Mount Tolmie Hospital

Temporary Shelter

Revised June 22, 2021

What's happened?

People living at the Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre arena have been moved to Mount Tolmie Hospital and other housing sites. BC Housing's lease of the Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre temporary shelter could not be extended.

To ensure no one was displaced and ended up back out on the streets, BC Housing will be using the Mount Tolmie Hospital in Saanich as a temporary shelter until the end of the year.

Why this location? Does it need rezoning?

The new temporary shelter is located at the decommissioned Mount Tolmie Hospital site, located at 3690 Richmond Road in Saanich. This site was selected was available, close to amenities, and the temporary shelter usage fits with the existing zoning. Temporary shelter with support services aligns with the existing zoning which allows for such uses as hospitals, nursing homes and congregate housing.

What happens at the end of the year? Will the lease be extended?

Our immediate focus is ensuring people living in the arena have safe, secure and accommodation. The future use of Mount Tolmie Hospital is yet to be determined

Who will be living in the temporary shelter?

Shelter guests have come from the Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre arena. If any shelter guests not from the arena are placed at Mount Tolmie Hospital, they will go through BC Housing's Coordinated Access and Accommodation process.

Who will operate Mount Tolmie Hospital?

PHS Community Services Society, an experienced non-profit operator, has been operating the shelter at the Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre arena and they will also operate the shelter at Mount Tolmie. Keeping the same operator will help shelter guests move and settle more easily. Many of the arena guests have been living together successfully for many months and have built relationships with each other and PHS staff.

PHS Community Services Society will operate the building and provide support services including daily meals, access to sanitary and hygiene facilities, and storage for belongings. Staff will also provide residents with access and referral to health and wellness programs.

What is provided at a shelter like this one?

Typically, a shelter of this type would provide:

- 24/7 staffing
- Onsite meals
- Access to laundry services, storage space and fenced outdoor space
- Hygiene facilities (shower and bathrooms)
- Sleeping pods that include a bed, mattress, side table and privacy walls for ease of cleaning and to reduce the spread of COVID, as well as being a more respectful way to provide shelter space
- Space for other service providers, like Island Heath, MSDPR, etc. to come in and provide services
- Harm reduction supplies and support within the shelter

What is being done to ensure the safety of staff, shelter guests and neighbours?

We are committed working with the community and our partners, including the District of Saanich, Island Health, and our non-profit operator PHS Community Services Society to foster a safe and inclusive community for everyone.

STAFFING: A minimum of two staff will be on-site 24/7 to support residents, manage building operations and be available to respond to concerns in a timely manner. During daytime hours several staff will be on hand, including an on-site supervisor, janitor, and supports from other partners providing specialized services.

TRAINING: Non-profit operators are required to ensure all staff have the appropriate skills, qualifications and training for the tasks they perform. Staff training, as required by BC Housing, includes, but is not limited to: crisis prevention training and/de-escalation training, non-violent intervention; first Aid/CPR; Indigenous awareness training; mental health first aid training; domestic violence and safety planning; safety for women in co-ed shelters training; substance use awareness and safety training; LGBT2Q+ awareness training; Vulnerability Assessment Tool; trauma-informed practice training; staff self care training; and BC Housing database training.

SECURITY: Non-profit staff will be onsite to respond to any concerns that may arise, working both inside the shelter space and patrolling the exterior to ensure everyone's safety and security.

SAFE CONSUMPTION SPACE: The building will be set up with the ability to provide a safe consumption space for residents only, to ensure the safety of residents who are active substance users and minimize use outside of the designated safe space.

BC HOUSING

What support services are available?

Shelter guests will have access to beds, showers, meals, staff support to help guests access community services and help with personal development plans.

GUESTS: As this is a shelter, outside guests are not permitted.

CURFEW: No, the shelter guests at Mount Tolmie Hospital are adults able to make personal choices around what time they come in at night. PHS staff will be present 24/7

DROP-IN SERVICES: No, health and support services will be provided to the shelter guests of Mount Tolmie Hospital only.

What processes are in place to ensure PHS is accountable?

Non-profit operators enter into a service agreement with BC Housing when they agree to operate a temporary shelter. This service agreement is standard across the province. Service requirements are then assessed as part of the mandatory operational and financial reviews required for all BC Housing funded non-profit operators.

As part of the service agreement, non-profit operators commit to the following:

- Provide shelter guests with appropriate accommodation as well as access to meals and hygiene supplies;
- Ensure all staff have the appropriate skills, qualifications and training for the tasks they perform;
- Maintain the property and ensure the all health, fire, building and zoning regulations are adhered to; and,
- Monitor and report on client use and outcomes.

BC Housing evaluates the non-profit operator's performance through a combination of onsite visits, community feedback, as well as operational and financial reviews. We also receive feedback from other partners who collaborate with PHS to provide supports, such as Island Health

For More Information:

Visit: https://letstalkhousingbc.ca/saanich-mount-tolmie-hospital