



## **Housing Overdose Prevention and Peer Services: Site Lead**

December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022- November 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023

### **OVERVIEW**

Peers Victoria is grassroots agency that has been working with, and for, Victoria sex workers since 1995. Through direct service delivery and partnerships, Peers provides an array of outreach, harm reduction, group education and other support services. We maintain a welcoming and accessible service environment that promotes empowerment of current and former sex workers.

In response to COVID19, the overdose crisis, and the decampment of homeless camps in Victoria, The City of Victoria and BC Housing partnered to develop a number of sheltering locations and low barrier housing sites (“Sites”). Some of these Sites are permanent, and others temporary. Island Health has provided funding for on-site health services, including harm reduction and overdose prevention, primary care, addictions medicine, and peer support services.

Experience and evidence have demonstrated that an in-reach model for harm reduction services, utilizing peer staff, resident peers, and allied health staff, is effective at reducing risks for individuals choosing to use alone in their homes. This “Housing Overdose Prevention and Peer Services” model (“HOPPS” model) is a model that is not solely dependent on a fixed space, rather, it also offers a range of overdose prevention options, including episodic in person, virtual, and by telephone witnessing.

With funding from Island Health, Peers Victoria operates three (3) HOPPS Teams in supportive housing locations. It is expected that the HOPPS Teams will continue to evolve given the need to engage in a continuous quality improvement process to ensure these services are provided in a way that minimizes harms related to substance use. As some Sites are temporary, the site assignments and hours of service may change in conversation with the funder, housing operator and other stakeholders.

### **Site Lead Positions:**

Capital City Center: 28-35hours

Russell St Shelter: 28-35hours

Catherine St/Spaken House: 28-35hours

Wage: The starting wage for this position is \$31 per hour. Benefits are available after 3 months of employment for employees who work 22 hours per week or more in a regular contract.

The site lead will work 21 hours per week at the site with an additional 10-14 hours per week to gather supplies, complete program utilization records submitted to the funder, shared participation in assisting resident responders to attend training and shared responsibility for call-out shifts.

Hours for sites will be 10am-5pm or 11am-6pm, subject to change based on program needs.

### **Site lead duties include (10-14 hours per week location variable):**

- Weekly purchase, ordering and distribution of supplies such as PPE, harm reduction, food, first aid supplies;
- Site scheduling and shared responsibility for filling call-out shifts;
- Attending relevant meetings on behalf of Peers including site meetings, some interagency meetings and onsite monthly resident and staff training;
- Relaying information to staff and peer trainees and residents concerning upcoming events, changed practices and protocols and other emergent communication;
- Participating in the peer training program and ensuring peer trainees and residents are paid in a timely manner and receive support for their work and related petty cash financial record keeping is completed;
- Submitting weekly Island Health program utilization records.

### **HOPPS Model Housing Outreach Worker duties include (21 hours per week fixed site):**

- Provide a range of options for individuals to safely use drugs alone or in public, including providing access to trained staff who can monitor individuals in-person, virtually, and/or by telephone, and who will respond to overdoses as needed in order to reduce the number of deaths and harms related to overdoses.
- Develop 'safer use' plans in partnership with residents

- Reduce other harms associated with substance use through:
- Provision of harm reduction supplies to reduce transmission of blood-borne infections, endocarditis, and sepsis.
- Increased access to low barrier services.
- Increased access to recovery services.
- Increased referral pathways to local services related to substance use and/or other health or related social issues; and
- Increased opportunity for peer support networks and peer participation; and
- Create safe and healthy communities by working in active collaboration with housing-based providers and the Site operator to collectively reduce overdose risks for residents of the site by sharing information, developing shared safety/care/tenancy plans, and providing educational resources.

#### **Additional Duties:**

- Deliver client-centered support to access safer supply and harm reduction supplies;
- Adherence to Peers organizational policies;
- Completion of shift reports, utilization documentation and financial record submission;
- Attend weekly staff meetings and training as required.
- Psychosocial support, including peer-based support;
- Provide client-centered advocacy;
- Education provision around hygiene and precautions in relation to Covid-19
- Provide prevention information re hand-washing and physical distancing;
- Provision of naloxone kits, overdose prevention and response information and individualized planning;
- Provision of the full array of harm reduction supplies and safe collection of used equipment;
- Information regarding how to access Drug Checking services with the Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project;
- Basic assessment and referral re symptoms of Covid-19;
- Ability to support peer-witnessed substance use for overdose prevention;
- Responding to crisis as needed and offering de-escalation support;
- Ensure residents' concerns are heard and that they understand supportive housing site expectations of residents;
- Support resident-based leadership and harm reduction support where possible;
- Collaborate with nursing and medical staff as needed;

#### **Desired Skills and Qualifications:**

- 2+ years working in harm reduction, preferably with previous program coordination experience;

- Strong writing and communication abilities, and an advanced working knowledge of office software;
- Ability to drive your own car (with travel expenses reimbursed), but an organization vehicle is available at limited times.
- An ability to manage conflict in a sensitive and considerate way that takes into consideration organizational responsibilities to persons served, staff, contract obligations and interagency service partnerships;
- Willingness to seek supervision and team support;
- Ability to manage financial record keeping (\$4000+ per month)
- Reliable and willing to be flexible at times regarding work schedule to meet program needs;
- Ability to understand and synthesize service outcome and utilization record keeping frameworks;
- Degree in human service field or equivalent work experience and/or lived experience;
- Ability to drive your own car is preferable (with travel expenses reimbursed), but an organization vehicle is available at limited times.
- Understanding of trauma informed care;
- Approachable, non-judgmental, empathic, and calm in conflict or crisis;
- Sex work positive and able to provide safer sex information and supplies;
- Knowledge of local health and social service agencies and service access particulars;
- Collaborative, team-oriented service approach;
- Commitment to practices of confidentiality, ethical service delivery, and boundaries in helping relationships;
- Punctual, reliable and able to communicate service and advocacy information verbally and in written format;

**If you are interested in these opportunities, please send a resume and cover letter outlining your relevant skills and experience to [peershiring@gmail.com](mailto:peershiring@gmail.com) by November 7th, 2022**

Applications from individuals with direct experience in any aspect of the sex industry are especially welcome. Our group welcomes Indigenous people, people of colour, and people of diverse abilities, genders and sexualities.