

From: **"Singh, Sandra"**

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 2024-04-03 2:04:42 PM

Subject: FW: Information Bulletin: Thomus Donaghy Overdose Prevention Site Relocated

Hello Mayor and Council,

Please find below VCH's just-released information bulleting re: the new TDOPS site.

Sandra

For Immediate Release | April 3, 2024

Thomus Donaghy Overdose Prevention Site Relocated

Vancouver, B.C. — Residents of downtown Vancouver will continue to have access to overdose prevention services, including supervised consumption, drug checking and other harm reduction services that connect people to care and can create a pathway to healing, as the relocated Thomus Donaghy Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) opens later today, April 3.

The toxic drug crisis is a declared Public Health emergency in British Columbia and is the leading cause of death in B.C. for people aged 10 to 59, accounting for more deaths than homicides, suicides, accidents and natural disease combined. Vancouver City Centre Local Health Area (LHA) records the second highest rate of overdose deaths in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region, and the second highest number of calls to B.C. Emergency Health Services after the Downtown Eastside. Harm reduction services are crucial to keeping people alive and connecting them to local services.

In March 2021, VCH and service partner, Raincity Housing, first opened the Thomus Donaghy OPS on Seymour Street. The program provides life-saving overdose prevention services to residents at risk of death from the toxic drug supply, which is often contaminated by a growing and unpredictable mix of dangerous substances, including synthetic opioids like fentanyl, benzodiazepines, nitazenes and other adulterants. Since opening, this OPS has experienced a 150 per cent increase in the volume of average daily visits, reversed more than 200 overdoses, and connected countless people at risk of overdose to essential healthcare supports and services to improve people's quality of life.

The lease for the Seymour Street location of the Thomus Donaghy OPS expired Sunday, March 31, 2024. A new location in the same LHA will open later today, in a space behind a social housing complex in the 1000-block of Howe Street. To ensure no gap in services, the VCH Mobile OPS is in place temporarily near the original location to provide life-saving harm reduction services to downtown residents.

The new site is accessed from Howe Street, but does not have street frontage, offering clients and residents increased privacy. VCH is committed to being a good neighbour, working with the City, other local partners and residents to ensure the smooth operation of these health-care services. The new OPS will be supported by security, sidewalk management, litter and needle sweeps, and community outreach teams, in addition to other supports, to ensure the health and safety of the people it serves as well as people in the surrounding area.

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is committed to delivering exceptional care to 1.25 million people, including the First Nations, Métis and Inuit within the traditional territories of the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo-Xai'xais, Lil'wat, Musqueam, N'Quatqua, Nuxalk, Samahquam, shíshálh, Skatin, Squamish, Tla'amin, Tsleil-Waututh, Wuikinuxv, and Xa'xtsa. Learn more at vch.ca [[vch.ca](mailto:media@vch.ca)].

- 30 -

Contact:

Vancouver Coastal Health

media@vch.ca

604.202.2012 (after-hours)

Meaghan Benmore

Regional Manager, Public Affairs

Vancouver Coastal Health

e-mail meaghan.benmore@vch.ca

I acknowledge that my place of work lies on the unceded traditional homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

The content of this e-mail is confidential and may be privileged. If you receive this e-mail in error, please contact the sender and delete it immediately.