



PATIENT-CENTRED DESIGN in our new Mental Health and Substance Use Wellness Centre

“Decisions we’re making right now will impact mental health care at our hospital for decades to come,” says Mark Welch, the Redevelopment’s Project Planning Leader for Clinical Programs. “It’s a huge responsibility, but also a wonderful opportunity to improve our patients’ experience and outcomes.”

A new 75-bed Mental Health and Substance Use Wellness Centre is what Mark’s referring to. It’s the centrepiece of Phase One and will replace the aging 30-bed Sherbrooke Centre by 2020. Sherbrooke was originally built as a nurses’ residence over 60 years ago but has been used for mental health patients since 1981. “As a nurses’ dorm, Sherbrooke served its purpose rather well,” says Mark. “But as a place for mental health patients — well, it has its limitations.”

“Sherbrooke doesn’t have enough beds or space, and the facility is very outdated,” says Mark, who has worked there for almost five of his 35 years in mental health care. “We plan to remedy that with our new Wellness Centre.”

To get the new building’s design just right we tapped into our collective wisdom. “Nurses, psychiatrists, therapists, hospital leaders, and support staff have all provided input into how we can integrate best practices and modern standards in order to elevate patient-centred care,” says Mark. “We started by asking what kind of care have we always wanted to give and what environment have we wanted to create, but Sherbrooke wouldn’t let us.”

People who’ve experienced mental illness, and their families, were also asked for their input as we planned aspects of the Wellness Centre. They helped validate the long list of requirements we’d developed.

“We want the building’s design, and even its décor, to be part of the therapy toolkit we use to positively effect people’s moods,” says Mark. “Creating an ambience of well-being, positivity, and healing so people feel safe and able to express their true feelings was a top priority for everyone.”

“We want our new space to be inviting, soothing, and spacious — like a beautiful, healing sanctuary with lots of light, art, and even access to nature,” says Mark. “When you first walk through the door you should feel safe and like you’re going to get better.”

The design and layout will give patients more control of their environment, too. This can influence a sense of autonomy and well-being, and even their engagement in therapy. Every floor will have spaces that allow for all levels of interaction from very personal and private conversations, to larger group and social gatherings, to alone time outdoors, or workout time in exercise rooms. Our new Older Adult Psychiatric Unit, Fraser Health’s first, will also have a walking loop to help elderly patients walk off anxiety and improve mobility.

Every patient will have their own private room and ensuite bathroom that feels like a personal retreat. “Our goal is to create a more home-like environment that feels much less institutional,” says Mark.

Having a space like this will go a long way to helping recovery. “Our patients come to us in crisis, and it’s our job to show them humanity, soothe their anxiety, and enhance their self-worth while they’re in our care. When they leave us, we want it to be with a sense of growth and personal insight, and renewed strength and resilience that helps them cope better with life and any future crisis,” emphasizes Mark.

“Improving the patients’ experience has a positive effect on nurses, care staff and psychiatrists too,” adds Mark. “When our patients do better it makes our work more fulfilling and keeps us engaged and motivated...and that in turn affects our patients, creating a nice positive cycle.”

“We expect our new state-of-the-art building will help more of those positive human connections to happen,” ends Mark, “After all, human connection is such a big part of the hospital experience, especially in mental health care.”

We want to
create a beautiful
healing sanctuary
for mental health
patients



NEW PARKING
is underway



PROJECT MILESTONES
show our progress

Parking for visitors and patients is this summer's project

Our Main Entrance parking lot expansion will be finished soon. We've added more patient and visitor parking close to our Main Entrance before we close a parking lot in 2017 at the bottom of Keary Street, which is where we'll build our new Mental Health and Substance Use Wellness Centre and underground parkade.

Our goal is to maintain our current parking supply as much as possible during construction so our staff and visitors aren't tempted to park in the neighbourhood. The Main Entrance parking expansion has been done in stages as a result. This allows us to finish and open one stage, or area, before closing another. By this fall, we will have added almost 100 parking stalls.

During construction many of the displaced trees and shrubs were salvaged. Three truckloads of shrubs were given to St. Michael's Elementary School for their new outdoor learning area. And much of the lumber was taken by a woodcrafter for art, furniture, and hospital benches.

Eventually, this area near the Main Entrance will be relandscaped once our entire redevelopment is finished. Our plan is to plant two trees for every large tree we removed, either on hospital grounds or public lands, to help keep New Westminster green and beautiful.

We're one step closer to breaking ground on Phase One

We reached another project milestone! In May 2016, a Request for Proposals, or RFP, was issued to the three candidates we short-listed last December to design and build Phase One of our Redevelopment. EllisDon, Bird Construction, and PCL Constructors now have until December 2016 to supply us with their building designs, timelines and costs for a new Mental Health and Substance Use Wellness Centre, an Energy Centre, a campus communications hub, and an underground parkade.

We'll select one candidate by early 2017 to be our construction partner for Phase One. It's then we'll know what our new mental health building will look like, inside and out. We'll break ground shortly thereafter and expect to be open for patients by early 2020.

Planning continues for Phases Two and Three

Our team is working on submitting a business plan for Phases Two and Three to government in 2016. The plan details requirements, scope, and budget for a new acute care tower, new Emergency, new and expanded operating rooms and interventional suites, more parking, and upgrades to existing spaces.



Three truckloads of shrubs were given to a local school

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