

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Our Place opens new night shelter for winter

VICTORIA, B.C. – With the COVID pandemic greatly reducing the number of shelter beds available in Victoria, Our Place has leased Cool Aid’s Downtown Community Centre at 755 Pandora Avenue as a temporary night shelter.

Following proper COVID protocols, the gymnasium will provide sleeping space for 20 people.

“Finding more winter shelter has been a priority for us,” says Leah Young, Director of Housing and Shelter at Our Place. “And when space became available downtown, we quickly made a plan to staff it.”

The new shelter opened on Sunday, Nov. 1 with funding through BC Housing. Eleven people took advantage of the new shelter on Sunday night, but as the weather turns uglier, staff are expecting it to fill quickly.

“Partnerships are essential to providing the necessary services needed during this pandemic,” says Julian Daly, CEO of Our Place. “And after working with Cool Aid and BC Housing at Muncey Place (former Comfort Inn), we were happy to discover there was space available downtown that we could manage.”

Kathy Stinson, CEO of Victoria Cool Aid Society, who leased the space to Our Place agrees. “Victoria is a unique place when it comes to serving a displaced population. We all want to lift up people who are suffering through hard times, and I couldn’t be happier to be working with Our Place to make this a reality.”

Our Place Society has grown from a unique inner-city community centre to nine locations serving Greater Victoria’s most vulnerable, including people struggling with homelessness, mental health challenges, substance use issues, the working poor, and impoverished elderly. Individuals and businesses provide 50% of the financial support for its programs and services. Our Place provides over 1,000 meals every day plus snacks, 400 units of housing plus transitional shelter spaces, hot showers, education, job skills, health care, addiction recovery services, donated clothing, counseling and outreach services, and a 60-bin storage facility. Most importantly, Our Place provides a sense of hope and belonging to our neighbours in need.

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For further information, please contact:

Grant McKenzie, Director of Communications
T: 250-388-7112 ext. 225
Cell: 250-217-2406

Email: grantm@ourplacesociety.com