

For Immediate Release | April 12, 2022

## Interior Health expanding withdrawal services

**IH WIDE** – As part of continued expansions in mental health and substance use supports, Interior Health is introducing new outpatient withdrawal management services in four communities and a new virtual option to make accessing care easier across the region.

“When people with substance use challenges make the courageous decision to reach out for help, there needs to be services to meet them where they are at,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “With new outpatient withdrawal management options across the Interior, more people will be able to access the help they need – faster. This is just one step as our government continues to build a comprehensive and seamless continuum of mental health and additions care that works for all British Columbians.”

The outpatient model means a person doesn’t need to be admitted to a facility to receive withdrawal support. Instead, patients will receive care, including the prescribing of medications as required, in their own home.

“Each person’s experience with addiction, and path to recovery, is unique,” said Interior Health president and CEO, Susan Brown. “Interior Health is pleased to be expanding outpatient withdrawal services, and we are committed to supporting people across the region in their recovery journeys.”

In addition to creating a regional virtual addiction medicine clinic, new outpatient withdrawal management teams will run seven days a week in Penticton, Kamloops, Vernon and Kelowna.

The new nursing positions have been posted and recruitment is ongoing. Services will be implemented as these staff are hired and trained, with service starts anticipated by summer 2022.

These new outpatients programs are in addition to [expanded services](#) in the North Okanagan, [five new youth withdrawal](#) management beds recently awarded in Kamloops, [22 adult withdrawal](#) beds to serve people across the Okanagan, [Integrated Treatment Teams](#) to provide multidisciplinary outreach to people who need flexible support, and growing access to Opioid Agonist Treatment through IH’s [nurse prescriber program](#).

For information on substance use services in Interior Health, visit [interiorhealth.ca](http://interiorhealth.ca) or call 310-MHSU (6478).

### Quick facts:

- Medically supported withdrawal management, sometimes called detox, is an important option for people with significant alcohol or other substance use concerns. Beyond physical and mental discomfort, withdrawal can cause medical complications that put people at risk of seizures, hallucinations, and even death.

We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

- The outpatient model is expected to be particularly helpful for people who may face barriers in accessing inpatient (bed-based) withdrawal management.

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