

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## New youth mental health centre secures provincial funding as part of Foundry network

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VICTORIA, BC | Victoria's brand new youth-focused mental health hub is set to become BC's next Foundry location, securing long-term operational funding from the province as it joins this growing network of integrated health and social service centres for young people.

"Youth get access to life-changing health care, mental health and addictions services, and social services – all under one roof in Foundry centres," said Minister of Mental Health and Addictions Judy Darcy.

"There is nothing more pressing than ensuring that young people get the support they need to take them through life's challenges, and Foundry makes it inviting and easy for youth and their families to get the help they need."

Construction of the centre began in June after Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island announced its plans to invest \$3 million dollars in a revolutionary new mental health care facility for young people and their families in downtown Victoria. Since that announcement, Victoria has been identified as the latest community to join the Foundry network thanks to a strong endorsement from Island Health."

"It's a sad reality that at a time in their lives when young people should be making friends and gaining independence, many are instead struggling with mental-health and substance-use challenges," said Minister of Children and Family Development Katrine Conroy. "The new Foundry centres provide a warm, safe and inviting place for youth to come, ask for help and get the supports and services they need to get back on the road to health."

As a Foundry centre, new ongoing provincial funding will build on and expand services to reflect the Foundry model and provide young people ages 12-24 with enhanced access to primary care, mental health and substance use services, social services and family and youth peer supports.

"One in five youth need help with a mental health or substance use issue, yet as few as 20 per cent have access to mental health services right now," says Bill Snell, chair of the Foundation's board. "We consistently heard that access to professional services before going into crisis remains the number one barrier to mental health for Island youth today, so bringing the city's core mental health experts and resources together under one roof was our top priority."

“This provincial funding is an incredible gift to the centre’s partners and a testament to the value Foundry Victoria will bring to Island families.”

Located at 818 Douglas Street, Foundry Victoria builds on the Victoria Youth Clinic’s long-standing history and leadership in providing health services to the region. As a Foundry centre, this facility will be a one-stop shop, expanding the services currently offered by the Victoria Youth Clinic, NEED2 Suicide Prevention Education & Support, Island Health and other community partners to transform the way primary healthcare and mental health and substance use services are provided to the city’s youth.

“Foundry takes a prevention and early intervention approach, helping overcome gaps and barriers in systems so young people and their families can access the support they need, when they need it—and not have to re-tell their story over and over,” says Dr. Steve Mathias, Foundry’s executive director. “Working together as a single network means that each Foundry centre will be able to efficiently scale new services and resources as mental health support for youth continues to evolve in our province.”

The Victoria Youth Clinic team, which includes counseling support from the Ministry of Child and Family Development and Island Health’s Discovery Youth and Family Services, and NEED2 are now operating out of the new space. Island Health’s Early Psychosis Intervention teams will be moving in later this fall and further services and supports will be phased in as the centre develops. The new Foundry centre will receive \$500,000 annually in provincial funding for operations as well as at least \$400,000 through government and philanthropic funds for initial establishment costs. Foundation donors will continue to support a range of programming within the facility, including enhanced collaboration with more than 120 community partners, while Island Health will continue to support physician funding within the clinic space.

“You can do so much more when you work together, building relationships that advance the total wellbeing of every youth you serve,” says Barb Thompson, executive director of the Victoria Youth Clinic – the lead agency of Foundry Victoria. “Taking a team approach across agencies—across systems, frankly—will let us better define the true needs of each client and then address them from multiple disciplines. It’s simply the most responsible way to support the healthcare needs of youth on Vancouver Island.”

Foundry Victoria is one of six sites now open across the province, joining locations in Vancouver (Granville and the North Shore), Kelowna, Campbell River and Prince George.

Services at the Victoria location will include an interdisciplinary team of dedicated youth-focused general practitioners, nurses, mental-health and substance-use clinicians, social workers and counselors, trans peer support and counseling, outreach/inreach workers, youth and family peer support and navigation workers, youth and guardianship workers, income and housing assistance and supported employment support.

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**Foundry** removes barriers and increases access to care by developing a province-wide network of wellness centres for young people ages 12-24. Foundry centres provide a one-stop-shop for young people to access mental health care, substance use services, primary care, social services and youth and family peer supports. By bringing together a variety of health and social services under one roof and working in partnership with young people and families, Foundry is helping BC's young people get the help they need when they need it. Hosted by Providence Health Care, Foundry is supported by the Government of British Columbia, Graham Boeckh Foundation, Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research and St. Paul's Foundation. Foundry Victoria is operated by Victoria Youth Clinic and includes more than 80 community partners. To learn more visit [www.foundrybc.ca](http://www.foundrybc.ca).

**Children's Health Foundation** of Vancouver Island is a registered charity that has raised funds to support children with disabilities and health challenges across Vancouver Island and the surrounding Gulf Islands for the past 90 years. The Foundation believes that all children deserve to reach their full potential, working with like-minded donors to transform the way care is delivered to Island children and families as close to home as possible. The Foundation owns and operates Jeneece Place and funds several trail-blazing health projects, including Her Way Home and Pathways to Healing. In April 2017, the Foundation announced a historic Island-wide \$3.2 million investment in community programs that will support more than 32,000 children, youth and families from Victoria to Port Hardy.

**The Victoria Youth Clinic** is a non-profit registered charity that has been providing an integrative multi-disciplinary approach to youth health care since 1998. The clinic team is dedicated in ensuring that youth have a safe and youth -friendly space where they can access appropriate and timely health care and social services. The youth clinic partners with community and government to advocate for youth, provides a resource to the community and participates in research, teaching and ongoing education. Referrals can be self-made or through the traditional health and social services sectors, schools and through other community supports.