



Comox Valley Community Action Team (CAT)

Mar 12, 2024

Subject: Council Resolutions - Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Beds (Councillor Jolicoeur), HEART and HEARTH Program Funding, and Motion - Temporary Sheltering Options (Councillor Morin)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to you in support of the following items on the agenda for this week's Courtenay City Council meeting: the two Council Resolutions - Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Beds (Councillor Jolicoeur), HEART and HEARTH Program Funding, and the Motion - Temporary Sheltering Options (Councillor Morin). These all support the provision of urgently needed services in our community and are in alignment with the findings and recommendations of the Comox Valley Substance Use Strategy. This Strategy is informed by local data and the lived experience of those who are impacted by mental health and substance use along with a broad spectrum of service providers and key leadership.

Further, the Comox Valley Community Action Team's assets and gaps analysis which focused specifically on the unregulated toxic drug crisis also identified the need for these urgent services. Medical detox has repeatedly been identified as a key gap in our local service provision as people often have to manage extensive wait times and travel outside our community where they do not have the supports in place to help sustain them in their recovery journey. Treatment services are also identified as an urgent need.

Housing First is a key tenant of harm reduction and saving lives, and while we lack sufficient affordable housing options for people who desperately need them, the sheltering options that may be realized through this Resolution and Motion have the potential to greatly support dignity, and improve safety, stability, and wellbeing for those in our community who are experiencing homelessness.

I fully endorse these and urge you to support them!

Sincerely,

Shari Dunnet

Project Coordinator

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