

Date: February 22, 2021

File No: 0390-20-AVICC

**RESOLUTION for Consideration by Delegates at the AVICC 2021 AGM & Convention
'Improved Access to Detox and Treatment Centre' – Backgrounder**

In alignment with Council's *2019-2023 Corporate Strategic Plan* and the goal of "fostering a complete community that is safe, healthy and inclusive", Council for the City of Port Alberni is submitting the attached resolution for consideration.

Just as each person's life path is unique, a route that leads to problematic substance use is also unique. Similarly, how and why a person decides to seek recovery is influenced by a variety of factors. Offering accessible and timely support to people seeking treatment for a substance use disorder directly correlates with their overall success.

Many individuals struggling with addiction report that they experience multiple barriers that produce significant challenges to linking with treatment services. Namely, placement on a waiting list is frequently mentioned as a barrier, leading some individuals to give up on treatment and to continue using, while prompting others to view sobriety during the waiting period as proof they do not need treatment.

As part of Council's commitment to be part of the solution, members sit on the board of the Port Alberni Community Action Team [CAT], a community-led initiative in response to the overdose crisis. Input from CAT's 'Lived Experience Peers' and professional members provides a unique understanding of the challenges faced by substance ill people on Vancouver Island seeking detox facilities. It is through this initiative that Council has been educated as to the impact, particularly as it relates to lost opportunities, that a lack of access to facilities presents when people seek to start the healing journey.

Thus, in alliance with CAT's position and in support of all individuals struggling with addictions, we call on the province to eliminate barriers to accessing detox beds by improving quantities of available detox beds and relaxing restrictions of facility access that require individuals to meet conditions prior to acceptance into detox programs.

The following links provide data and information in support of this resolution.

Barriers to Substance Abuse Treatment in Rural and Urban Communities: A Counselor Perspective:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3995852/>

A rapid access to addiction medicine clinic facilitates treatment of substance use disorder and reduces substance use:

<https://substanceabusepolicy.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13011-019-0250-1>

The BC Coroner's report states that on Vancouver Island there were 263 deaths in 2020, and 166 deaths in 2019 (increase of 37%).

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/statistical/illicit-drug.pdf>

Yours truly,
CITY OF PORT ALBERNI



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