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## **PHSA Assumption of Correctional Health Services Update**

September 2017

### **Correctional Health Services Teams Coming Together Experience and insight will support successful transition**

The Ministry of Health, the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (MoPSSG) are in the final planning stages as PHSA prepares to assume responsibility for health care services provided in BC correctional centres. Offer letters have gone out and the vast majority of positions have been filled for roles within the new Correctional Health Services structure that will be implemented October 1. Most of these positions were filled by employees of Chiron, the contractor previously responsible for health care services in correctional facilities. Recruitment continues for remaining vacancies.

“We are pleased with the response from Chiron employees for these positions,” said Andrew MacFarlane, Provincial Executive Director, Correctional Health Services, BCMHSUS. “The experience and insight these individuals have working in the correctional environment is a huge asset and will help ensure a smooth transition for clients as we implement our new model of care and clinical guidelines.”

The new staffing model includes approximately 30 additional positions across BC’s ten provincial correctional centres. Integrated inter-professional health care teams, located in each centre will include physicians, nurses, mental health and substance use professionals and others working together to assess, screen, triage, treat and transition clients back to the community. This will involve close collaboration with community-based service providers in the regional health authorities.

### **Orientation sessions scheduled for September**

Andrew MacFarlane and other members of the Correctional Health Services leadership team are attending staff welcome/orientation sessions across the province in September. These sessions provide an opportunity for the new Correctional Health Services teams to come together, connect with leaders and learn about core practices and processes within the newly created Correctional Health Services. This will also be an opportunity for staff to learn about the services and supports available to them as new PHSA staff, including learning and development activities planned over the next several weeks.

### **Physician Recruitment Continues**

Medical staff recruitment is underway and many physicians currently working in correctional centres have joined the PHSA Correctional Health Services team.

“We are pleased to have such a positive response from our existing physicians,” said Dr. Nader Sharifi, Medical Director, Correctional Health Services. “Their experience and continued commitment to this client population will ensure continuity of care as PHSA assumes responsibility for Correctional Health Services.”

Contracts with the majority of psychologists currently providing services are being finalized, as most have decided to join PHSA, contributing to a smooth transition at the facilities where they work.

Services at each facility will be maintained and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Adjustments to service levels will be made as required.

There has also been an excellent response from dentists and psychiatrists who have signed contracts with PHSA to work with Correctional Health Services. Leadership is confident that all sites will have experienced, interdisciplinary teams in place by October 1.

### **Renovations Underway to Accommodate New Teams and New Workflows**

With more staff and new ways of working together, physical changes are required to health services space in correctional centres. This requires careful planning and a coordinated approach to ensure current services are maintained while these renovations take place.

“This process has been a partnership with PHSA,” explains John Pastorek, Project Director, BC Corrections. “We’ve worked well together to confirm requirements, accommodate new workflows and more people. All of this work is happening within the reality of space constraints and tight deadlines.”

Some sites, such as Kamloops, will require larger changes as walls are moved to increase the size of the nursing station, add a treatment room and increase storage space. Others sites will have less disruption as changes are minor. In most sites, the dedicated break room for health services staff will be repurposed to accommodate telehealth and meeting space. This means Corrections staff and Correctional Health Services staff will share a common staff room.

“This common staff space will create an opportunity for stronger connections between health and BC Corrections staff and supports our priority for a collaborative culture,” said John.

The majority of renovations will be completed by the October 1 deadline. While efforts have been made to minimize disruption during construction, this process has presented challenges for some. The team is grateful for the patience and cooperation of all staff and clients during the renovations.

### **New Corporate Office for Correctional Health Services**

As of September 6, the Correctional Health senior management team will be co-located at 4949 Heather Street, Vancouver with other BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services. The new office is an attractive, open concept in a beautiful heritage building.

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