

Partnership in Action

Interior Health and ASK Wellness

Bob Hughes, CEO, ASK Wellness Society

Debi Morris, MHSU Network Director, IH

Feb 16, 2022



Interior Health



Wellness Society

ASKWELLNESS.CA

Streets → Homes → Health → Employment

About ASK Wellness

- VISION: To work towards a society that recognizes the value and potential of each individual.
- HISTORY: ASK has been providing client-centered services for 30 years for the marginalized and persons at risk, offering a variety of support programs across a continuum of Streets, to Homes, to Health, to Employment.
- Services re. housing, substance use, mental health, harm reduction, health education, supports for those with developmental disabilities, and employment opportunities.
- ASK has long contracted services including Population Health, Acquired Brain Injury, and through Mental Health and Substance Use in the Thompson/Nicola region.



Complex needs in complex times

- Dual public health emergencies
- Homelessness, substance use and mental health are an area of focus for Interior Health communities
- Combining health, housing and social services under one roof
- With respect, advocacy and a client-focused approach ASK and IH come together in the intersection of these complex issues



Drug checking at ASK. Photo: Levi Landry



Examples of innovation

- 2012: Adult Addictions Supportive Housing – *located in Kamloops and Merritt*
- 2016: Overdose Prevention Services - *established in 10 days*
- 2020: T-iOAT program - *developed in partnership with IH and delivered by ASK as COVID 19 impacts arrived*
- 2020/2022: COVID Isolation Services – *serving vulnerable populations*



Collective impacts

- Collaborative client centred approach
- Daily collaboration with ASK providing life-skills and housing and IH staff leading clinical care
- Reduced hospitalization with community based care
- Critical partnership facing opiate, homelessness, and pandemic concurrently
- ASK has expanded its housing portfolio to currently provide 735 units of housing across Kamloops, Merritt, and Penticton



Future focus

- Efforts to improve pathways from homelessness and substance misuse to recovery and community engagement
- Higher rates of engagement in OAT therapies
- Improved community understanding of partnership and mutual objectives



Spero House Supportive Housing, Kamloops



Questions?



Interior Health



Wellness Society

ASKWELLNESS.CA

Streets → Homes → Health → Employment