



# Complex Care Housing Services

IN INTERIOR HEALTH

**Complex care housing is part of the [Belonging in B.C.](#) strategy to support people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.**

## **What is complex care housing?**

Complex care housing provides a combination of housing plus a cross-section of health services, integrated into one team. The team meets people where they are and works to support them in ways they feel serve them best.

Health care, social services and non-profit housing providers deliver wrap-around care for adults 19 and older living with overlapping mental health and/or substance use challenges and other health needs.

Services are delivered seven-days-a-week. The programming is culturally responsive, takes a harm-reduction approach and respects the personal choices, natural supports and diverse cultures and lifestyles of the people it serves.

Across the province, complex care housing is being implemented in a range of housing types. Interior Health (IH) has implemented a model in Kelowna and Kamloops with smaller, congregate living sites that range from four to 12 rooms. This service began in Kelowna and Kamloops in 2023 and will expand in each community. Twenty more complex care spaces are coming to both Kelowna and Kamloops.

## **Are complex care beds open?**

- Yes, complex care housing is open in both Kelowna and Kamloops with 20 spaces in each community.
- Potential clients are identified through IH Mental Health and Substance Use services, local acquired brain injury programs, outreach nursing staff, other partners, and our contracted provider. An intake committee then prioritizes clients who meet the eligibility criteria according to greatest need, and those individuals who face chronic challenges in experiencing homelessness.

## **What kind of support is provided?**

- Medication-management support
- Psychosocial-rehabilitation supports
- Indigenous-specific services
- Recreational and leisure activities
- Life-skills support and skill development
- Harm-reduction approach

## **Who will deliver these services?**

- Housing-support providers
- Nurses
- Social workers
- Occupational therapists
- Health-care workers
- Peer and cultural support workers
- Psychiatrists
- Addiction-medicine physicians
- Nurse Practitioners



## Eligibility criteria

- Complex care is meant to serve adults (19 years and older) living with serious mental health and/or substance use challenges and other health issues that severely impact function and ability to maintain housing. A formal diagnosis is not required.
- Individuals whose needs are not met by existing supportive housing that are homeless (unsheltered or sheltered) or are precariously housed, including:
  - Those with unstable tenancy/residency in market or subsidized housing
  - Those with no fixed address
  - Those living in in-patient or transition services that are likely to be discharged to homelessness or housing that lacks appropriate supports
  - Those living in or recently discharged from the corrections system
  - Those who have had frequent stays in institutional health-care settings (e.g. acute or tertiary care, forensics)
- Individuals who would benefit from access to round-the-clock, 24/7 mental-health or substance-use services and/or functional supports.

## Other eligibility considerations:

- Wherever possible, functional need should be the focus of referral and assessment rather than confirmed diagnosis. There are persistent gaps or delays for services that can provide a formal diagnosis. Reliance on formal diagnosis can disproportionately exclude people who are the most disengaged from care and who experience systemic barriers to services.
- Priority populations:
  - First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people
  - People who identify as black, Indigenous or people of colour
  - Young adults (19-26), particularly those that meet the eligibility criteria and are transitioning from government care to independence
  - Women, families
  - 2SLGBTQ+
  - Seniors (65+)

## Where can I learn more about Complex Care Housing?

- Read our [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Visit [Complex Care Housing](#) (*Government of BC website*)
- Read our announcements:
  - [Supports increased for people with complex care needs](#)
  - [Interior Health prepares to open first complex care homes in Kamloops and Kelowna](#)
  - [New complex care housing approved, coming soon for Kelowna](#)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is the goal of complex-care housing?

- Complex-care housing is housing with health care onsite designed to support people who live with significant mental health and substance use, and/or medical challenges that result in difficulty finding and maintaining housing. Complex-care housing has 24/7 staff who get to know residents and their needs so they can support them with comprehensive, person-centred services.

- Housing is a first step towards improving overall health and that is the overarching intent of these homes for vulnerable individuals in Kelowna and Kamloops.

#### **Where are the complex-care homes located?**

- In neighbourhoods in Kelowna and Kamloops.

#### **How many people do the homes support?**

- Up to twelve and as few as four individuals will have a home and access to health-care services at each location. The number of individuals depends on the complexity of their individual needs and staffing.

#### **Why were these locations chosen?**

- The homes had the appropriate layout and number of rooms and were available for this initiative. Selected locations are centrally located near additional services and in a part of the community familiar to the individuals we believe will benefit from housing and service supports.
- Having homes located in residential neighbourhoods provides a sense of normalcy that is integral to success.

#### **Does IH own the building?**

- No. IH is overseeing health services at the locations.

#### **What services are provided on site?**

- IH provides a range of health-care services on site, including nursing, occupational therapy, and social work. An IH cultural worker (Indigenous) and a peer-support worker provide support from a lived-experience perspective and offer further supports.
- A contracted partner provides life-skills training and support, including activities of daily living such as cooking, cleaning, and shopping, psychosocial rehabilitation and education, preparation for independent living and support to access education and employment.

#### **Should neighbours be concerned?**

- No. Services at this location are provided on site from skilled clinicians who are familiar with the needs of these vulnerable individuals.
- This is the client's home and we know that when individuals, even those with complex needs, have that sense of ownership, they are more prone to care for the property and be respectful of the neighborhood.
- Residents of this home are expected to be good neighbours and good room mates. Staff will work with them to understand those expectations.

#### **Will there be security on site?**

- No security will be on site. The homes will be regularly monitored by 24/7 staff.
- A Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment has been completed for each site which has informed some of the minor tenant improvements that were focused on safety and crime prevention.

#### **How long can people live there?**

- Complex care housing does not have a specific length of stay. In some cases, clients may stay indefinitely. In other cases, having access to this housing will support clients to stabilize their health and be able to reintegrate into society and find alternate housing.

#### **Can people use drugs at this home?**

- Housing is a critical determinant of health and can be the first step in supporting people to improve other aspects of their lives. This is considered the individual's home, and we are taking a harm-reduction approach, which we know is integral to recovery.
- Our priority is to ensure that clients have access to appropriate substance-use services and supports, and that we maintain a safe environment for clients and the staff who are working on site.

- IH is committed to being a good neighbour and fostering a supportive and recovery-oriented environment.

**Will this site support detox?**

- No. Withdrawal management is a targeted, time-limited service that requires medical oversight. This is not a dedicated withdrawal-management facility, but, as we would with anyone living in the community, we can link clients to substance-use services, including withdrawal management, if appropriate.
- Clients will be offered safe-supply, opioid-agonist treatment and other health services.

**Are there plans for additional complex care housing homes?**

- Yes. Both Kelowna and Kamloops will be expanding the existing complex care housing services. The expansion is planned to add another 20 complex care housing spaces in each community to bring the total to 40 for each community.