

For Immediate Release | March 3, 2021

Interior Health adds youth substance use treatment beds in Kelowna

KELOWNA — Interior Health has awarded a contract for 10 substance use treatment beds for youth to The Bridge Youth & Family Services Society in Kelowna.

“So that young people and their families get the mental health and substance use care they need, our government is bringing new youth addictions beds to the Okanagan, the first of many we’re establishing across the province this year,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “I’m grateful to The Bridge for their dedication and commitment to supporting youth during two public health emergencies.”

The new beds will open this spring and are part of the Province’s commitment to double the number of youth substance use beds available in B.C.

“Interior Health is pleased to work with The Bridge Youth & Family Services Society to bring these vital services to Kelowna,” said Susan Brown, president and CEO of Interior Health. “With these new beds, young people will be able to access high quality inpatient treatment closer to home.”

Inpatient treatment beds provide a short-term “live in” environment with daily programming to address the underlying causes of a person’s substance use.

“Today’s announcement is a cause for celebration as we move forward together to offer a live-in resource for young people experiencing addiction,” said Celine Thompson, The Bridge Youth & Family Services Society’s executive director. “We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our community and we are looking forward to working with Interior Health and the provincial government to deliver this life-saving service in the Okanagan.”

On August 13, 2020, the Province announced it would be doubling youth substance use beds throughout B.C. The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions committed to implementing 123 new beds across the province as part of the 10-year strategy [Pathway to Hope](#).

For more information about substance use services in Interior Health, visit www.interiorhealth.ca.

Quick facts:

- Inpatient treatment beds are one piece of a continuum of care for addiction issues. Others include outpatient-based treatment and withdrawal management. It is important to have a range of services available as each person’s experience with addiction is unique, as is their experience of recovery.
- The new beds will be available for youth living in Interior Health between the ages of 12-18 who have significant and complex substance use challenges, who have not been successfully supported through less-intensive treatment.

Interior Health is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and providing a wide range of quality health-care services to more than 801,000 people living across B.C.’s vast interior. For more information, visit www.interiorhealth.ca, follow us on Twitter [@Interior_Health](#), Instagram [@interiorhealthbc](#) or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/interiorhealth.ca.

The [Bridge Youth & Family Services Society](#) is a not-for-profit, registered charity that has provided innovative and quality programming to the children, youth and families of the Central Okanagan since 1969. Governed by a committed board of directors, led by a seasoned executive director, and supported by a team of more than 100 professional staff and volunteers, the organization has consistently demonstrated its capacity to meet the needs of the community it serves.

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