

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## TRANSFORMING SUPPORTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN PENTICTON

December 15, 2017

Penticton, B.C. | Penticton is the next community in B.C.'s interior to join the Foundry network, thanks to provincial funding, and donations and support from the community. This investment will provide young people ages 12-24 with integrated health and social services.

“The emotional wellbeing of our youth is critical, and we want to make sure young people have the resources in place that will help them develop the resilience to deal with life’s challenges,” said Mental Health and Addictions Minister Judy Darcy. “By adding Penticton to the Foundry network, we’re helping more youth and their families get access to life-changing supports and services that will help them live a healthier life – physically and mentally.

The centre, to be known as Foundry Penticton, will offer easy access to core services including primary care, mental health and, substance use services, sexual health, youth and family peer support and navigation, housing, supported employment, income assistance and education supports. Access to integrated services will help improve the health and social outcomes of young people aged 12 to 24 years in the community.

“Our Child and Youth Mental Health Intake clinic for both younger children and youth will be co-located with the Penticton Foundry location and provide a range of mental health and substance-use services,” said Minister of Children and Family Development Katrine Conroy. “Young people living with mental health issues really benefit from this type of one-stop access to treat the whole person, physically, emotionally and mentally. It’s the kind of comprehensive intervention that can change lives.”

Penticton & District Community Resources Society (PDCRS) will be the local agency that develops the centre with youth, families, government and community organizations. The centre is anticipated to be operational and accepting clients by fall 2018.

“By offering a variety of wellness services in one place, Foundry centres will help eliminate the stigma that can be associated with accessing help so we can reach young people earlier,” says Dr. Steve Mathias,

executive director of Foundry. “We want to help young people address small issues before they become big ones.”

A key factor for Penticton securing provincial support for Foundry Penticton was the advocacy efforts of local youth with the YES (Youth Engagement Strategy) Project and more than 20 community partners who made commitments to participate in service delivery.

“The Foundry experience has been successful in other communities,” said Executive Director Tanya Behardien. “Many youth who struggle with mental-health challenges and other complex issues face significant barriers to getting the help they need. We look forward to working with partners to create a centre where improved access to health and social services makes all the difference in the trajectory of young peoples’ lives.”

In 2017/18, the Ministry of Health provided \$200,000 to each regional health authority to support the establishment of Foundry’s five additional centres, for a total of 11 centres in the province. In addition to Ministry funding, Penticton & District Community Resources Society will receive \$200,000 in one-time philanthropic funding for a total \$400,000 in establishment support; and the organization is currently working with the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen and other local partners to complete establishment costs and ensure Foundry Penticton meets the unique needs of its community.

We are excited that Foundry Penticton will be a long-term, anchor tenant in the new Penticton Youth Centre,” said Aaron McRann, Executive Director with the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen. “This represents a milestone for our community’s journey of collaborating to build better services for our youth. The Youth Centre building, attracting Foundry to Penticton, the engagement of youth through the YES Project—these are all things that have taken community effort to achieve.”

The Community Foundation has launched a \$3 million campaign to ensure the new resource centre meets the unique needs of young people and their families in Penticton. To date, the campaign has raised \$910,000 and people wishing to help build a better future for our youth can learn more at [www.cfso.net](http://www.cfso.net).

Foundry Penticton joins other centres launched in Kelowna, Vancouver (Granville and North Shore), Prince George, and Campbell River as well as those in development in Victoria, Abbotsford and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows.

## **About Penticton & District Community Resources**

For more than 50 years, PDCRS is a social services organization providing a range of community programs and services for individuals and families at every stage of life in the South Okanagan/Similkameen. The organization helps over 600 people daily in more than 40 programs in 15 communities. The society's services are organized in four strategic pillars: Child Care & Support Services; Youth & Family Services; Community Living Services for Adults with Developmental Disabilities; and Community Development.

## **About Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen**

Since 1991, the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan | Similkameen has been working to build healthy, vibrant and livable communities across the South Okanagan Similkameen. The Foundation has granted more than \$3.8 million to local causes. Through additional programs like the YES Project, Vital Signs, 100 Women & 100 Men Who Care, Just in Case Planning Seminars, grant writing workshops, and Neighbourhood Small Grants, the Community Foundation is working to build a smarter, more caring community.

## **About Foundry**

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. To learn more visit: [www.foundrybc.ca](http://www.foundrybc.ca).

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