

Who is PHS and What Does PHS Do?

Founded in 1993 by visionaries, PHS Community Services Society is a charitable non-profit that has become one of British Columbia's largest supportive housing operators and leaders in healthcare, harm reduction, and health promotion for Vancouver and Victoria's most vulnerable populations.

Known for tackling hard and critical work other organizations decline, PHS supports severely underserved people struggling with homelessness, mental health, and profound substance use disorder, by specializing in low-barrier services. We serve people who lack alternatives due to their physical health, mental health, behavioral issues, substance dependencies, and forensic history. We have over 1,900 units of low-barrier supportive housing and a range of services designed to be accessible to street-entrenched populations to house and help the people who otherwise fall through the cracks.

PHS is widely acknowledged as a leader in innovative harm reduction practices. Insite, our supervised consumption program, is globally recognized as North America's first legal supervised injection site. Managed in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health, Insite has seen over 4.9 million visits in the past 20 years, providing a safe space for illicit drug use without a single overdose death. Over 50 peer-reviewed studies have demonstrated that Insite saves lives, improves health and facilitates connections to medical care, housing and social services.

Other PHS essential low-barrier community services include a medical clinic, affordable dentistry, supportive recovery programs, a credit union branch with over 7,000 members (in partnership with Vancity), a managed alcohol program and a food program that prepares over 2,250 meals daily in Vancouver and Victoria.

PHS is a pioneer in the prescribed supply of medical-grade alternatives to unregulated street drugs. We have developed clinical programs that have created new approaches to preventing drug poisoning and overdose deaths.

Although not an Indigenous organization, PHS has Indigenous health programming and works closely with Culture Saves Lives, offering services to inner-city Indigenous communities. As part of our reconciliation efforts we've sponsored an extremely low-barrier grant program for Indigenous individuals to travel to home communities for important cultural and family events.

Most of our funding comes by way of government contracts for services. But our innovations, unique programs, and gap-filling efforts are not covered by government funds, and this is where we rely on donor support. In the past five years, our newly established fund development team has sought diversified funding from individuals, foundations, and corporations.

If you would like to discuss ways to partner with PHS to help serve marginalized community members, we would be delighted to meet with you. Please contact our Fund Development Manager, Kelly Nichol at kelly.nichol@phs.ca or call (778) 580-5472.