

Squamish OPS Good Neighbour Agreement

SQUAMISH OPS

GOOD NEIGHBOUR AGREEMENT

AMONGST:

The following organizations must be a part of the agreement and participate in the functioning and maintenance of the agreement:

- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Squamish Helping Hands Society (SHHS)

Vision:

To implement lifesaving overdose prevention services in Squamish in a safe and effective way, that is respectful of the needs of people who use drugs and the large community as a whole.

Goals of the Agreement:

- To provide clarity on the roles and responsibilities of Squamish Helping Hands Society and Vancouver Coastal Health (referred to collectively as the partners) in the implementation and ongoing operation of the Overdose Prevention Site located at 37930 Third Avenue, Squamish BC;
- To establish a plan to mitigate any risks of negative community impacts that could be associated with the operation of the Overdose Prevention Site;
- To offer clear and accessible pathways for neighbouring businesses and or/residents to raise any issues associated with the operation of the site; and
- To provide a clear complaint resolution process for any issues identified.

Introduction:

The Overdose Crisis was declared a public health emergency in British Columbia in April of 2016. In 2019 the Sea to Sky region was identified by VCH as a high priority community based on rates of overdose deaths and overdose events. The Sea to Sky Community Action Team (CAT) was formed, with representatives from local municipalities, non-profit organizations, First Nations Communities, the local health authority, and the local RCMP, among others. When the COVID 19 pandemic reached our province, the number of overdose deaths increased due to a toxic drug supply and people using drugs alone. It became a top priority of the CAT to open an overdose prevention site. VCH provided funding to implement the service in collaboration with Squamish Helping Hands Society and other key stakeholders, including the District of Squamish.

Although there are no anticipated negative community impacts, the CAT recommended drafting a good neighbour agreement to be signed by the partners.

Role of partners entering into this agreement:

Vancouver Coastal Health:

- Provide primary funding, training, and support on implementation plan and operating guidelines
- Provide Overdose Prevention Site designation under the BC Public Health Act

Squamish Helping Hands Society:

- Responsible for operating the Overdose Prevention Site, including hiring and supervision staff and peers, ensuring adequate supplies, and responding to immediate community concerns.
- Work with partners on ongoing communications plan
- Provide VCH with relevant data, including number of visits to the site, number of overdoses, and any critical incidents
- Provide regular updates to the CAT regarding implementation and the day to day running of the OPS

Strategies to mitigate possible community concerns:

- SHHS will ensure that no drug trafficking will occur at the OPS;
- SHHS will ensure that noise is kept to a minimum;
- SHHS will ensure that there is no loitering at the site
- SHHS will do needle sweeps and litter collection on and near the site at least twice daily;
- SHHS will provide an accessible contact for any community complaints that may arise, and commit to responding within 24 hours.

Complaint Resolution Process:

For general questions, inquiries, and to provide feedback: contact Maureen Mackell or Lisa Young at Squamish Helping Hands Society @ 604.390.3000 or info@shhs.ca or maureen@shhs.ca

In the case of noise complaints, property maintenance concerns, etc.: contact District of Squamish Bylaw @ 604.815.5067

In the case of an emergency, call 911.

AGREED:

OPERATOR

Name: Maureen Mackell

Title: Executive Director | 

Signature: 

Date: February 17, 2021

HEALTH AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE

Name: Chris Van Veen

Title: Director, Vancouver Coastal Health

Signature: 

Date: March 12, 2021