

# Triage Emergency Services & Care Society Drug & Alcohol Free Transitional Housing Project 5616 Fraser Street

## Operations Management Plan

The Management Plan for the Drug & Alcohol Free Transitional Housing Project at 5616 Fraser Street provides an overview of Triage's commitment to operating a supported housing program for individuals with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders, who have committed to living substance-free. It is our intent to operate the building in a manner that manages any and all impacts of the project on neighbouring residents and business. This management plan outlines the basic operating parameters for the housing and incorporates protocols to manage various issues raised by neighbouring residents and business owners as well as ensuring an adequate and timely response on the part of staff. This is the beginning of a new process and we look forward to working with the community to best respond to community needs.

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### *1. Overview*

Triage Emergency Services & Care Society is a registered not for profit society overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors. Triage provides housing and support services to individuals with a mental illness and/or substance use issue. Triage has a proven reputation for providing housing to some of the most vulnerable people in our community. We conduct assessments and referrals to a broad range of treatment options, with the focus on the substance use and mental health systems. Our existing programs include a 28 bed emergency shelter, a 45 unit transitional housing program, a 24 unit transitional housing program for women, a 27 and a 26 unit apartment complex, and an Outreach project.

This project provides a transitional supported housing program for adults with co-occurring mental illness and addictions who are living a substance free lifestyle. The program operates in an apartment building at 5616 Fraser Street in Vancouver constructed for this purpose. Triage offers this program in conjunction with partners including Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) who have a long-established relationship with Triage in their delivery of mental health

services at the Society's emergency shelter and supported housing programs, as well as BC Housing, the Federal Government (via the Supporting Community Partnership Initiative), and the City of Vancouver. Triage is also committed to working closely with the community to help ensure the effective management of this project.

Our four-storey building at 5616 Fraser Street has been developed within the regulations of the C-2 By-law (Special Needs Residential Facility - Group Living) and contains 30 studio residential units ranging from 350 to 430 sq. ft with approximately 4,500 sq. ft. of amenity space at grade facing on to Fraser Street. In addition to providing the entry lobby and administration functions, the ground floor has:

- a multi-purpose room having a large open area that will have tables and chairs that can be moved around to allow for a broad range of activities such as meetings, in-services/seminars, special events, dinners and a wide range of client recreational activities;
- a room for TV viewing and card or board games;
- a library for quieter activities and reading;
- a small kitchen, dining room;
- staff offices;
- storage space;
- a small garden area;
- a computer area with Internet access; and
- a consultation room for Triage staff to meet privately with residents.

The building has been designed to provide private living quarters while having sufficient additional amenities and common areas so that the residents of this housing can be actively engaged during the day and prepared for their transition to independent living.

## ***2. Project Objectives***

Triage is committed to the project achieving the following goals:

- to provide supported housing for adults who have co-occurring mental illness and addictions who are committed to living a substance free life;
- create a setting that will support and assist residents to achieve independence through the acquisition and practice of healthy community living skills;
- assist residents to access services and programs that will support them in overcoming their addictions and developing the life skills necessary for independent living;
- promote the health and well-being of our residents; and
- assist our residents to integrate into the community and to become active participants in a civil society.

Triage wishes to emphasize that this facility is operated as a transitional phase in our residents' progress towards independent living. While each resident's progress towards this goal will vary, it is anticipated that the average resident will live at this location for approximately two years.

### 3. Programs

<p><b>Assessment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• referrals to the 5616 Fraser Street building will be coordinated through VCH's Mental Health Housing Services (MHHS) Access process</li> <li>• assessment will be completed by a professional case manager with training in Mental Health and Addictions, a physician or psychiatrist and the Manager at Triage</li> <li>• the assessment team will assess all referrals and will be responsible for determination of eligibility for the program</li> <li>• as part of the assessment process, and ongoing, residents will be required to identify personal goals with respect to addictions and mental health management and improvement of independent community living skills</li> <li>• key contact people for both mental health and addictions issues will be identified for each resident, to ensure a coordinated approach to care planning and timely communication regarding client issues</li> </ul>
<p><b>Treatment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treatment for mental health and addictions will be handled on an outpatient basis at external agencies, not on site</li> <li>• there will be a psychiatrist / physician available for treatment and ongoing consultation as required</li> </ul>
<p><b>Medications</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• medication regimes are primarily the responsibility of the resident;</li> <li>• a medication support system will be available to residents who require assistance to achieve independence in this area</li> </ul>
<p><b>Liaison</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff will refer to and liaise with employment, Ministry of Human Resources, physical health, mental health, and addictions programs</li> <li>• Triage will provide educational resources for residents re: employment opportunities, mental illness, BC benefits, addictions, Dual Diagnosis, medical conditions</li> <li>• Triage will maintain daily contact with the dedicated case manager at the Midtown Mental Health Team regarding resident issues and progress</li> <li>• the Dual Diagnosis Program will be available to provide specialized training, skill building and consultation support for the Case Manager and Triage Health Care Worker staff and to provide programming as appropriate for residents in the project</li> </ul>
<p><b>Life skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff will provide group or individual support, life skills education and training on such issues as:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ household management and meal preparation</li> <li>⇒ vocational assistance and referrals</li> <li>⇒ conflict resolution skills</li> <li>⇒ budget management</li> <li>⇒ personal rights /empowerment/self-advocacy</li> <li>⇒ mentoring and peer support programming to complement existing staffing and support services</li> <li>⇒ location of long term housing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• a recreational therapist will work with residents to design social /recreational programs that meet their needs</li> </ul>

<b>Meal Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• will not be provided, as residents will have their own in-unit kitchen facilities</li></ul>
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## 4. Community Liaison

### *Triage Contact Information*

The Executive Director of Triage, as the designated community liaison, is responsible for addressing any issues related to the ongoing operation of this facility. His contact information is as follows:

Name: Mark Smith, Executive Director  
Phone: 604-215-3040 during normal business hours (9:00 am to 5:00 pm)  
604-805-2763 cell phone for after hours calls  
Email: msmith@triage.bc.ca  
Mail: Mark Smith, Executive Director  
The Triage Emergency Services & Care Society  
707 Powell Street  
Vancouver BC V6A 1H5

The secondary designated liaison is:

Name: Greg Richmond, Community Housing Manager  
Phone: 604-215-3046  
Email: grichmond@triage.bc.ca

A 24 hr. phone number is available to community members who wish to contact staff at the facility to report a problem. This number is:

(to be included when the facility is built)

### *Community Advisory Committee*

As a part of Triage's commitment to responding to the concerns of residents and businesses in the vicinity of 5616 Fraser, a Community Advisory Committee has been established to ensure there is open communication and that community concerns are dealt with.

The Triage Drug & Alcohol Free Transitional Housing Project Community Advisory Committee (Fraser Street CAC) is a group of concerned public citizens formed to work with Triage. It is an advisory group, not a decision-making body, which fulfills its purposes by being solution-focused and responsive to community concerns. Members operate in agreement with Terms of Reference that they have helped establish.

The Fraser Street CAC will meet as determined by the Advisory Committee. This schedule may change from time-to-time, based on the advice of the committee.

The purposes of this group are to:

1. provide support to Triage in its commitment to meeting its goals in this project;
2. address the impact of the project on the community and provide input to address these concerns;

3. review Triage's response to complaints; and
4. act as a liaison between Triage and the neighbourhood.

Membership on the Fraser Street CAC is comprised of the following plus an alternate:

1. Triage (2)
  - Triage management representative (1)
  - Board Member (1)
2. City of Vancouver (2)
  - Housing Centre (1)
  - Vancouver Police Department (1)
3. Vancouver Coastal Health (1)
  - Housing, Mental Health and Addiction (1)
4. Community Representation (12-15)
  - Businesses (3)
    - north of 33rd Avenue (1)
    - south of 41st Avenue (1)
    - between 33rd and 41st Avenue (1)
  - Schools (4)
    - McKenzie Elementary PAC (1)
    - John Oliver High School PAC (1)
    - Khalsa School PAC (1)
    - St. Andrews PAC (1)
  - Residents (5-8)

Business representatives will be invited by a business representative who participated in the management plan consultation. The schools selected will be identified through the consultation process as being in the vicinity of the Fraser Street facility; each school PAC will be contacted and asked to name a representative and an alternate. The residents will be selected through a process that involves distribution of a letter to approximately 1,300 addresses in the surrounding area plus e-mail distribution to those involved in the consultation process – this letter will invite applications for CAC membership. These applications will be screened by a group of volunteer residents who attended the management plan consultation and who indicated that they did not wish to be part of the CAC but wanted to ensure that community members on the CAC were representative of the overall neighbourhood.

Each member is requested to have an alternate to ensure continuity and representation from all interested parts of the community.

When appropriate, specialists may be invited to participate in meetings to address specific agenda items. Community members will be selected by volunteers who participated in the facility management plan consultation and from those who respond to the invitation of an expression of interest for membership on the CAC.

## ***5. Management Protocols***

Triage is committed to the following management protocols to reduce the potential for harm or nuisance to individuals and property from the operation of the facility and, where necessary, to take appropriate actions to address problems within its control.

### *Staffing*

- For the first year of operation, there will be a minimum of two health care staff on duty at all times (24 hour/seven days a week), allowing for an immediate response to any issues as they arise. Night shift staffing levels will be reviewed at the end of the first year to determine if adjustments are warranted.
- There will be a part time Recreational Therapist on site during the day, and an Occupational Therapist available to the program.
- Interim adjustment may be made if this level of staffing does not seem to be sufficient to address the needs of the project.
- Staff responsibilities: will include receiving referrals; managing all tenancy issues; including incoming and outgoing tenants; liaising with mental health and addiction services, as well as other relevant community services; working with tenants to achieve their goals, coordinating and delivering recreational opportunities; and medication support duties.
- Staff experience and educational level requirements will be as follows:
  - ⇒ a minimum of a 2 year education certificate in mental health or addiction;
  - ⇒ experience with a population similar to our residents; and
  - ⇒ medication support training.
- All staff have undergone a reference and background check including a criminal record check.
- All staff members are trained in Triage's established risk management procedures.
- All staff members are oriented to protocols within the management plan, including responsiveness to community concerns.

### *Maintenance of an Alcohol and Drug Free Environment*

- Referrals for the program will come from Vancouver Coastal Health's Mental Health Teams; family physicians; supported recovery and residential treatment services; the Dual Diagnosis Program and Mental Health supported housing and residential settings. Referrals will be screened and registered through Mental Health Housing Services.
- All residents of this housing will undergo a comprehensive professional assessment of their commitment to living a substance free lifestyle. Individuals not committed to this will not be approved for housing.
- The maintenance of a drug free environment will be based on admission criteria which emphasize the need for abstinence, professional assessment and screening to ensure commitment to an alcohol and drug free lifestyle, high levels of staff support and programming to support recovery, as well as developing relapse prevention and intervention strategies.
- This housing is for individuals with a mental illness who have a demonstrated commitment to living a substance free lifestyle. People who are using substances will not be eligible for this housing.
- To be eligible for admission residents will have:

- ⇒ a serious and persistent mental illness which interferes with daily functioning related to work, personal life, leisure and education;
- ⇒ a dependency on substances which cannot effectively be managed without an alcohol and drug free environment with daily supports;
- ⇒ a requirement for ongoing psychiatric clinical treatment and support by a Mental Health Team;
- ⇒ a willingness to engage in developing an individual recovery plan;
- ⇒ a willingness to live in a substance free environment and to be in recovery (abstinent); and
- ⇒ 60 day minimum drug free criteria prior to admittance.

### *Resident's Agreement*

Residents will be required to sign an agreement that will include “good neighbour” expectations and that will clearly outline grounds for eviction from the 5616 Fraser Street program.

### *Relapse Prevention/Intervention*

- While residents of this housing will be committed to a substance free lifestyle, despite their best efforts, some will experience a lapse/relapse (any use of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol) as part of their transition to addiction management.
- Relapse indicators will be identified during the assessment process, at which time individual plans for relapse prevention will be developed. Indicators will be monitored by the case manager, staff and residents.
- If a relapse occurs, an individual will be required to recommit to abstinence or be relocated within 48 hours to an alternate site operated by Triage.
- If it is brought to the attention of staff that a resident may have relapsed but is not disclosing this, the individual's recovery plan will be reviewed and may be adjusted to address this issue.
- An aggregate record of relapse rates will be kept and included in an annual report to the City of Vancouver.
- The fundamental concern will always be safety for staff, residents and community. No one will be allowed to remain who might pose a threat.

### *Safety and Security*

As part of its commitment to operating this project, Triage has established the following set of protocols to ensure the safety and security of residents, staff, and the community. In case of immediate danger inside or outside of the facility, 9-1-1 will be called.

<b>Exterior Perimeter Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the 24 hour staffing will allow the monitoring of all activity in and around the building, responding as necessary</li><li>• Triage will monitor activities at the rear of the facility through the use of security cameras</li></ul>
<b>Interior Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• all exits are alarmed and monitored by security camera</li><li>• there is a monitored magnetic entrance card system for residents</li><li>• a sign in system is required for overnight visitors</li><li>• staff will be alerted to “unwanted” persons – i.e. people who have a known history of unacceptable behaviour</li><li>• residents responsibility for their guests behaviour is included in the residence agreement</li><li>• Triage has a response plan with protocols for staff to follow in respect to potential safety related events that could occur – staff are trained in these procedures</li><li>• the Community Advisory Committee will be informed of Triage’s response plan</li></ul>
<b>Police Liaison</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Triage will maintain regular communication and consultation with the Vancouver Police Department through the local Community Policing Office</li><li>• The 911 and Mental Health Emergency Services systems will be used in all situations involving violence or potentially volatile situations</li></ul>
<b>Criminal Activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Triage will take appropriate action to intercede in cases of vandalism or other criminal activity, up to and including reporting the incident to police</li></ul>
<b>Resident Selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• individuals with a known history of violent and sexual offences will not be admitted as residents in this facility</li></ul>

## *6. Community Responsiveness*

Triage will ensure that careful consideration be given to any concerns or issues expressed by members of the community about the facility, and will take appropriate actions to address problems within its control.

The goal of being responsive to the community is to ensure, as much as possible, that the community has positive and helpful experiences with the facility. The secondary goal is to ensure that continuous quality improvement issues are made evident, so that they can be addressed.

### *Safety, Security and Nuisances*

Any situation that affects the safety and security of residents, staff, or a member of the community will be dealt with immediately, following the protocols set out in the “Safety and Security” section of this document. The procedures below will be followed to address community concerns:

1. When a complaint comes in, the appropriate on-duty supervisor will acknowledge the question or concern with a rapid response.
2. In cases where staff cannot respond to the question or concern to the satisfaction of the individual, the issue will be brought to Triage’s Community Housing Manager to address.

3. In most cases, Triage's management should be able to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the individual. Where the issue is not resolved satisfactorily, the individual has the option of launching a complaint, following the issue resolution process outlined below.
4. All complaints or incidents will be logged and this information will be shared with the Community Advisory Committee.

### ***Issue Resolution Process***

In addition to the preceding protocols to address issues regarding safety & security and nuisances, occasionally, there may be other types of concerns that arise from members of the community. While the intent is to address these concerns through dialogue, if the individual feels the situation warrants an official complaint, Triage's issue resolution mechanism will ensure that an objective and thorough response is provided.

1. An individual wishing to make a formal complaint should do so in writing to the Community Housing Manager within 30 days of the situation that resulted in the complaint. Triage staff will log all concerns that reach this level and will be reported to the CAC at each advisory committee meeting.
2. The Community Housing Manager, or appropriate designate, will confer with the individual as to how the complaint is to be addressed, and the individual will be informed as to the action to be taken regarding the complaint, within 15 days of the written statement.
3. If the individual is not sufficiently satisfied as to the outcome of this procedure, they may write to the Executive Director of Triage and should do so within 15 days of being notified of the outcome of the initial dispute procedure.
4. The Executive Director will inform the individual, in writing, of the response to the complaint, within 15 days of the receipt of the letter. If the individual is not satisfied, the complaint may then be brought to the attention of the Triage Board of Directors.

## ***7. Annual Reporting***

Upon the completion of each fiscal year (year end, March 31), Triage will submit a program review to the Directors of Social Planning and Housing, City of Vancouver.

The program review will include:

- Outcomes and performance results associated with the housing and services provided at this facility and its impact on the neighbourhood.
- Additionally, VCH and Triage will participate in the development of evaluation / outcome research that may include measures of improvement in health status, addictions relapse rates, quality of life, educational and vocational functioning and housing stability.

The CAC will have input into the annual report to the City.