

“I get emotional when I talk about Insite, it’s always been a beacon.”

DEAN WILSON



Housing and harm reduction

PHS Community Services Society is a charitable non-profit that provides housing, healthcare, harm reduction and health promotion for some of the most marginalized and under-served people in Vancouver and Victoria.

We are recognized as North American leaders in low barrier housing and harm reduction services.

Our internationally recognized services and community programming include a medical clinic, affordable dentistry and a credit union branch.

**9 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1M9
604-683-0073 | info@phs.ca | www.phs.ca**

Executive overview: our staff is our story

Micheal Vonn, Chief Executive Officer and Jeff Brooks, PHS Board Chair

This year we are marking the 30th year of PHS as an organization and the 20th year of Insite.

Milestones suggest history, and history asks where we've come from. And the most meaningful answer is that we come from where we've always come from. That is, from the skill and courage and dedication of the people who choose to do this work.

For decades, PHS staff, volunteers and community champions have served the most under-served members of our society and brought their all to the effort. We serve a community of folks who are profoundly marginalized and attending to their most urgent needs is hard and gritty work.

Our frontline: they clean. And they clean some more. And they help folks who are very ill to de-hoard their living space. And move out fire hazards and respond to overdoses.

They find every way possible to keep housed people who would be evicted to street homelessness in any other situation.

Our staff and volunteers serve community members with severe mental health challenges and brain injuries who are frequently barred from other services because of their behaviours.

There are almost no other workplaces you can name in which staff attend ceaselessly to such a complex array of behaviours and effects of trauma.

It can't be said often enough, and we'd like to say it with special emphasis as we mark three decades: we are so grateful to the people who make what we do possible.

Thank you to our staff, volunteers and supporters. You are making the biggest difference it is possible to make in people's lives. A life-or-death difference in many cases. And while many people would like to make such a difference, not everyone has the tenacity, the patience, the resilience, and the compassion.

So, to our veterans of many years of phenomenal service, to our brilliant new recruits and everyone in between – our deep gratitude. You have made the work of PHS sometimes renowned, always indispensable and the most meaningful service to our community that we could possibly offer.

For all the years of PHS past and to come, thank you.



PHS at 30: Celebrating decades of innovation

This is how we make a difference in the communities we serve

We have anniversaries to recognize and people to celebrate.

PHS was founded 30 years ago. Insite, 20 years ago. And Pigeon Park Savings turns 20 in early 2024.

We have so many milestones to commemorate and the work of so many folks to cheer to the rafters. Here's just the barest hint of the achievements we have to celebrate in a fly-by overview of some of our history.

The 30/20/20 anniversaries

PHS Community Services Society was incorporated as the Portland Hotel Society in August 1993. We officially changed our name to PHS Community Services Society in July 2003.

Insite opened September 2003, followed by Pigeon Park Savings in March 2004.

Decades of innovation

PHS was formed to house and support people excluded from other services. And we've grown over the years, currently operating more than 1,600 units of low-barrier supportive housing and shelters in Vancouver and Victoria.

We began operations at the height of Vancouver's AIDS crisis, when the city was noted for some of the highest per capita HIV transmission rates in the world. We began giving out clean needles; at the time an act of civil disobedience, but City policy by the end of the decade.

In the '90s, PHS was an early adopter of the Housing First model, which is now a recognized best practice in Canada as an emergency response to homelessness.

We opened Insite, North America's first legal supervised consumption site, now a best practice model for approaching drug overdoses.

And PHS is currently innovating with prescription fentanyl programs, which we believe will become a critically important approach to the drug poisoning crisis.

Leadership in housing

We're opening three housing facilities summer/fall 2023:

- Dovetail Annex: a 30-bed modular housing construction in Vancouver alongside the PHS-operated Margaret Mitchell Place.
- The Stanley: a mixed-use Vancouver development with a tower of market rental apartments and 80 PHS-managed supportive housing units.
- The Juniper: a 46-unit B.C. Housing new-build modular construction in Victoria.

We're in the process of bringing wall-mounted Lifeguard overdose alarms to all our residences as an added layer of protection to prevent overdose deaths.

We re-envisioned sheltering with 'pod-style' units which we initiated in Victoria when providing temporary shelter during COVID and later brought it to the Osborn Shelter in Vancouver, an innovative 24/7 operation with 60 modular sleep pods and safe consumption areas.

Clinical and Harm reduction pioneers

PHS is known around the world for operating Insite, which has recorded:

- 4.9 million visits since 2003.
- 15,050 overdose interventions without a single drug poisoning death.

There are now 38 supervised consumption sites and an additional 30 overdose prevention sites operating across Canada. The model has also been successfully exported to the US.

Additionally, we offer witnessed consumption at Molson Overdose Prevention Site and our Mobile Overdose Prevention Unit, which have together recorded more than 113,150 visits.

We distribute harm reduction supplies in a 24/7 operation reaching people where the immediate need is. This includes:

- Three million clean needles per year.
- More than 80,000 glass pipes for inhalant drug users every year.



In mid-2022, PHS launched two programs that pilot new medication protocols:

- SAFER (Safer Alternative for Emergency Response) prescribes fentanyl patches, tablets, liquid or powder for witnessed consumption.
- And Enhanced Access, for people who have already stabilized on a program such as SAFER, which allows off-site consumption.

And we expanded the Community Managed Alcohol Program, where participants can substitute member-brewed wine and beer for non-beverage alcohols. It now supports more than 150 individuals seven days a week.

PHS, along with other organizations, safely disposes of used needles. Every year we:

- Collect around 1.5 million syringes in used sharps containers.
- Retrieve around 50,000 improperly discarded sharps from around Vancouver.

There are no simple solutions to intertwining crises

Housing, healthcare, harm reduction and health promotion provide an immediate, humane response

The horrendous effects of drug poisoning, addiction and homelessness aren't issues that can simply be policed away.



PHS Board member, and former Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Perry Kendall puts it best in describing these as 'wicked problems.' This is a planning/policy term for an issue that's so multifaceted there's no simple solution, with outcomes only available along the lines of better or worse.

Every 'wicked problem' is essentially a symptom of other broader, complex social issues.

"These are problems for which there's no specific answer," said Dr. Kendall (pictured above). "It's like saying imposing treatment or making drugs illegal is the answer, or locking people up for taking drugs, or prevention is the answer. They work, but each have limitations on how well they work."

It's a bit like talking about finding a cure for cancer, he said: there are more than 200 different types of cancer and there are multiple causes for each.

Dr. Kendall joined the PHS Board because he supports the organization's approach to working with our community and big picture take on multifaceted issues.

"PHS has recognized this for a long time, creating housing for people that are vulnerable, and healthcare for people who wouldn't otherwise have it," he said. "And community supports like low-barrier banking.

"It's about trying to give people their agency."

His experience of overseeing clinics for people with opioid dependencies showed that "being respectful of people gets results."

Since 2016 the province has been in a public health emergency due to overdoses, which are now the leading cause of unnatural death for people aged 10 – 59.

It was Dr. Kendall who declared the emergency back in April 2016 having recognized that drug poisoning deaths were a social-medical problem that should be addressed as a public health matter.

The designation as a public health emergency has given health authorities tools to collect data on drug poisonings and issue important alerts, but it has inherent limitations. It is another tool in the toolbox.

And we need the whole toolbox.

PHS's new fast-track housing solution

Dovetail Annex went from planning to housing in mere months

PHS opened a new fast-track modular housing unit with 24/7 supports for people experiencing homelessness in Vancouver.

Dovetail Annex provides 29 units of housing for people who have been living in shelters and the encampments on East Hastings St. and at CRAB Park.

In turn, this eases the pressure on shelter spaces in the Downtown Eastside.

It's a one-story, 6,458 square-foot building of a type that's typically used by workers at logging or mining camps, with private rooms and shared washroom, laundry and kitchen spaces.

As is typical for PHS, it will be staffed 24/7 and residents will receive daily meals, harm reduction and health care, cultural programming and referrals to mental health, primary care and other community-based supports depending on their requirements.

Modular buildings are an emergency response to homelessness. The location received a development permit from the City of Vancouver in March 2023 and was housing people by late summer.

It's located on Ash Street, in Vancouver, directly adjacent to our pre-existing modular housing at Margaret Mitchell Place. Hence the name Dovetail.

"As we've been operating housing at this location for several years, we're established in the neighbourhood and welcome the enhanced health supports that will assist us in building community connections and supports for residents of both buildings," said PHS Housing Director Tanya Fader.

"We would like to note our appreciation for our neighbours in False Creek who continue to be welcoming and collaborative."

This project was being developed simultaneously with lookalike emergency shelter modular developments accommodating 60 people at 1525 and 1535 Western St., Vancouver, which are being operated by partner housing provider Lu'ma Native Housing Society.

Dovetail Annex was made possible through partnership with the City of Vancouver, the Province, BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health.



DOVETAIL ANNEX
phs



**PHS DENTAL
ASSISTANT
EBONY HALL**

PHS dental clinic meets an urgent community need

Dentistry is a quality of life issue for marginalized people in the Downtown Eastside

The community services provided by PHS go beyond the housing and harm reduction that we're best known for.

For more than 20 years, PHS has provided affordable dental care to a marginalized and under-served community.

The importance of dental care goes without saying. From relieving pain to preventing infections and providing the means of consuming a variety of foods, dental care is essential. And cost can put this essential health care out of reach of people living with severely limited means.

Which is why the Portland Community Dental Clinic provides routine check-ups and emergency response for the folks in the Downtown Eastside.

The clinic was launched in 2001 to meet this community need and currently has more than 2,000 active patients on the books, with scope to take on more.

Dental Assistant Ebony Hall joined the practice as a practicum student and officially joined the team in 2009. The hours suited her, but above all she felt accepted by colleagues and the community like nowhere else.

"Here I can be more myself," she said. "I grew up in the neighbourhood.

"There's a cross section of people coming here. There are those who, for whatever reason, have been affected by homelessness and addiction, and those that live in the neighbourhood and want to be seen locally.

"A lot of people find out that we're here and want to be seen closer to home.

"I've heard people assume that we triage people to other providers, but we actually provide a full dental service here.

There's a lot of preventative check-ups and emergencies. There's no demand for aesthetic cosmetic procedures but we do restorative work."



**PORTLAND
COMMUNITY
DENTAL
CLINIC**

Restorative dentistry is the repair or replacement of damaged or missing teeth, which includes crowns and bridges. However, one of the most pressing issues in this community is broken and/or missing dentures.

PHS dental staff have Vancouver Coastal Health funding to help cover costs of urgent work, and also have a relationship with the UBC School of Dentistry.

Portland Community Dental Clinic, located at 12 East Hastings St., Vancouver, is open Monday to Thursday, from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Insite at 20: Still saving lives, still giving hope

The iconic supervised consumption site shows the world the power of harm reduction

When Insite opened in September 2003, it wasn't just the first sanctioned site in North America for witnessed injecting. It was a paradigm shift.

People could walk through the doors and inject in a welcoming space, with nurses on-hand to give advice on matters as immediate as avoiding infections or damaging veins. Participants could sit together over a coffee in the chill room, staffed by peers.

Former Insite manager Darwin Fisher described it best: "Insite is like a community centre for drug users that happens to also have clinical services. We're subtly bringing healthcare to people."



Insite is a frontline medical unit for people who often avoid traditional healthcare settings, usually from bad previous experiences. It's a hub providing community connections for people who have reason to distrust institutions. It builds relationships with isolated people.

Dean Wilson is a well-known figure in advocacy and support for Insite. He

lobbied for the facility and fought to keep it open. Along the way, he's been featured in 18 nonfiction books and too many research projects to recall.

His involvement goes back to the PHS-organized Out of Harms Way conference in 1997 which featured European harm reduction leaders discussing supervised consumption sites. Dean became president of the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users in the early 2000s, and his campaigning included winning the support of Vancouver Mayor Philip Owen and being featured in the award-winning 2002 documentary *Fix*.

He was the first person through the door at the launch of Insite.

"It was a Sunday afternoon and I was in the chill room with [then] Executive Director Mark Townsend, and he said 'When do you want to open?' I said, 'Tomorrow morning.' He said 'What about now?' and I said basically, the sooner the better.

"We needed to show that it worked. I did my drugs, and they opened Insite. It was a soft opening that day."

Dean was also prominent in the precedent-setting Supreme Court fight that kept Insite open.

"I get emotional when I talk about Insite, it's always been a beacon. When the Supreme Court agreed that

supervised injection sites were the right thing to do it proved everyone in the community was right.”

Dean is still a champion of Insite, even though he doesn't do drugs any more.

“I used every month from August 1969 to May 2022. I stopped using drugs at age 66. I was getting old. And now I can cope with Dean Wilson.

“It was never about the drugs, it was about being Dean Wilson. I don't need drugs to cope anymore. I don't miss any of it.

“People have to find their own way out. PHS never gives up on anybody, because you never know when they will figure it out.”

Another great public face for Insite is Guy Felicella, now a Peer Clinical Advisor for both Vancouver Coastal Health and BC Centre on Substance Use, and an in-demand harm reduction public speaker.

“Before Insite, people who used drugs didn't have a safe space,” he said. “With Insite, things changed from a criminal perspective to a health perspective, with the nurses present.

“They counted me visiting Insite more than 4,000 times over 10 years. Insite gave me community. I was welcomed there.

“That place never enabled my addiction, it enabled my life so I was able to figure it out.”



In addition to reversing overdoses, Guy says the Insite team saved his leg during a bone infection, showed him how to manage his then chaotic drug use, and they patiently developed connections that led him to overcome the crushing low self-worth he felt as a homeless drug user.

“These days I'm married with three kids, and I've got a job, but I've got the fondest memories of Insite,” he said. “There's no question that if that facility did not exist, I'd not be alive, and I'd certainly not have a decade sober.

“Basically, the thing about harm reduction is that it builds trust. That's a powerful thing when you are using substances. You need someone to be supportive of you, to be willing to build a relationship. And that's what Insite does.”

We provide low-barrier recovery. Because it works.

PHS recovery options in Victoria and Vancouver are aimed at people experiencing homelessness

PHS operates a unique, low barrier recovery program on Vancouver Island.

Our Douglas Street Supportive Recovery Program (SRP) stands out in the recovery sector in being specifically designed to address the gap in services for people experiencing homelessness.

There are almost no services like ours that create a pathway to recovery for people who are effectively excluded from other options.

The SRP is the only program on Vancouver Island that allows cigarette and cannabis smoking, couples and pets. Staff are more tolerant of relapses than other programs: one slip does not mean an automatic discharge, although participants would need to subsequently show that they can recommit to their recovery.

Participants actively work on their recovery through an intensive six-month residential program.

This program is for people who have already been through detox, and are taking part in opioid agonist therapies such as methadone or buprenorphine/naloxone (Suboxone) to reduce cravings for street opioids.

Medical support is key, but not all there is to recovery. Recovery is tough. It involves learning new ways of living, especially relating to dealing with emotions. And this takes patience, and understanding.

People staying at the SRP attend morning meetings six days per week and have regular engagement with in-house programs.

There is a curfew, and visiting is limited to pre-authorized immediate family members. There are Mental Health Workers on-site around the clock, three meals daily and daily medication delivery from pharmacists.

“Some people do the whole six months, and others might stay for a couple of months,” said Program Operations Manager Vrinda Conroy. “It depends where they are at.

“When people arrive, we let them know that we’re not going to tell them how to work recovery, but that they are going to tell us what they want in terms of support. They have to work on their recovery, and a large part of



ROOM AT DOUGLAS ST.
SUPPORTIVE RECOVERY

that is participating in the programming.

“The work here really is to bring people together, and encourage involvement.”

Participants can self-refer. And staff find that there’s a lot of word-of-mouth recommendation, particularly as the SRP is a different experience from higher barrier programs.

“There are not a lot of recovery options available on the Island, and we’re the only one I know of that’s low-barrier, where if people have a slip they don’t get kicked out,” said Vrinda.

“And most of the others are difficult to access.”

Higher barrier recovery programs are the ticket for some folks. Just not all. The point of the SRP is to provide a much-needed option.

Recovery is not a one-size fits all process. It takes time and a great deal of humility, and we find that the more supports PHS offers, the more hopeful the outlook for participants.



DIGNIFIED SPACE FOR DOUGLAS ST. RESIDENTS

Onsite: Recovery that literally meets people where they’re at

Recovery comes in many flavours and so does harm reduction. We provide both, as low barrier as possible, to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

In Vancouver, PHS operates Onsite, a self-referred recovery program that’s upstairs from Insite, our witnessed injection site, to very literally meet drug users where they are at. Every weekday, two or three people transition from supervised consumption at Insite to detox at Onsite.

Admission brings supports on many fronts. Nurses attend to wounds or infections; physicians review participant’s health history and drug use to create personalized recovery plans.

Onsite has a 12-bed medically-supported detox floor. In the past, detox was expected to take seven days. However, more recently, the detox process takes two to three weeks due to the strength of street drugs and adulterants, particularly benzodiazepines. Often participants arrive unaware that they have benzodiazepine dependencies.

After detox, participants stay in private rooms on an 18-bed transitional housing floor that provides ongoing recovery support.

It’s low-barrier and patient-centered, which means participants are allowed to smoke cannabis, which can help with sleep, appetite and anxiety.

Culture Saves Lives is sharing healing and hope

Music takes messages throughout the Downtown Eastside Indigenous community and beyond

The Culture Saves Lives team is sharing drum-based songs created to provide spiritual truths to Indigenous people throughout the Downtown Eastside.

Their music is a medicine. It gives hope to people who are suffering and adrift from their ancestral teachings as a result of more than a century of government assimilation policies aimed at destroying Indigenous identity.

By any metric you choose, Indigenous people face stark health inequities. Nationally, life expectancy is 15 years shorter than for other Canadians. In Vancouver, Indigenous people make up 39 per cent of the homeless population despite being only two per cent of the city's overall population.

Culture Saves Lives was formed to address these social determinants of health, making a difference through the belonging that comes with immersion in Indigenous traditions. It's done through a low-barrier, harm reduction lens to reach those in the most urgent need.

The group received Vancouver Coastal Health funding to compose Indigenous songs in a traditional style for sharing throughout the Downtown Eastside community and beyond.

"Our identities, our ties to the land and each other, and language, dress and religion have been stolen," said Culture Saves Lives organizer Cody Hunt.

"Many Indigenous people in the Downtown Eastside have no experience of their own traditions.

"Retaining ancestral knowledge is vital for all Indigenous people, so we're always looking for new ways to engage those who are suffering. We're particularly proud to be creating new songs, made specifically to be shared, which we hope will provide a calling back to some of the ways of our ancestors.

"Back in the day, the knowledge keepers would say that if you are not singing and dancing and taking part in ceremonies, then you will get sick."

Culture Saves Lives is inviting people to join in singing and playing the new songs, which are both being taught in-person and written down for sharing further afield.

"We've composed five songs so far, although it's probably not how someone would imagine composition from a Western perspective of someone sitting down to write music with some specific ideas in mind," said Cody.

"From an Indigenous worldview, the song comes to you at a certain point in time and you need to be able to keep the tune and understand where it's coming from so you can put words to it.

"I'm not making the song, I'm sitting in a place feeling the energy of the environment, which is being channelled

through my voice. If you were in the woods near Squamish with a drum, it would feel very different from what would come to you on the Island or up North.”

Traditional songs, which in some cases date back more than 1,000 years, tell of specific events that happened to an individual, or a supernatural event on a tribe’s land. Permission is required to sing a specific family’s song.

But these songs being created for the DTES are a gift for everyone in the community and beyond. They are created with the intent that they travel among Indigenous people living in the North West.

Traditionally, there would be an expectation of sobriety in order to sing, but Culture Saves Lives is inviting people to come as they are because there is no time to waste.

“The songs are almost like teachings,” said Cody. “They don’t describe life in the Downtown Eastside, but they contain truths for people who are here and struggling.

“If things are not going right, hopefully you will listen to the words and realize there’s a piece missing from your life.

“Personally, I’m lucky in that my people were able to retain their culture. But the reality is that for most people in this neighbourhood, family structures were broken by the residential school system.”

Being able to support Indigenous people to regain their culture is vitally important. People with belief, and connections, have more tools to deal with suffering.



CULTURE SAVES LIVES TAKE IT TO THE STREETS WITH A TRADITIONAL LOG DRUM

Culture Saves Lives teach the songs to Indigenous participants on Thursdays at The Hub (1 East Hastings St.) from 12 – 2 p.m.

Building community with drinkers to reduce harm

Applying harm reduction to alcohol targets illicit street drinking

Alcoholism is the most common addiction across the country, ahead of nicotine use.

The most urgent aspect of this in the marginalized communities we serve is the use of non-beverage alcohol – substances not meant for human consumption such as hand sanitizer and mouthwash that carry significant health risks.



As the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use has noted: “The Downtown Eastside faces more liquor restrictions than any other Vancouver neighbourhood. As a result, non-beverage alcohol remains more accessible than beverage alcohol for many people with alcohol use

disorder who also experience poverty, homelessness or vulnerable housing.”

PHS’s Community Managed Alcohol Program (CMAP) is a harm reduction program that works with participants to substitute non-beverage alcohol with limited amounts of member-brewed wine and beer. The program also offers food and a connection to medical care.

As with all harm reduction, our approach is to prevent the negative consequences of substance use and to improve health.



CMAP participants operate from their own supportive and inviting community, with specific responsibilities around brewing.

“Drinkers needed their own space, as there was nothing available for them,” said Program Operations Manager Kieren Nelson. “Drinkers are often the first to be asked to leave any public area.

“I think the stigma is particularly harsh because alcohol is a legal drug, not illicit. It’s easier for society to blame the drinker than talk about trauma, poverty or classism.

“Having participants brew their own beverages has turned out to be very beneficial in people’s lives, and CMAP has grown over the years into a community.”

CMAP has expanded to a seven-days-a-week program which sees around 150 participants each month, with its own outdoor seating area outside CMAP’s lounge.

Prescribed supply

Medical-grade product brings stability

The PHS medical team is building a one-of-a-kind prescription fentanyl framework that can be scaled and adopted in other Canadian cities.

These are the first steps for two connected pilot programs that pioneer the use of medical-grade fentanyl to provide regulated alternatives to dangerous street drugs. Launched in 2022, there are now around 50 people receiving prescription fentanyl, and plans for expansion.

The past year has seen a focus on behind-the-scenes work to build systems ranging from working out contracts with pharmacies to establishing the extent of drug users' tolerances.

This is research and development that addresses a critical gap in addiction medicine: providing treatment for people with opioid use disorder when opioid agonist therapies (OAT) haven't worked out.



OAT treatments such as methadone prevent withdrawal symptoms and reduce cravings, but they don't work for everyone. And when they don't work, patients are likely to return to toxic street drugs.

The PHS pilot programs are prescribed supply models with

built-in low-barrier access to PHS primary care and pathways to recovery.

The first program is SAFER (Safer Alternative for Emergency Response), which provides a thorough intake process with a medical review and tolerance testing. Participants come in daily for witnessed consumption.

SAFER is a collaborative effort of PHS, Vancouver Coastal Health, and BC Centre on Substance Use, and is currently funded by Health Canada.

The other pilot program is Enhanced Access, which is for those who have stabilized and pay for their prescription fentanyl at rates comparable to street costs.

Enhanced Access is the first and only program of its kind in Canada, and meets all federal and provincial laws and regulations governing physician-generated prescriptions and medication purchases from pharmacies.

"We see a lot of positive changes in our patients once they start on prescription fentanyl," said PHS Medical Director Christy Sutherland (pictured, left). "They look well. They gain weight, they work on obtaining ID and getting housing. They are calmer.

"They have consistency in their lives: they know the supply is there, and they know what's in it. They are no longer playing Russian roulette."

Pigeon Park Savings. You can bank on it.

We provide a financial resource for an impoverished neighbourhood

As we come up to our 20th year of low-barrier community banking, Pigeon Park Savings is growing faster than ever.

Pigeon Park Savings was founded in March 2004 just after Four Corners Community Savings closed. Four Corners was a BC government-owned DTES financial institution, created under the leadership of community advocate Jim Green.

The departure of Four Corners left a huge, unaddressed need for financial services for low-income people who receive Ministry cheques but are effectively excluded from conventional banking.

It just made sense for PHS to step in with its own version. And no better partner for the enterprise could have been wished for than Vancity.

“We still have original members with Four Corners ID cards in their files,” said Pigeon Park Savings branch manager Sharon Buchanan.



“People were able to use their ID to start an account here.

While Four Corners had offered mortgages and attempted to integrate business accounts, PPS learned from their predecessor’s

challenges and opened with a clear focus on financial literacy.

“We just make it as easy as possible for people to get the service they need.”

Last year, the branch, which PHS manages in partnership with Vancity, had around 5,000 members with a few dozen folks who were not account holders, calling in just to cash cheques.

But now, the branch has almost 7,000 members. Plus an additional 1,100 people, who are not account holders, regularly calling in to cash cheques. It’s been a period of amazing growth.

“We don’t have the capacity to have any more staff because of the size of our building,” said Sharon. “We have six wickets, plus myself, plus a station at the back. ‘Cheque day’ is a really busy time so we have a ninth person who can take the place of anyone so staff can take a comfort break without us losing momentum.”

From the outset, Pigeon Park Savings has operated as a non-profit social service agency with a specific focus on providing low-barrier services.

Like any other bank, PPS must manage risk. And within those parameters, PPS has found ways to support people who face barriers at other institutions because of



MEET THE PIGEON PARK SAVINGS TEAM

ID requirements. PPS accepts expired or photocopied government-issued photo ID and will work with people to obtain copies of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction's own photo ID.

Above all, staff work to instill essential financial literacy in people that have never had a bank account before.

"The Ministry has community integration specialists working at the Carnegie Outreach Program who help people experiencing homelessness to set-up a Pigeon Park Savings account," said Sharon. "Service Canada has also signed people up.

"And we've grown even more since March 2023 when cheque-cashing places in Vancouver stopped serving customers without ID."

Sharon has been at the branch since early 2009. She says she would never have otherwise gone into banking, but could not imagine leaving the branch as the community members have become like family.

"All the paperwork is worth it for seeing the difference this makes to people's lives," she said.

"Staff here create relationships with people who start to feel more comfortable with us. You see people who have never trusted institutions in the past feel ready to become a member, and it feels great."

The need for low-barrier financial services is growing throughout the Downtown Eastside and beyond, and word-of-mouth about helpful Pigeon Park Savings is travelling fast.

Donor-driven action makes a difference

Thanking the organizations and individuals that support PHS frontline work

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our generous donors, many of whom have been contributing for years.

Their unwavering support shapes PHS programs through impactful gifts.

Thanks to the commitment of this community, we continue to be recognized as global leaders in innovative programs. PHS strives to maximize the impact of every dollar raised, directing it to the people and programs that need it most to ensure that every contribution creates a meaningful impact.

For every \$1 spent on fundraising we have raised \$5.38 to further enhance our programs and improve the lives of the community members we serve.



BOARD CHAIR JEFF BROOKS RUNS THE FUNDRAISING UNDER ARMOUR EASTSIDE 10K

While unable to list everyone, we particularly want to extend special recognition to the following major gift donors:

- Al Roadburg Foundation
- Alpha & Omega Painting
- Anonymous Donation in Memory of Paula Armstrong
- B2Gold Corp.
- Benevity Giving Platform
- British Columbia Dental Association
- Canada Running Series
- Community Impact Real Estate (CIRES)
- Doctors of BC
- Evergreen Cannabis
- The Fockler Family (The Rainbow Fund)
- Keray Henke
- Jacqueline Koerner
- Nicola Wealth Foundation
- Pay-Pal Giving Fund
- Taeda Foundation
- The Rogers Family

Special thanks to our monthly donors whose annual gifts generated more than \$28,000 in the 2022-2023 fiscal period.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our Board of Directors and committee representatives for their invaluable time, leadership and support. Their dedication plays a vital role in shaping PHS into the innovative and accountable organization it is today.

How you can help a marginalized community

A letter from Fund Development Manager Kelly Nichol

Let me introduce myself. My name is Kelly and I'm delighted to join PHS as the new Fund Development Manager.

We recently bid a fond farewell to my predecessor Michelle Sewell, who left the organization after five years to embark on a new role as Development Director at Adoptive Families Association of BC.

We are grateful for Michelle's dedication and hard work at PHS and wish her success in her new endeavour.

With 20 years of experience in the field, I'm excited to build on PHS's strategic fundraising approach and foster strong relationships with donors and supporters.

It's an honour to collaborate with the extremely dedicated team at PHS, implementing innovative solutions to serve vulnerable communities in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and Victoria.

I look forward to meeting our donors to maximize the impact of their generous contributions supporting PHS. (Reach me at kelly.nichol@phs.ca with any inquiries you may have.)

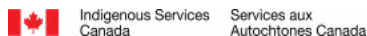
Reflecting on the past year, our mission remains steadfast in providing homes for marginalized individuals, supporting their health, and developing innovative



approaches to harm reduction and supportive recovery that saves lives.

We rely on the support and advocacy of our community to fund and spread awareness about PHS's vital work. Whether you are an individual, business, organization, or community group, your contributions strengthen the vulnerable communities we serve. Thank you.

Our strategic partners make all this possible





LU'MA NATIVE HOUSING SOCIETY



Financial report

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	Internally Restricted Funds	Replacement Reserve Fund	General Fund	2023	2022
Revenue					
BC Housing Management Commission	-	\$ 474,868	\$ 38,995,962	\$ 39,470,830	\$ 36,897,671
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority	-	-	17,994,626	17,994,626	16,484,623
Vancouver Island Health Authority	-	-	775,015	775,015	1,132,504
Rent	-	-	5,460,491	5,460,491	5,806,244
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	-	-	985,977	985,977	689,586
Other income	-	-	4,934,485	4,934,485	3,252,317
Other service grants	-	-	1,638,053	1,638,053	1,689,408
Donations, grants and fundraising	\$ 10,500	-	402,801	413,301	949,051
	10,500	474,868	71,187,410	71,672,778	66,901,404
Expenses					
Staffing costs	-	-	44,735,224	44,735,224	40,798,571
Repairs and maintenance	-	474,868	5,179,293	5,654,161	5,100,548
Building operational costs	25,000	-	3,763,706	3,788,706	3,597,911
Amortization	-	-	2,103,998	2,103,998	1,811,050
Residential services operational costs	94,742	-	9,011,149	9,105,891	8,669,550
Interest on long-term debt	-	-	779,282	779,282	809,753
General administrative costs	7,942	-	5,313,846	5,321,788	5,006,026
	127,684	474,868	70,886,498	71,489,050	65,793,409
Excess (deficit) of revenue over expenses	\$ (117,184)	-	\$ 300,912	\$ 183,728	\$ 1,107,995

* During the year, the Society received \$444,786 (2022 - \$525,739) in restricted and unrestricted donations and grants. The unused restricted donation and grant amounts will be used and recognized into income in the year the money is spent.

	Internally Restricted Funds	Replacement Reserve Fund	General Fund	2023	2022
Assets					
Cash	-	-	\$ 6,336,631	\$ 6,336,631	\$ 12,420,844
Restricted cash	\$ 1,879,678	\$ 663,641	-	2,543,319	4,049,685
Investments	-	2,500,000	-	2,500,000	-
Accounts receivable	-	-	6,015,092	6,015,092	1,821,681
Government agencies recoverable	-	-	336,077	336,077	274,108
Prepaid expenses and prepaid lease	-	-	143,317	143,317	83,241
	1,879,678	3,163,641	12,831,117	17,874,436	18,649,559
Investments	-	-	3,000,000	3,000,000	-
Long-term portion of prepaid lease	-	-	197,157	197,157	203,095
Capital assets	-	-	63,961,608	63,961,608	65,423,101
	1,879,678	\$ 3,163,641	\$ 79,989,882	\$ 85,033,201	\$ 84,275,755
Liabilities and fund balances					
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	-	-	\$ 1,278,992	\$ 1,278,992	\$ 1,132,566
Government remittances payable	-	-	862,104	862,104	598,803
Salaries and dues payable	-	-	5,701,596	5,701,596	3,353,091
Damage deposits	-	-	158,202	158,202	140,707
Deferred contributions	-	-	9,457,710	9,457,710	9,775,744
Current portion of vehicle loan	-	-	39,769	39,769	40,015
Current portion of long-term debt	-	-	1,230,961	1,230,961	1,383,062
Interfund balances	(32,395)	474,868	(442,473)	-	-
	(32,395)	474,868	18,286,861	18,729,334	16,423,988
Long-term debt	-	-	33,812,627	33,812,627	35,043,589
Vehicle loans	-	-	16,742	16,742	55,134
Replacement reserve	-	2,688,773	-	2,688,773	2,802,082
Deferred capital contributions	-	-	24,209,586	24,209,586	24,558,551
	(32,395)	3,163,641	76,325,816	79,457,062	78,883,344
Net assets					
Internally restricted funds	1,912,073	-	-	1,912,073	1,099,257
General fund	-	-	3,664,066	3,664,066	4,293,154
Total	\$ 1,879,678	\$ 3,163,641	\$ 79,989,882	\$ 85,033,201	\$ 84,275,755

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Overview

Information for this briefing was drawn directly from financial statements audited by the Chartered Professional Accountants of KPMG. However, this briefing summary itself has not been audited. The full package of audited financial statements is available by request via info@phs.ca.

The Board of Directors requested a truncated version of the audit report for the membership of the society.

Thank you to the business community

Your support gives comfort and dignity to people experiencing homelessness



Our sheltering staff provide a change of weather-suitable clothing to people experiencing homelessness.

This clothing, essential to the dignity and comfort of folks needing shelter, comes through donations.

Footwear comes courtesy of Forerunners, which has four locations serving Vancouver-area runners. The store invited customers to donate shoes when purchasing new ones.

Forerunners has provided more than 500 pairs of running shoes over the past year in donations greatly appreciated by community members in need.

“We feel good these gently worn shoes that are still usable can help people that need them, so they aren’t being thrown into landfills,” said store co-founder Karen Butler.

“We feel that donating these shoes to PHS is a win-win!”

**JASMINE PHEASEY
SHOWS DONATED
RUNNING SHOES**

Give a gift today

Every financial gift we receive impacts and improves the lives of those who are in need within the community we serve.

For information on how to make a tax-deductible gift, please contact us at **donations@phs.ca**.

“Together, we make our community a stronger, more resilient and healthier place.”

**9 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1M9
604-683-0073 | info@phs.ca | www.phs.ca**

**MARY, THE IN-HOUSE ELDER
FOR PHS-FUNDED
INDIGENOUS HEALTH
SERVICES, DEMONSTRATING
CEDAR WEAVING**



PHS Community Services Society: housing, healthcare, harm reduction & health promotion