

# Sumac Place

## Specialized mental health services on the Sunshine Coast

October 2012

### About Sumac Place

Sumac Place is a newly renovated 28-bed specialized mental health facility located at 841 Kiwanis Way in Gibsons, B.C. It is part of Vancouver Coastal Health's plan to meet the need for specialized mental health services throughout the region and will serve clients from the Sunshine Coast as well as from other locations in the region.

Sumac Place is on Squamish Nation Territory, and is the "sacred site of the First Man". Vancouver Coastal Health is grateful to the Squamish and Sechelt First Nations for their traditional blessing and appreciates their support for Sumac Place.



### Who we serve

Sumac Place serves clients from the Sunshine Coast and from throughout Vancouver Coastal Health. This type of care is for adults with complex mental illness who need further supports in order to optimize their independence and quality of life. Clients are stable and require specialized rehabilitation services as they continue on their recovery journey. Stays typically range from six to 24 months.

### A place for recovery

Research shows that specialized mental health services are best provided in smaller, more home-like facilities like Sumac Place. Clients have an individualized treatment plan. A specialized care team supports clients to gain the skills and abilities needed to transition back to their home communities with sufficient supports in place.

The focus of treatment is to help clients maintain stability, acquire daily living skills and achieve meaningful recovery. For example, clients receive the support necessary to participate in community life and accomplish everyday activities for themselves such as preparing their own meals, visiting the bank, getting their hair cut, joining an exercise class, or meeting their general medical or dental needs.

Sumac Place has a highly qualified staff and physician team with specialized skills and training in the recovery model of care, psycho-social rehabilitation, and mental health.

### Questions and concerns

We welcome your questions and any opportunity to share information.

Please contact **Doug Andrie**, manager, at 604-741-1511 or [douglas.andrie@vch.ca](mailto:douglas.andrie@vch.ca).

## Questions & Answers about Sumac Place

### **What kind of health care professionals will be available at the facility?**

A team of care providers, including nurses, social workers, occupational and recreational therapists, mental health workers, peer support workers, plus psychiatrists and family practice physicians provide direct services at Sumac Place.

### **Where will clients come from?**

Sumac Place serves clients from the Sunshine Coast as well as from communities across the Vancouver Coastal Health region. VCH is committed to providing services as close to home as possible and Sunshine Coast clients requiring this specialized service will be accommodated whenever possible.

### **Where will clients go when they are discharged?**

Repatriation of clients to their home communities will be a priority. Most clients will move to more independent settings such as supported living apartments or family care homes in their own communities. In some cases, clients will live independently in the community and be connected to a community mental health team for ongoing support. It is anticipated that clients who are from the Sunshine Coast will return to this community on discharge.

### **Is Sumac Place the only site in VCH offering specialized mental health services?**

No. VCH has a total of 229 specialized (tertiary) mental health beds across the health authority—all part of a continuum of mental health services that include community based services as well.

### **Will mental health clients from Riverview be accessing these services?**

No patients have been transferred from Riverview to Sumac Place. Riverview Hospital has closed and the clients transferred to other regional facilities.

### **The town of Gibsons already has limited primary care and community mental health services. Won't this service put a strain on the local health care system?**

With the clinical and other staff at Sumac Place, the service will be sustainable and integrated into the continuum of health care services being provided by VCH. Because clients will be well supported at Sumac Place, it is anticipated that there will be no significant strain added to existing services in the community.

### **Is it appropriate for this type of facility to be located in a residential area?**

Yes. There are similar services located throughout the province that have produced good outcomes for clients and no major issues or concerns for neighbours.

### **What kind of supervision will there be at the site?**

Sumac Place is staffed 24/7/365 with trained mental health staff. There is a higher staff-per-client ratio than in most other health care settings.

### **Why is Sumac Place providing services for people from other communities?**

There are 40 adult rehabilitation beds in Vancouver and 28 in Gibsons to service residents from Richmond to Bella Bella. Clients may or may not be from the Sunshine Coast similar to how Sunshine Coast residents may travel to Vancouver to receive certain specialized health care services.

### **Did this site create any new jobs?**

Yes. There are about 33 new positions—a mixture of full-time and part-time. For information about health care jobs with Vancouver Coastal Health, visit [VCH Careers website](#).

### **Are these VCH services related to the Cottage Farms facility?**

VCH is not affiliated with Cottage Farm, which has not yet started operating in the community. In the future, Sumac Place clients may access this and other community programs and services such as the library and community centre.