



## Get the facts on supportive housing!

### What is Supportive Housing?

- Supportive housing enables people to transition to more stable, independent living by providing longer-term housing with individualized support services.
- Supportive housing is not temporary “crisis” housing but provides homes to those who require additional supports to progress with positive changes in their lives and maintain their housing
- Supportive housing units are self contained suites including a kitchenette and bathroom, and shared amenities such as laundry facilities, and meeting spaces.
- Staff are on site at the housing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and know each tenant well. Support staff address behaviours that may negatively impact the local neighbourhood and refer tenants to other offsite community services such as counselling, employment searches, skill-building, educational opportunities, and treatment services
- Existing agencies in the community who provide treatment services are committed to collaborating with the agency operating the housing to find the most appropriate treatment services for tenants when needed.
- Research and examples across the country show that supportive housing works because it is a combination of engagement, outreach, medical care, mental health care, case management, life skills training and referrals to other services in the community.

### Who is housed in supportive housing?

- People of all ages and genders may require supportive housing
- Some residents may be living with mental health and substance use challenges, and some may be experiencing other barriers that have influenced their ability to acquire and maintain housing.
- Before entering supportive housing, prospective tenants are assessed to ensure they are eligible, and understand and agree to the expectation for participation and behaviour.
- The supports residents receive will be individualized to their goals and stable housing is a precursor to achieving their goals.
- There is no fixed time for people to be in supportive housing and they are encouraged to move to stable, independent housing when they are ready.

### What will the supportive housing building be like?

- The building will be a three-story modular (factory built) structure with 46 units of supportive housing. These studio units will include a bathroom, kitchenette and will be safe, secure and self-

contained. There will be shared amenity spaces such as laundry facilities and meeting space. It will have covered outside space on the property for residents.

## How might supportive housing affect the neighbourhood?

- Supportive housing apartment buildings have been successfully integrated into many neighbourhoods in other communities in BC and across Canada.
- Prevention is an important part of keeping neighbourhoods safe, and the staffing associated with supportive housing results in adequate surveillance to ensure safety of the tenants and neighbours, and to discourage unwanted activity coming into the buildings.
- A Community Advisory Committee consisting of residents of the neighbourhood, and including those who live in supportive housing, will be formed to assist with successful integration of the housing into the neighbourhood. The Committee will be formed during the design and construction phase and will continue with regular meetings to address and remedy any neighbourhood concerns about the operation of the site.
- Research shows that property values do not decrease, and crime does not increase in neighbourhoods with supportive housing<sup>1</sup>. Those living in supportive housing want to be there and take great care of their home, and neighbourhood.

## What are the impacts of supportive housing?

- Research shows some common themes regarding success of supportive housing.<sup>2</sup>
  - For tenants:**
    - Housing is maintained
    - Health outcomes improve and drug use decreases
    - Tenants engage in their community in a meaningful way (volunteering, employment, taking a class)
    - Social networks are developed
    - Personal goals are achieved
    - Problems are solved more independently
    - Tenants feel safe in their units, building and neighbourhood
    - Life skills are developed.
  - For neighbourhoods:**
    - Tenants develop a sense of community and integrate into neighbourhood
    - Building is stable with a calm atmosphere
    - Minimal complaints from neighbours.
    - Existing neighbourhood concerns are alleviated not exacerbated (ie: tenting, needles, inappropriate behaviour reduced)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/supportive-housing-in-your-neighbourhood.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> [www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/transition-from-homelessness/defining-success-for-supportive-housing-projects-in-bc&sortType=sortByDate](http://www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/transition-from-homelessness/defining-success-for-supportive-housing-projects-in-bc&sortType=sortByDate)