

# Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

## 2023/24 Annual Service Plan Report

August 2024



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## Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions 2023/24 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2023/24 – 2025/26 Service Plan published in 2023. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Whiteside". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Honourable Jennifer Whiteside  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
August 6, 2024

## Table of Contents

Minister's Accountability Statement .....	3
Letter from the Minister .....	5
Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report .....	7
Strategic Direction.....	7
Purpose of the Ministry.....	7
Operating Environment.....	8
Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results .....	8
Financial Report.....	22
Appendix A: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities.....	23

## Letter from the Minister

People in B.C. continue to face unprecedented challenges that impact their mental health. This ministry was created in 2017 to close gaps in mental health and substance use care and build a more connected system that truly meets the needs of people and communities. Since then, we have expanded access for people with a sharp focus on early intervention, prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery services. Building out this continuum of care has never been more important. Budget 2023 invested a historic \$1 billion toward expanding programs and services for mental health and addictions across the entire sector.

In 2023/24, we launched the made-in-B.C. Road to Recovery model. This model provides seamless, integrated care for people throughout their recovery journey addressing long-standing gaps in addictions care. We increased access and improved the quality of bed-based substance-use treatment and recovery services by expanding detox services, virtual addiction medicine services, outpatient and rapid access addiction clinics, and improved access to medication-assisted treatment including opioid agonist treatment (OAT). We also opened nearly 100 new publicly funded community adult substance use treatment and recovery beds with no out-of-pocket fees for all in British Columbia, with many more to come.

Harm reduction measures like drug checking and overdose prevention not only save lives but also provide vital entry points to care, helping people find their pathway to recovery. This is why we scaled up harm reduction services, such as Take-Home Naloxone and other drug checking services that offer low barrier connections to treatment and other services people need. We also delivered public awareness campaigns on transit and social media, particularly targeting youth, to break down stigma and to educate people on the dangers of using drugs.

We remain committed to supporting Indigenous-led mental health and wellness approaches to address the deep and ongoing impacts of colonialism, racism, intergenerational trauma, and gaps in the existing system of care. As part of the Province's efforts to expand access to mental-health and addictions care, we have been working with the First Nations Health Authority and Indigenous communities across the province to support the delivery of Indigenous-led, culturally appropriate services. This included funding for Indigenous Treatment, Recovery and Aftercare Services, and First Nations-led treatment centres like the Orca Lelum Youth Wellness Centre in Duncan.

We continued to work urgently to build a fully connected system of mental health and addictions supports for youth and young people, so more young people can get the care they need earlier, before problems become larger roadblocks. This included increased treatment options for youth, crisis supports, culturally safe wraparound services, enhanced transition services and improved emergency room, hospital-based care, and discharge planning for treatment and recovery services. To better support youth in crisis and to improve care and discharge planning, we launched new hospital crisis response teams in Fraser Health. These teams are dedicated to helping youth with mental health and addiction challenges who are admitted to emergency departments or moving from acute care transition to community-based services. These teams help young patients and their families stay connected to the

short-term and long-term supports they need in their community, providing more comprehensive care throughout their healing journeys.

To reach more young people, we also expanded Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) teams across 12 school district communities in 2023/24 to provide mental-health and addictions care to children and youth by bringing providers together to deliver effective and accessible services. We also committed to opening 10 more Foundry centres to provide free and confidential counselling, primary-care, sexual-health and substance use services to young people aged 12-24 and their families all under one roof. By the end of 2023/24, we had established plans for ICY teams in 20 communities and 35 Foundry centres across the province.

For adults with complex needs, there is now more high-quality, team-based care available through 446 Complex Care Housing (CCH) spaces. CCH offers voluntary and person-centered health, cultural, and social supports all under one roof, and where people live, for as long as they need it. This innovative program is designed to address the needs of people who have overlapping mental health and addiction issues, complex functional needs, and other significant health challenges that affect other areas of their lives, such as brain injuries or mobility impairments. Throughout 2023/24, we continued to support the work being done by the BC Consensus on Brain Injury and scaling up services for people living with brain injury related to an overdose through new programs like the Cognitive Assessment and Rehabilitation for Substance Use program (CARSU). This program helps people living with brain injury and their support persons develop a thorough understanding of their unique needs and limitations, and links them to rehabilitation supports to improve their quality of life.

We are committed to creating an integrated system of mental health and addiction services to support everyone in British Columbia. Given the ongoing toxic drug crisis, it is critical that we do all we can to keep people alive and connect them to care. We will continue to work across the continuum to ensure people have the access to the right care at the right time and in the right place. We know there is more to do, and we are taking action to deliver the programs and services that people need wherever they are in their journey.



Honourable Jennifer Whiteside  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
August 6, 2024

## Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

This annual service plan report has been developed to meet the requirements of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets stated in the service plan for the reported year.

## Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2020 and Minister Whiteside's 2022 [Mandate Letter](#) shaped the goals, objectives, performance measures and financial plan outlined in the [Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions 2023/24 – 2025/26 Service Plan](#) and the actual results reported on in this annual report.

## Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (the Ministry) leads the Province of British Columbia (B.C.) in efforts to improve the mental well-being and reduce substance use-related harms for all people in B.C. The Ministry has overall responsibility for the development of a coherent, accessible, and culturally safe mental health and addictions system that is effective for individuals and families throughout the province. The Ministry is responsible for leading and accelerating B.C.'s response to the toxic drug crisis. The Ministry also works in collaboration with other agencies to strengthen social supports and services that impact mental health and problematic substance use (for example, housing, employment, poverty reduction, education, childcare, and workplaces). The Ministry leads the transformation of B.C.'s mental health and substance use system by setting the strategic direction for the Province through cross-sector planning and driving system-level improvement through research, policy development, and evaluation. To realize this mandate, the Ministry undertakes a whole-government, multi-systems approach in partnership with other ministries, First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous peoples and partners, service delivery partners, researchers, local and federal levels of government, families, youth, advocates, and people with lived and living experience.

## Operating Environment

In 2023/24, the unrelenting toxic drug crisis continued to impact every community across the country, including throughout B.C., claiming lives at an unprecedented rate. The crisis is driven by an unpredictable and highly toxic drug supply with high concentrations of fentanyl and its analogues, along with cocaine, methamphetamines and benzodiazepines.

Even as the province recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, communities continue to feel the lasting impact on mental health and wellbeing because of challenges accessing the services they needed. Access is made more difficult by other social, structural, and economic factors that impact daily lives – like climate emergencies, inflation and poverty, access to housing, food, and other basic needs. Altogether, these factors contribute to people’s increasingly complex needs for the important services the Ministry continues to develop and implement.

Indigenous people are disproportionately impacted by the toxic drug crisis. In addition, First Nations communities across Canada continued to announce findings of unmarked graves at former residential school sites in 2023/24, which serve as a disturbing public awakening to the atrocities committed at residential schools - a truth that survivors and their families have always known. Our work towards reconciliation is just beginning. The Ministry acknowledges and continues its commitment to address systemic inequities, dismantle systemic racism, focus on co-creating systems with people with lived and living experience, and upholding the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) by supporting Indigenous-led solutions identified in the [Action Plan](#).

B.C. continued work to retain and recruit people to deliver the important services needed by people in British Columbia. Supporting psychological health and safety of workers in those roles and finding new ways to recruit much needed staff is fundamental to increasing the number of qualified professionals in key communities across B.C. who provide culturally safe care that meets people where they are at.

These challenges have highlighted the urgency of the work of this Ministry, and with healthcare providers and communities, we have advanced our mandate to build a better future for everyone in B.C. More than ever, it is critical for people to have the care and support they need, when and where they need it. We are committed to continuing our work to build an integrated system of care for all people throughout the province, one full of healing and hope, where no one falls through the cracks.

## Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results

The following goals, objectives and performance measures have been restated from the 2023/24 – 2025/26 service plan. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2024/25 – 2026/27, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).



## **Goal 1: Accelerate B.C.'s response to the toxic drug crisis across a full continuum of substance use care that keeps people safe and improves the health and well-being of British Columbians.**

Improving access for British Columbians at risk of toxic drug poisonings to harm reduction services, including prescribed safer supply, remain key strategic priorities for the Ministry given that deaths due to toxic drug poisoning remain at a record high of approximately six deaths per day.

### **Objective 1.1: People at risk of toxic drug poisoning can access essential life-saving overdose prevention interventions that include harm reduction services, separating people from the toxic drug supply through using prescribed safe supply, reducing stigma, and connecting people to care and treatment.**

Increasing access to evidence-informed programs and services across the full continuum i.e., prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery that are low barrier and tailored to the unique needs of individuals and communities are critical for reducing harms associated with the toxic drug crisis.

#### **Key results:**

- Worked to reduce stigma related to drug use and addiction through decriminalization, making it easier for people to reach out and be connected to care. The Ministry and partners implemented substance use navigators and proactive outreach positions to support implementation and connect people to care.
- Launched two new public awareness campaigns in December 2023 - Supports for Substance Use – Stories, and the Youth Drug Prevention campaign.
- Continued to increase capacity for life-saving response to toxic drug poisoning events through overdose prevention sites and supervised consumption sites; virtual harm reduction services; anonymous, community-based drug checking; and the publicly funded [BC Take Home Naloxone program](#).
- Collaborated with health authorities and other health system partners to enhance prescribed alternative programs and enhanced the program's robust monitoring and evaluation plan.
- Provided \$12.5 million to the First Nations Health Authority to support Indigenous-led approaches to prevention and harm reduction, and culturally safe substance use care and treatment services, including \$8 million for initiatives to respond to the toxic drug crisis.

## Summary of progress made in 2023/24

Starting January 31, 2023, B.C. launched a pilot to decriminalize possession of illegal substances for personal use (under 2.5g) for adults to reduce the fear and shame that keeps people silent and leads so many to hide their drug use and avoid treatment and support. In 2023/24, the Ministry invested \$3.96 million in substance use navigators and proactive outreach positions in all B.C. health regions to support implementation, build relationships with law enforcement, and connect people to care. Police officers received training, and Government launched the [Building Relationships in Collaboration: Indigenous-led Connections with Police grant](#) (BRIC) to support decriminalization in culturally appropriate ways. In 2023/24, 25 BRIC grants were awarded with a total of \$500,000 in funding directly to First Nations, Métis, and Indigenous organizations. Between February and October 2023, there was a 96 percent decrease in possession related drug seizures under the 2.5g threshold amount.

In 2023/24, the Ministry engaged with and listened to communities and partners to adjust the implementation of decriminalization and heard the need for ongoing investments in the broader system of care and supports that are responsive to the diverse needs of people who use drugs. In 2023, in response to feedback from stakeholders and partners including police, local governments and community members, B.C. requested and received an amendment to the exemption to prohibit possession of illegal substances on and near playgrounds, wading pools and spray parks, and skate parks, and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General developed legislation to regulate the use of illegal substances in certain public spaces. This had not come into force by March 2024, and Government continued to engage with a broad range of partners and stakeholders to inform the future direction for decriminalization.

In December 2023, Government launched two public awareness campaigns. The first, Supports for Substance Use - Stories campaign highlights real-life stories of healing and recovery, reinforces that recovery is possible for all people no matter their circumstances, and helps people navigate to mental health and substance use services at [HelpStartsHere.gov.bc.ca](https://www.helpstartshere.gov.bc.ca) (an evolution of the web resources previous on [wellbeing.gov.bc.ca](https://www.wellbeing.gov.bc.ca)). Research indicates that people who have seen the provincial public awareness campaign were more likely to express compassion for people living with addiction and have a better understanding for the supports needed to help people find a pathway to healing. Government also launched a [Poison Drugs campaign](#) to raise awareness for youth and families of the poisoned drug supply and encouraging conversations among trusted supports. Research indicates that campaign ads effectively built awareness of the new campaign webpage with significant traffic to the site during the ongoing campaign period.

B.C. continued to scale up harm reduction services to save lives. In 2023/24, modelling estimated that between January 2015 and September 2022, 8,637 death events were avoided due to Take Home Naloxone, overdose prevention and supervised consumption services (OPS/SCS) and opioid agonist treatment (OAT) – with 1,788 death events (20 percent) averted

by OAT.<sup>1</sup> In 2023/24, the Province added 29 new [Facility Overdose Response Box](#) sites, where naloxone and supplies are available to staff who work at community and non-profit sites. The decriminalization initiative enhanced access to harm reduction supplies, enabling police departments to purchase 1,147 nasal naloxone kits to ensure frontline police officers have timely access to life-saving supplies. As of March 2024, there were 50 OPS/SCS in B.C. (5 more than March 2023), including 24 inhalation sites (4 more than March 2023); and 119 locations where people can drop off drug samples for analysis, with 57 sites offering immediate results with Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometer on some days of the week.

B.C. continued to work with health authorities and other health system partners to enhance access to prescribed alternatives<sup>2</sup> to separate more people from the toxic drug supply and enhance monitoring and evaluation of the program. In early 2024, a peer-reviewed study found that the B.C. prescribed alternatives program reduces the risk of death by as much as 91 percent in people with opioid-use disorder (OUD).<sup>3</sup> To support prescribers and increase access, the Ministry continued to fund the [BC Centre on Substance Use](#) to develop [clinical protocols](#), deliver training and education to physicians and nurses, and review emerging evidence.

The Ministry continued to fund Indigenous-led approaches to prevention and harm reduction, and culturally safe substance use care and treatment services with \$8 million in 2023/24 for the toxic drug crisis. FNHA [reports publicly](#) on the impact of First Nations-led initiatives. In 2023/24 the FNHA distributed 107 First Nations harm reduction grants, valued up to \$50,000 each. Four hundred seventy-three people completed the Not Just Naloxone Training Course, 5,672 nasal naloxone kits were distributed to 120 First Nations communities; there were 2,204 virtual sessions with psychiatrists and addictions specialists; and 1,520 First Nations Health Benefits clients were supported on suboxone and generic buprenorphine/naloxone.

The Ministry previously provided funding to support First Nations treatment centres. Tsow-Tun Le Lum Healing House was completed in November 2023 and offers 20 treatment beds and living units to support people who have experienced addiction, trauma or grief.

In 2023/24, the Ministry continued to support Métis Nation BC with another \$375,000 to support Métis-led mental health and wellness initiatives, including the development of a cultural safety and wellness curriculum and a harm-reduction and stigma-reduction campaign.

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<sup>1</sup> BC Centre for Disease Control (2024). Unpublished modeling. Methodology from Irvine, M.A. et al (2019) Modelling the combined impact of interventions in averting deaths during a synthetic-opioid overdose epidemic. *Addiction* <https://doi.org/10.1111%2Fadd.14664>.

<sup>2</sup> In February 2024, the Ministry retired the term “prescribed safer supply”, shifting to prescribed alternatives, which more accurately reflects the intervention clinicians deliver as part of a continuum of medication options for substance use care. Prescribed alternatives references prescribing medications to prevent toxic drug poisonings and death from the toxic drug supply and is often used alongside OAT as a way of managing and treating OUD.

<sup>3</sup> Slaunwhite, A. et al (2024) Effect of Risk Mitigation Guidance for opioid and stimulant dispensations on mortality and acute care visits during dual public health emergencies: retrospective cohort study. *BMJ* <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2023-076336>.

## **Objective 1.2: Support people with substance use challenges to access a range of evidence-based treatment and recovery services.**

Improving access to a well-coordinated network of evidence-based treatment and recovery services is essential to ensuring people with substance use challenges receive the support they need in their recovery journey.

### **Key results**

- Implemented the [Adult Substance Use System of Care Framework](#) by expanding access to opioid agonist treatment (OAT) and increasing access to adult substance use treatment and recovery beds and services. One hundred and ninety-six new publicly funded adult substance use beds opened in 2023/24, including the first Road to Recovery site in Vancouver.
- Budget 2023 included funding over three years towards a new program for Indigenous-led treatment, recovery, and aftercare services. Through this funding, in 2023/24 the Ministry provided funding to initiate planning and development of [Orca Lelum Youth Wellness Centre](#) in Lantzville, and engagement for Lheidli T'enneh to consult on a potential [youth centre of excellence](#) in Prince George/northern B.C.
- Undertook a comprehensive engagement process with stakeholders from the bed-based substance use treatment and recovery sector to learn more about what is working well within the current approach to oversight of treatment and recovery services, and how we can improve the safety and quality of services.

### **Summary of progress made in 2023/24**

The Ministry continued to focus on delivering evidence-based treatment and recovery services to ensure people with addictions receive the support they need in their recovery journey. B.C. undertook significant work in 2023/24 to implement the [Adult Substance Use System of Care Framework](#) including two key areas of work – expanding access and reach of OAT, and expanding access to bed-based substance use treatment and recovery services across B.C. In June 2023, B.C. became the first province in Canada to provide universal coverage for eligible OAT medications for B.C. residents with active medical services plan coverage. In November 2023, B.C. was the first province to enable registered nurses (RNs) and registered psychiatric nurses (RPNs) to prescribe OAT via a new class of certified practice. As of March 2024, 98 RNs and 38 RPNs were certified through that process, enabling better access to OAT particularly in rural and remote communities. In the month of March 2024 there were 2,063 OAT prescribers across B.C., 147 more than March 2023.

In 2023/24, the Ministry continued to make progress on building an integrated, patient-centered continuum of substance use treatment and recovery services. B.C. opened a total of 196<sup>4</sup> new publicly funded adult substance use beds in 2023/24. In 2023/24, 4,649 adults accessed bed-based substance use treatment and recovery bed-based services, 1,007 more

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<sup>4</sup> This includes 99 health authority funded beds, and 97 beds funded by Budget 2023 through grants from the Canadian Mental Health Association – BC Region.

than 2022/23. Thirty-four of the new publicly funded beds were opened at B.C.'s initial [Road to Recovery](#) site in Vancouver - a made-in-B.C. model of a seamless continuum of addictions care from withdrawal management (detox) to treatment and aftercare services for people with moderate to severe substance use disorders. A fundamental part of the Road to Recovery model is Access Central, providing people with a "front door" for a central point of access and immediate clinical assessment. Clients calling Access Central Vancouver for withdrawal management services (detox) receive a clinical assessment and same-day substance-use virtual care provided by addiction specialists and nurses, with support from referral workers. Between October 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024, Vancouver's central access line received over 9,300 calls for services, and more than 2,100 of those requested withdrawal management were clinically assessed and received same day care. The Ministry also began planning to expand this model to other health regions.

Budget 2023 provided funding to initiate planning and development of [Orca Lelum Youth Wellness Centre](#) in Lantzville – this will be a first of its kind youth wellness centre founded on culture, with 20 substance-use treatment beds that offers culturally informed care to Indigenous people aged 12 to 18 years. It also supported an engagement process for Lheidli T'enneh to consult on a potential [youth centre of excellence](#) (Prince George/northern B.C.). The Ministry continued their investment of \$10.75 million in 2023/24 to support First Nations land-based healing services grounded in cultural teachings at 81 sites across B.C., supporting 147 communities.

Budget 2023 provided funding to the Canadian Mental Health Association – BC Region to assist the Province in procuring 180 substance use treatment and recovery beds as part of the broader health system supporting treatment and recovery - 97 of which opened in 2023/24 free of charge to people in British Columbia. These beds expanded access for under-served populations, such as those in rural and remote areas, Indigenous people, people who are or have been involved with the criminal justice system, and new or pregnant parents.

In addition to investing in new services, MMHA is working to address gaps in oversight and quality of bed-based substance use treatment and recovery services in B.C. Through fiscal year 2023/24 the Ministry partnered with the [Ministry of Health's Assisted Living Registry](#) to co-develop a Provincial Oversight Policy for Registered Supportive Recovery Residences and other tools to improve oversight on-the-ground. At the same time, the Ministry provided supportive recovery operators with free access to online training to help them with implementing the [2021 Provincial Standards for Registered Assisted Living Supportive Recovery Services](#). In Fall 2023, the Ministry initiated engagement to guide next steps toward potential regulatory changes and improving sector oversight. By the end of March 2024, a total of 19 engagement sessions were complete, with feedback captured from over 100 representatives from 15 unique stakeholder groups.

Budget 2023 also committed to expanding Recovery Community Centres in all regional health authorities over the next three years. This builds off success at [The Junction Vancouver](#) which served 772 unique clients in 2023/24.

In 2023/24 the Ministry provided \$500,000 to Métis Nation BC (MNBC) to host two gatherings to create an opportunity for Métis individuals to engage in safe, Métis-led dialogue related to

substance use. The Ministry also continued to support culture-based mental health and wellness capacity for MNBC and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres with \$375,000 each annually.

### Performance measures and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Baseline	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
[1 a] Number of publicly funded naloxone kits shipped to THN distribution sites around B.C. via the BC Take Home Naloxone (THN) Program <sup>1</sup>	393,086	424,390	400,000	488,411

Data source: BC Centre for Disease Control. Retrieved from: <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Pages/Overdose-Response-Indicators.aspx>.

<sup>1</sup> PM 1a targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 400,000 and 400,000, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Based on order data for naloxone kits shipped to BC Take Home Naloxone distribution sites, based on fiscal period. Program shipping is based on orders from regional sites. Note: Naloxone has a shelf life of 2-3 years so demand for kits is driven by new kit recipients, and those replacing their kits for a variety of reasons (expired, lost, stolen, or used to reverse a toxic drug poisoning).

This measure reports on the number of THN kits that have been shipped to distribution sites across B.C. to save lives in the event of a toxic drug poisoning. In 2023/23, over 480,000 THN kits were shipped across the province, an increase of 15 percent over 2022/23 and well exceeding the 2023/24 target. Demand for THN kits remains high – 52,515 kits were to distribution sites around B.C in August 2023 alone. The THN program is part of a growing number of overdose prevention and supervised consumption services, including observed inhalation services, operating in B.C. health regions.

Performance Measure	2021/22 Baseline	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
[1b] % of people on Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) who have been retained for 12 months <sup>1,2</sup>	45.5%	44.9%	2-5% increase	44.1%

Data source: B.C. PharmaNet data. Previous to July 2023, this measure was calculated by scientists at the Centre for Advancing Health Outcomes.

<sup>1</sup> PM 1b targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 2-5% increase and 2-5% increase, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> The methodology for this measure was refined in 2023 and again in 2024 to better reflect how well people are connected to and retained in OAT in B.C. The 2021/22 Baseline was reported in the 23/24 plan as 49.9%, updated to 45.4% in the [2022/23 service plan report](#), and refined to 45.5 percent as of July 2024. The actual for 2022/23 was stated as 45.2% in the 2022/23 service plan report, refined to 44.9% as of July 2024.

This performance measure indicates the number of people on OAT for OUD who have been taking the medication consistently for 12 months dispensed through a community pharmacy. In 2023, the Ministry of Health assumed responsibility for reporting of this measure and refined the methodology to better estimate retention. This includes a shift from a point in time count at some point during the fiscal year, to a measure of the percentage of clients that had been on OAT for more than 12 months on March 31 of each year. As a result of the updated

methodology, the 2021/22 baseline was recalculated from 49.9 percent to 45.5 percent, and the 2022/23 actual was recalculated from 45.2 percent to 44.9 percent. This is consistent with how the measure was reported in the [2022/23 Ministry Annual Service Plan Report](#), and the [2024/25 Ministry Annual Service Plan](#).

The continued high concentration of fentanyl and its analogues, including the presence of benzodiazepines, in the toxic drug supply pose a challenge to initiation and retention on OAT. The 138 new registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses prescribing OAT as of March 2024 improves access to OAT in rural and remote parts of the province.

Performance Measure	2021/22 Baseline	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
[1c] Median number of days between client referral and service initiation for community bed-based treatment and recovery services <sup>1</sup>	29.5 days <sup>2</sup>	31.25 days <sup>3</sup>	TBD	31.0 days

Data source: Health authority reporting to Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and Ministry of Health.

<sup>1</sup>PM 1c targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as “TBD”

<sup>2</sup>Median number of days between client referral and service initiation reflects service wait times for health authority funded bed-based substance use treatment and recovery services but does not include withdrawal management or stabilization as these may operate quite differently than treatment and supportive recovery and some may not use waitlists or have wait times for services (e.g., if a bed is not available a prospective client is sent to their local hospital). It also does not include wait times for tertiary services such as Red Fish, Heartwood for Women and others.

<sup>3</sup>Baseline wait time for treatment and recovery beds reflects median of submitted aggregate data from Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Provincial Health Services Authority, Fraser Health Authority, Vancouver Island Health Authority (treatment beds only) and Interior Health Authority only.

<sup>4</sup>2022/23 actual wait times reflects median of submitted aggregate data from all regional health authorities with caveats (NHA reported complete data for the time period Jan. to March 2023 only; IHA reported partial data for the full fiscal year; Island Health reported partial data for supportive recovery but full data for treatment).

Wait times are one way to understand accessibility of services and wait time targets can encourage changes that reduce service waits. In 2023/24, the median wait time for substance use treatment and recovery beds in B.C. was slightly lower than the wait time recorded in 2022/23. In 2023/24, 4,649 people were served in adult substance use treatment and recovery beds, a 28 percent increase over 2022/23. This data indicates a significant improvement over the forecasted wait time of 35.0 days included in the 2024/25 Ministry annual service plan – likely due to a combination of more complete, full fiscal year data and more beds to support people when they are read.

Service providers report they must be flexible in how they manage waitlists so as not to reduce access for clients that have difficulty reaching the service. For example, clients who must travel from their home community to a service cannot access a bed as soon as it is available; this may result in the service reporting a longer wait time. Wait times can also be impacted by personal readiness to start treatment, the need for longer stabilization periods, release from custody, precarious housing/homelessness, and access to childcare. Health authorities are considering new ways to enhance support for people to access a bed as soon as it is available.

Bed-based services are only one part of a much broader continuum of substance use services. While people often think of bed-based services when contemplating treatment or recovery, not everyone wants or needs bed-based services; outpatient services are just as important to enhancing access. Health authorities and service providers support people while they wait for a bed-based service (e.g., they are connected to a mental health and substance use clinician, receiving opioid agonist treatment, etc.). The Ministry continues work to better understand these broader factors, decrease wait times and improve access to the full range of substance use services for people in B.C.

## **Goal 2: Create a seamless, integrated, accessible, and culturally safe mental health and addictions system of care.**

This goal is to improve access to a coordinated and effective mental health and addictions system for British Columbians.

### **Objective 2.1: Mental health and addictions services and supports are designed, coordinated, and delivered using a whole of government, cross-sector approach to remove barriers to mental health and well-being.**

Given the complex and multifaceted nature of mental health and substance issues, a cross-government approach is required to ensure people with mental health and/or substance use issues can access the critical supports (i.e., housing, income security) needed to improve and maintain their mental health and well-being.

#### **Key results**

- Continued to work with Indigenous partners to support Indigenous-led service delivery models for mental health and wellness, and advance cultural safety and humility across the system.
- Continued implementation of new [Complex Care Housing](#) services, with new services for 276 people open in 2023/24.
- Launched seven new Mobile Integrated Crisis Response teams to respond to people experiencing mental health crises.
- Launched [HelpStartsHere.gov.bc.ca](https://www.helpstartsbc.ca), providing a comprehensive starting place for people looking for mental health and substance use services and supports in B.C.
- Continued to add resources and training for employees and employers via Care for Caregivers, Care to Speak, and the Workplace Mental Health Hub, with more people reached by Care for Caregivers webinars and peer support through Care to Speak.



## Summary of progress made in 2023/24

The Ministry is leading the cross-government government approach to ensuring people with mental health and/or substance use issues can access critical supports.

In partnership with Northern First Nations Alliance, Northern Health Authority and the First Nations Health Authority, in 2023/24 the Ministry created the [Northwest Working Group](#) to advance discussions on more culturally appropriate resources to better serve First Nations people living with addiction in the Northwest. The working group is identifying approaches to ensure that withdrawal-management and treatment-and-recovery services for the region are culturally appropriate and meet the needs of First Nations and people living in the northwest of B.C.

Complex Care Housing (CCH) is a component of [Belonging in BC](#), the provincial plan to address homelessness led by the Ministry of Housing. In addition to ongoing implementation of services funded through Budget 2022, in 2023/24 the Ministry worked with BC Housing, health authorities, and other partners to plan the forthcoming implementation of 240 new, purpose-built CCH units announced as part of B.C.'s [Homes for People](#) plan and funded through Budget 2023.

The Ministry also delivered key results under the provincial [Safer Communities Action Plan](#), which committed to expand mobile mental health and substance use crisis response services like [Peer Assisted Care Teams](#) (PACT) and Mobile Integrated Crisis Response Teams (MICR). In 2023/24, MICR teams were launched in Abbotsford, Port Coquitlam/Coquitlam, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Penticton, Vernon, and on the Westshore. Three communities were identified for new PACTs - Kamloops, Comox Valley and Prince George.

In 2023/24 the Ministry refreshed the Wellbeing.gov.bc.ca website to create [HelpStartsHere.gov.bc](#), the new name was chosen to reflect the site's mission to provide accessible information and supports. The site features links to the Supports for Substance Use - Stories campaign to bring together stories of hope, and a pathway to recovery. Analysis indicates that people are using the site to search for services and informational articles.

In 2023/24 the Ministry continued to add resources to [www.careforcaregivers.ca](#) to support healthcare workers; and initiated work to refresh other digital tools and training that were launched during the pandemic to better meet the needs of today's workforce ([www.workmentalhealthbc.ca](#)). In 2023/24, Care for Caregivers webinars reached 436 percent more people (1720 compared to 320), and Care to Speak peer support reached 75 percent more people (741 compared to 424), than in 2022/23. Learning coaches continued to be available to assist leaders in making organizational shifts to foster employee well-being. Service users consistently reported a high degree of satisfaction with the programs.

## **Objective 2.2: Improved wellness for children, youth, and young adults.**

Children, youth, and young adults can also experience serious mental health and substance use challenges; therefore, it is critical they have access to rapid, high quality, and appropriate services and programming to support their overall well-being.

### **Key results**

- [Integrated Child and Youth \(ICY\) teams](#) began serving children and youth in three new communities in 2023/24 - Fraser-Cascade, Mission and Nanaimo-Ladysmith. At the end of March 2024, hiring and implementation continued across a total of 12 school district communities.
- Port Hardy [Foundry](#) opened in May 2023, bringing the total number of Foundry centres in B.C. to 16. The Foundry BC App platform was integrated with three in-person Foundry centres at the end of the 2023/24 (Richmond, Cariboo-Chilcotin, and Port Hardy).
- The Ministry opened 20 new youth substance use treatment beds, and partnered with the [Provincial Health Services Authority](#) to develop and release guidance for youth in acute care settings with substance intoxication and acute withdrawal, and on development of the Provincial Child and Youth Substance Use and Wellness Framework for future release.
- The Ministry worked with regional health authorities to support expansion of Early Psychosis Intervention program across the province.

### **Summary of progress made in 2023/24**

Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) Teams bring services together in a multidisciplinary team setting, making it easier for children and youth to connect to the care they need, where and when they need it – at school and in the community. The Ministry extensively engaged with community, Ministry and Indigenous partners to identify the next eight school district communities to host ICY Teams, which will bring the total number of communities to 20. Throughout 2023/24, community partners who support the implementation of ICY Teams in the first five school district communities (Phase One: Coast Mountains, Comox Valley, Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows, Okanagan-Similkameen and Richmond) enhanced cross-community knowledge sharing practices and pursued innovative solutions for implementation challenges. This work benefitted the seven communities in earlier stages of ICY Teams implementation (Phase Two: Fraser-Cascade, Kootenay-Columbia, Mission, Nanaimo-Ladysmith, North Okanagan-Shuswap, Pacific Rim and qathet), and is resulting in quicker hiring and smoother development in these communities.

Foundry is a network of integrated youth wellness centres and online supports providing welcoming, free primary care, sexual healthcare, mental health and substance use supports, peer support, and social services for young people ages 12-24 and their families. As of March 2024, Foundry centres are open in rural and urban communities across all regional health

authorities. In 2023/24, the Ministry announced 12 new communities that will host a Foundry centre, expanding access to vital health and wellness services for young people and their families to 35 centres across the province over the coming years. [Foundry Virtual](#) ensures services are available province-wide, and in 2023/24 Foundry began to integrate the Foundry BC App platform into in-person Foundry centres. Starting with Richmond, Cariboo-Chilcotin, and Port Hardy, this is expanding the range of options available for young people to access health and wellness services by enabling them to schedule in-person appointments through the Foundry BC App platform and virtual appointments via in-person Foundry centres.

In 2023/24, B.C. continued to open more services to support young people struggling with substance use across health authorities, including 20 new treatment beds for youth and young adults in Vancouver (7), Surrey (8) and Kamloops (5). The Ministry also partnered with [Child Health BC](#) and the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) to develop and release the new [Provincial Child and Youth Substance Intoxication and Withdrawal Guideline for Acute Care Settings](#) in September 2023. The guidelines promote best and wise practices across the province for health care professionals in assessment, screening, treatment initiation, and discharge planning for children and youth presenting to acute care settings with substance intoxication and acute withdrawal. Funding to [Dan's Legacy Foundation](#) provided access to more wraparound supports for young people with substance use challenges including counselling and other supports for underserved young people.

The Ministry also worked closely with regional health authorities to launch new community based-youth substance use services and expanded existing services to support more youth. Progress in 2023/24 included:

- Launch of Vancouver Coastal's Downtown Eastside Youth Outreach Centre and expansion of the outreach team, which provided temporary clinical and support services to 30 young people, and expansion of the Youth Integrated Case Management Team, which served 250 young people.
- Expansion of the Short-Term Assessment and Response Team in Fraser Health which supported 4,064 young people, and launch a new team Short-Term Assessment and Response Team in Island Health that served 224 young people.
- Launching a new Youth Substance Use Connection Worker service in Interior Health who received 532 referrals.
- Implemented a new Youth Substance Use Clinician service in Northern Health which served 186 young people.

The Ministry conducted significant engagement in collaboration with the Provincial Health Services Authority to inform a forthcoming Provincial Child and Youth Substance Use and Wellness Framework to strengthen care pathways and support coordinated, integrated, and evidence-informed youth substance use services across the province. Engagement included Indigenous partners, service system representatives, families, and over 180 young people with lived or living experience with substance use.

Government invested \$25 million in 2023/24 to continue to expand access for young people to regional evidence-based Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) programs, with specialized

multidisciplinary treatment for young people in community settings who are experiencing early signs of psychosis. Examples of progress in 2023/24 includes a 220 percent increase in reach in the Northern region (77 program enrollments compared to 24 in 2022/23); and a move into a new expanded and purpose-built space for the South Island program in Island Health.

Launched in 2023, the youth Poisoned Drugs campaign offered education and encouraged conversations about poison drugs to help create a safe place to ask questions, to find help and resources for young people and caregivers.

### Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
[2a] Number of Complex Care Housing spaces operational <sup>1</sup>	184	325	460

Data source: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

<sup>1</sup> PM 2a targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 500 and 600, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Totals are number of permanent and temporary services from active projects. Figure indicates overall system capacity and does not reflect the number of active clients at any one time.

Complex Care Housing (CCH) services enhances provincial capacity to provide high quality, team-based care for adults with complex mental health, substance use and/or functional needs who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, or whose needs are not met by their existing housing. In 2023/24, B.C. significantly exceeded the target of 325 spaces with 460 spaces operating and serving clients as of March 2024.

People will move in and out of CCH for a variety of reasons. Some services are intended to be transitional, while others are permanent, offering services for as long as people need it. Every space has the capacity to serve multiple people in a year. As such, the total number of spaces reported does not reflect the total number of clients that have accessed CCH throughout the past year.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Baseline	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
[2b] Number of communities (school districts) with Integrated Child and Youth (ICY) Mental Health and Substance Use Teams operating or in implementation	0	12	12	12

Data source: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

<sup>1</sup> PM 2b targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 20 and 20, respectively.

As of March 2024, 23 ICY teams were in implementation or operating across 12 school district communities in B.C. ICY teams in the Phase One communities saw an average of 1,420 children and youth per month between August 2023 and January 2024. Progress in 2023/24 included expanding the team composition. By March 2024 family peer support workers had been hired in all Phase One communities. In addition, the Ministry continued to support

engagement with First Nations, Métis and Inuit community partners to create an Indigenous support position that is informed by specific community needs.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Baseline	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Actual
[2c] Number of Foundry centres operating <sup>1</sup>	11	15	17	16

Data source: Internally compiled from Foundry Central Office reports, received on a quarterly basis by MMHA.

<sup>1</sup> PM 2c targets for 2024/25 and 2025/26 were stated in the 2023/24 service plan as 19 and 23, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> “Operating” refers to Foundry centres that have officially opened in communities and are actively providing services to young people and their caregivers. Target numbers do not include centres that are in development but not open.

As of March 2024, Foundry centres were providing services to youth and young adults in 16 communities - Vancouver-Granville, North Shore (North Vancouver), Campbell River, Abbotsford, Ridge Meadows, Kelowna, Prince George, Victoria, Penticton, Terrace, Comox Valley, Langley, Richmond, Cariboo-Chilcotin (Williams Lake), Sea to Sky (Squamish) and Port Hardy. In 2023/24, 16,047 youth accessed Foundry. In addition, nine new Foundry centres are in development in Burns Lake, East Kootenay (Cranbrook), Surrey, Fort St. John, Tri-Cities, Kamloops, Sunshine Coast, Vernon, and Powell River (qathet).

Foundry Burns Lake broke ground in October 2023, at a ceremony held by lead agency Carrier Sekani Family Services. The actual number of Foundry centres operating in 2023/24 is one less than the target of 17 centres, as Foundry East Kootenay experienced unexpected construction delays.

## Financial Report

The Ministry's financial results ended on target with Treasury Board approval to access the Contingencies Vote appropriation to support to funding to community organizations and increase or expand access to mental health, substance use, and treatment and recovery services.

## Financial Summary

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations <sup>1</sup> (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
<b>Operating Expenses</b>					
Policy Development, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation	22,891	61,166	84,057	80,667	(3,390)
Executive and Support Services	3,824	711	4,535	7,925	3,390
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>26,715</b>	<b>61,877</b>	<b>88,592</b>	<b>88,592</b>	<b>0,000</b>
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual <sup>2</sup>	0,000	0,000	0,000	(97)	(97)
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,715</b>	<b>61,877</b>	<b>88,592</b>	<b>88,495</b>	<b>(97)</b>
<b>Ministry Capital Expenditures</b>					
Executive and Support Services	3	0	3	0	(3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(3)</b>

<sup>1</sup> "Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the "estimated amount" under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act* for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

<sup>2</sup> The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$0.097 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

## Appendix A: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in Minister Whiteside's 2022 Mandate Letter.

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Building a comprehensive system of mental health and addictions care, including by implementing A Pathway to Hope, B.C.'s roadmap for making mental health and addictions care better for people.</p>	<p>In progress. In addition to the other progress detailed in this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since A Pathway to Hope was released in 2019, our government has continued to follow it as a roadmap to transform the sector through actions that are reflected in the mandate letter. The pillars set out in A Pathway to Hope strive for improved wellness for children, youth, and young adults, support for Indigenous-led solutions, improved access to seamless and cohesive care for substance use, and improved access to better quality mental health and substance use services and supports. The outcomes achieved and the experience gained by implementing the Pathway to Hope changes throughout the system will inform the future direction and evolution for our vision and strategy for mental health and addictions care in BC that truly meets the needs of people.</li> <li>• Seven Sisters opened at Mills Memorial Hospital in Terrace in February 2024, Seven Sisters is a regional mental-health facility that provides long-term rehabilitation and recovery programs for adults living with serious and persistent mental illness. This new facility is nearly twice the size of the previous site, with an additional 5 beds (for a total of 25). Five rooms are in apartment-type spaces to support transition to independent living.</li> </ul>

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Developing and launching complex care housing to provide an increased level of support – including more access to nurses and psychiatrists – for those with overlapping mental health, substance use, trauma, and acquired brain injuries.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As of March 31, 2024, service providers have the capacity to support 460 people through complex care housing services.</li> </ul>
<p>Taking into account the unanimous recommendations of the Select Standing Committee on Health, and with support from the Minister of Health, continue to lead and accelerate B.C.'s response to the illicit drug toxicity crisis across the full continuum of care – prevention, harm reduction, safe supply, treatment, and recovery.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B.C. continued to partner with health authorities, prescribers, and people with lived and living experience to expand access to prescribed alternatives.</li> <li>Expanded overdose prevention services - as of March 2024 there were 50 sites, with 23 sites offering inhalation services.</li> <li>Drug checking services continue to expand. As of March 2024 there were 119 drug checking locations around the province where people can drop off a drug sample for analysis, and 57 of these offer immediate results on some days of the week.</li> <li>Since 2017, B.C. has opened over 600 new adult and youth substance use beds - 238 in 2023/24.</li> <li>The Ministry continued funding for First Nations-led responses to the toxic drug response – <a href="#">First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) reports publicly on progress.</a></li> <li>In 2023/24 the FNHA distributed 107 First Nations harm reduction grants, valued up to \$50,000 each; 473 people completed the Not Just Naloxone Training Course; 5,672 nasal naloxone kits were distributed to 120 First Nations communities; 2,204 virtual sessions with psychiatrists and addictions specialists; and 1,520 First Nations Health Benefits clients were supported on suboxone and generic buprenorphine/naloxone.</li> </ul>



2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Expand new complex care, treatment, recovery, detox, and after-care facilities across the province, while building a new model of treatment offering seamless care through detox, treatment, and supportive housing so people don't fall through the cracks and can get quality care when and where they need it.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 196 new adult treatment and recovery beds opened in 2023/24.</li> <li>• 97 new beds opened in 2023/24 free of charge to people in B.C. is expanding access for under-served populations, such as those in rural and remote areas, Indigenous people, people who are or have been involved with the criminal justice system, and new or pregnant parents (implemented by Canadian Mental Health Association – BC Region).</li> <li>• Launched Road to Recovery in Vancouver, a made-in-B.C. model of addictions care that establishes a seamless continuum from withdrawal management (detox) to treatment and aftercare services. Budget 2023 supported expansion across the province.</li> <li>• Continued work to expand the recovery community centre model to a total of 6 sites across the province to ensure people continue to receive the support they need in community after leaving a substance use treatment facility.</li> <li>• Continued work to expand the Red Fish Healing Centre model of care to another site in B.C. to provide specialized care for people with serious and persistent mental health or concurrent substance use concerns who have not been successfully treated by other programs.</li> <li>• First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Provincial Health Services Authority and the Ministry continue to work together to improve access pathways to provincial substance use beds. To-date changes have been made to improve the application form to better recognize the role of First Nations Treatment Centre and FNHA representation has been added to the case review process.</li> </ul>

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Expand B.C.'s prescribed safe supply programs to separate more people from the toxic drug supply through safe alternatives. Work with regulatory colleges, professional associations, and other levels of government to overcome barriers.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ministry is expanding the continuum of medication options for substance use care including adding diacetylmorphine.</li> <li>• To overcome barriers, the Ministry is coordinating with the BC Centre on Substance Use to develop a knowledge hub with resources on prescribed alternatives to support clinicians and inform the public.</li> <li>• The Ministry has also partnered with the BC Centre for Disease Control to launch a publicly available dashboard that includes regularly updated data on prescribed alternatives prescribing. The dashboard includes monthly client and prescriber numbers, which can be broken down by health authority and class of medication.</li> </ul>

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Implement decriminalization of simple possession of small amounts of illicit drugs for personal use, while maintaining focus on establishing rules and guidelines that protect public health and community safety.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government engaged throughout 2023/24 with a broad range of partners and stakeholders who identified the need for ongoing investments in the broader system of care and supports that are responsive to the diverse needs of people who use drugs.</li> <li>• B.C. requested and received an amendment to the exemption to prohibit possession of illegal substances on and near playgrounds, wading pools and spray parks, and skate parks, and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General developed legislation to regulate the use of illegal substances in certain public spaces. This had not come into force by March 31, 2024.</li> <li>• Government continued to engage with a broad range of partners and stakeholders to inform the implementation of decriminalization moving forward.</li> <li>• Implemented all 12 substance use navigators (two in each health authority) and hired 22 of 24 health authority proactive outreach staff.</li> <li>• Provided resource cards with linkages to health and social services to all RCMP districts, municipal police departments, military police, sheriffs and regional health authorities.</li> <li>• Worked with health system partners, and support data monitoring and evaluation.</li> <li>• Added new decriminalization outreach and navigation staff to support connections to care.</li> </ul>

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing engagement with local governments, law enforcement, bylaw officers, corrections partners, people who use drugs, public health experts, and the business community.</li> <li>• Launched the Building Relationships in Collaboration: Indigenous-led Connections with Police grant to support implementation of decriminalization in culturally appropriate ways.</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation to inform implementation and reporting to Health Canada and <a href="#">public reporting</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>Assess and expand supports for people who are causing detrimental harm to themselves and others as a result of mental health or substance use, to increase safety and improve health outcomes while upholding the rights of all British Columbians.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February 2024 - A new, dedicated mental-health and substance use area opened in the expanded Peace Arch Hospital emergency department, doubling its capacity with 50 single-patient rooms.</li> <li>• February 2024 - a new in-patient psychiatric unit at the Vernon Jubilee Hospital was approved, providing 44 single-patient rooms for occupancy by 2029.</li> <li>• November 2023 - the Fraser Health regional mental health and substance use Access and Flow Team expanded its capacity to provide consistent 12-hour care daily, while Surrey Memorial Hospital enhanced its emergency services with four new addiction assessment nurses.</li> </ul>

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>Work with the First Nations Health Authority to deliver culturally appropriate mental health and substance use services for Indigenous Peoples.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2023/24 the Ministry provided funding to initiate planning and development of Orca Lelum Youth Wellness Centre in Lantzville, a first of its kind youth wellness centre founded on culture, with 20 beds specifically for Indigenous youth; and an engagement process for Lheidli T'enneh to design a youth centre of excellence (Prince George/northern B.C.).</li> <li>• Continued funding for Indigenous-led approaches to prevention and harm reduction, and culturally safe substance use care and treatment services with \$8 million to the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) in 2023/24.</li> <li>• Tsow-Tun Le Lum Healing House in Duncan opened November 2023.</li> <li>• Provided \$10.75 million to the First Nations Health Authority to support First Nation land-based healing services grounded in cultural teachings at 81 sites across BC., serving 147 communities.</li> </ul>

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>With support from the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, work to improve public safety in our communities, including by implementing initiatives to address repeat and violent offending.</p>	<p>In progress. As part of the Safer Communities Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Mobile Integrated Crisis Response (MICR) teams have launched in six communities – Abbotsford, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Coquitlam/Port Coquitlam, Penticton and Vernon.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Community Transition Teams (CTTs)</a> have been expanded to service people transitioning from all BC Correctional Centres to offer support services for people leaving provincial correctional centres.</li> <li>• 1,525 unique clients were served by 10 community transition teams in 2023/24, the median wait time from client referral to service initiation was 4.5 days.</li> <li>• CTTs are highly utilized (i.e., caseload capacity) by both people accessing CTTs from a correctional facility, and people accessing CTTs from the community<sup>5</sup>In Q4 of 2023/24:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32.4% of clients reported achieving their goals while retained in service; an improvement over previous quarters.</li> <li>• Half (51percent) of clients were connected to services such as: regional health authority services (25.68%), forensics Regional Clinics (6.08%); bed-based substance use treatment (17.57%), long-term mental health counselling (4.73%); Indigenous specific care/service providers (4.05%); community-based non-profit (10.14%); peer support/groups (6.76%) or others (8.78%).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> CTTs in Interior Health reported lower utilization by clients in corrections, partially due to a vacant social worker position.

2022 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2024
<p>With support from the Minister of Children and Family Development and the Minister of Education and Child Care, lead work to continue our government's commitment to addressing mental health problems early by expanding Integrated Child and Youth Teams to 20 school districts.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICY teams were operating or being implemented in 12 school districts across the province as of March 2024.</li> <li>• In 2023/24 the Ministry continued to engage with First Nations, Métis and Inuit community partners to create an Indigenous support position that is informed by specific community needs.</li> </ul>
<p>Support the work of the Minister of Housing to better coordinate services to deliver improved outcomes for people living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, in collaboration with the Ministers of Health, Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and Public Safety and Solicitor General, as well as Indigenous Peoples, external partners, and others.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90 new transitional, fixed-term spaces with 24/7 support services opened in July 2023 in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health to help address housing, health, and social needs of persons experiencing or at-risk homelessness within Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.</li> </ul>