



NEWS RELEASE

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RIVERSTONE HOME/MOBILE DETOX SERVICES TRIPLE EFFORTS IN ADDITIONAL COMMUNITIES

SURREY – Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and Mission residents, members of Fraser East First Nations communities and other residents of Fraser East who need support in withdrawing from substances can now access two new home/mobile detox teams serving these communities.

Building on the success of the Riverstone Home/Mobile Detox Program implemented in 2010, the second team launched last spring to augment services provided by the original teams, expanding services to include Mission to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows. In addition, a third team fully funded by the First Nations Health Authority is now operating in First Nations communities throughout Fraser East and also includes the Mission to Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows corridor.

“Detox teams use proven approaches to support people with alcohol or other drug addictions,” said **Health Minister Terry Lake**. “These new teams are a timely addition to the services available in Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and Mission and in Fraser East First Nations communities.”

The program was developed to address the needs of individuals who have not traditionally accessed community-based detoxification/withdrawal services and are assessed as suitable for this service.

“Since the launch of the first phase of Riverstone five years ago, we have seen incredible success stories from the many patients who have benefited from our home/mobile detox program. The numbers speak for themselves and indicate the approach we are taking is working,” said **Fraser Health president and CEO Michael Marchbank**.

Since its inception, the first phase of the program has contributed to several encouraging statistics, including a 67 percent decrease in the number of hospital admissions as clients are able to receive services and supports in the community. In addition, the program has helped contribute to a 46 percent decrease in the number of psychiatric emergency room visits as clients are able to receive detox or withdrawal management services in their residence or other supportive environment.

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Home/mobile detox consists of a medical assessment by a physician along with regular monitoring by a nurse and health care worker during the withdrawal process to provide medical management and support. Before discharge from the program, case workers ensure the client and their support network are connected to community programs that continue the recovery process.

“The need to expand detox services for First Nations in the Fraser Salish region has been outlined by communities in their regional health and wellness plan and the First Nations Health Authority is pleased to support this expansion with our partners,” said **First Nations Health Authority Chief Executive Officer Joe Gallagher**. “The Riverstone team has shown results in delivering effective services and the addition of a First Nations team will enhance our ability to be in community and engaging in the work that better reflects the traditions and values of First Nations people for better services.”

While detox is provided at home if the client resides in a safe and supportive environment, clients without an appropriate living situation can stay in a short-term stabilization bed located in different facilities while they participate in the program. Alternatively, clients can also visit the Riverstone Daytox Program located at Chilliwack General Hospital. Detox support is provided seven days a week.

Referrals to the program can be made by individuals, family members, physicians, hospital withdrawal management facilities, or other service providers, via the toll free number 1-866-795-0600. Upon referral, a medical assessment is completed to determine if home/mobile is the right level of care for the individual.

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