

I want to first and foremost welcome you to the YARD Clinic... It's my hope and expectation that you'll enjoy your time with us, and we'll do our best to ensure we're all working together to help you better manage your condition.

I also want to let you know that Social Work is available to help you to learn the coping strategies and to gain the confidence necessary for sustaining a happy quality of life. I hope that my clinical experience can assist you in acquiring the knowledge and insight required, at a comfortable pace, to develop skills for both disease self-management and independent living.

Here are examples of reasons why YARD Clinic patients ask for social work assistance:

- Addressing financial difficulties. This includes better understanding both health insurance and medication coverage. Money is often the #1 stress for people.
- Discussing post-secondary education plans or choice of career... or solving problems at work or school because of the diagnosis. Sometimes it involves talking about establishing purpose in life, if you're feeling directionless right now. This might mean getting a sense of control over the decisions and actions for achieving personal goals, or increasing your autonomy from others.
- Understanding the diagnosis and learning tips on how to cope with symptoms.
- Asking questions about alcohol and drug use. With regard to medicinal marijuana and cannabinoids, I'm available to discuss what we know, based on the research, about long-term outcome, known risks, and the products (edibles, vaping, CBD/THC ratio).
- Navigating changes in relationships.
- Sexual health matters such as gender identity, sexual orientation, or experimentation.
- Increasing awareness of community resources such as mental health services.
- Depression, including alleviation of social isolation.
- Anxiety, often fuelled by the emotional roller coaster of uncertainty due to flares.
- Low self-esteem, often exacerbated by how difficult it seems just to lead a 'normal life.'

There are some policies to know about... I'm sensitive to your privacy, and my reports cannot be released without subpoena or without your consent. I'm required by law to report physical or sexual abuse occurring to anyone under 19, and to find psychiatric services for a person at risk of immediate and dangerous self-harm.

I'm available to meet during your Monday clinic visit, but I also offer counselling sessions Monday-Friday. To book an appointment you can call Susie at 604-875-4012 or the Main Desk at 604-875-4040. Or if you mention to a staff member that you'd like to see me (you don't have to confide the reason why), an appointment will be arranged. I eventually see almost everyone at some point during their stay on the YARD Program, so I look forward to meeting you!

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