

MEDIA ADVISORY

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The Mustard Seed Kamloops Reopens Live-in Support Program

The Mustard Seed Kamloops has reopened a live-in support program, a 17-bed Men's Sober Living Centre at the Outreach Centre at 181 West Victoria Street. The Centre will provide up to one year of support for men who have maintained at least one week of sobriety and includes employment coaching and a wellness coordinator to facilitate with a transition from addiction to fully independent living. The Men's Sober Living Centre replaces the Men's Recovery Centre.

Programming will include Street School to help residents attain their Grade 12 diploma, mandatory volunteering, Interior Health Authority's Smart Recovery program and the new-to-Kamloops Seed Academy training program. Seed Academy is a four-week program designed to provide training and education including first aid, non-violent crisis intervention training, and WHMIS, with the goal of helping men build their resumes and increase their employability.

"Residents will be required to volunteer 9-12 hours per week for the first few months through various social enterprise programs," said Mario Borba, managing director, The Mustard Seed Kamloops. "After volunteering for a few months there will be opportunities for them to be employed and all proceeds from the social enterprise will either pay the salaries or to be reinvested in the program."

While the details are still being finalized, possible social enterprise ventures include a thrift store, janitorial work, catering, and a coffee shop.

Men can self refer directly to The Mustard Seed or be referred by any social agency in Kamloops. Participants will then go through an intake process at The Mustard Seed to determine if the program is the right fit for their needs and goals. The cost of the program is covered by the provincial government, or residents can opt to pay for themselves.

"The program will be available on a first come, first served basis," said Borba. "We know there are a lot of people who are anxious to see this happen."

The goal of the program is to keep people occupied and engaged and requires a personal commitment. If a resident experiences relapse, there will be a meeting with the wellness coordinator to reset and re-establish goals and look at potential triggers and how those triggers can be avoided.

"If there's a relapse, which happens in an addiction centre, rather than kick them out we'll work with them over the week and try to get them into a treatment centre as they might need more support than what we will offer," said Borba. "The second time it happens, they will be discharged, but only after The Mustard Seed works with them for a week to find them a more appropriate place. If in that week, they relapse again, then they will be discharged."

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Jeff Arlitt, who will work as a wellness coordinator at the Men's Sober Living Centre, will work alongside an employment coach to provide support to the men toward reaching their individual goals. Over the course of the year, the hope is to help residents find employment and their own place to live.

"We'll be working with residents to make sure they're following through with their goals and plans," said Arlitt. "The goal is to make sure they have everything they need to be successful when they leave."

The Men's Sober Living Centre has started interviews and is looking to fill 17 spaces with men looking to make positive and lasting change in their lives with help, support, and encouragement from The Mustard Seed team.

For more information or to set up an interview with The Mustard Seed Kamloops contact:

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