

# 8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

## RECOVERY CAPITAL CONFERENCE OF CANADA



TELUS CONVENTION CENTRE  
CALGARY, ALBERTA  
APRIL 3-4, 2024



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## MEET THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE



**Giuseppe Ganci**  
Conference Co-chair



**Jordan Bowman**  
Speaker and Presenters Coordinator



**Jessica Cooksey, MA CCS-AC ICADC**  
Conference Co-chair



**Ruben Buck Breaker**  
Conference Cultural Advisor



**Matthew Kalenuik, CCS-AC ICADC CAPM**  
Communications Coordinator



**Dr. Nathaniel Day**  
Conference Scientific Advisor

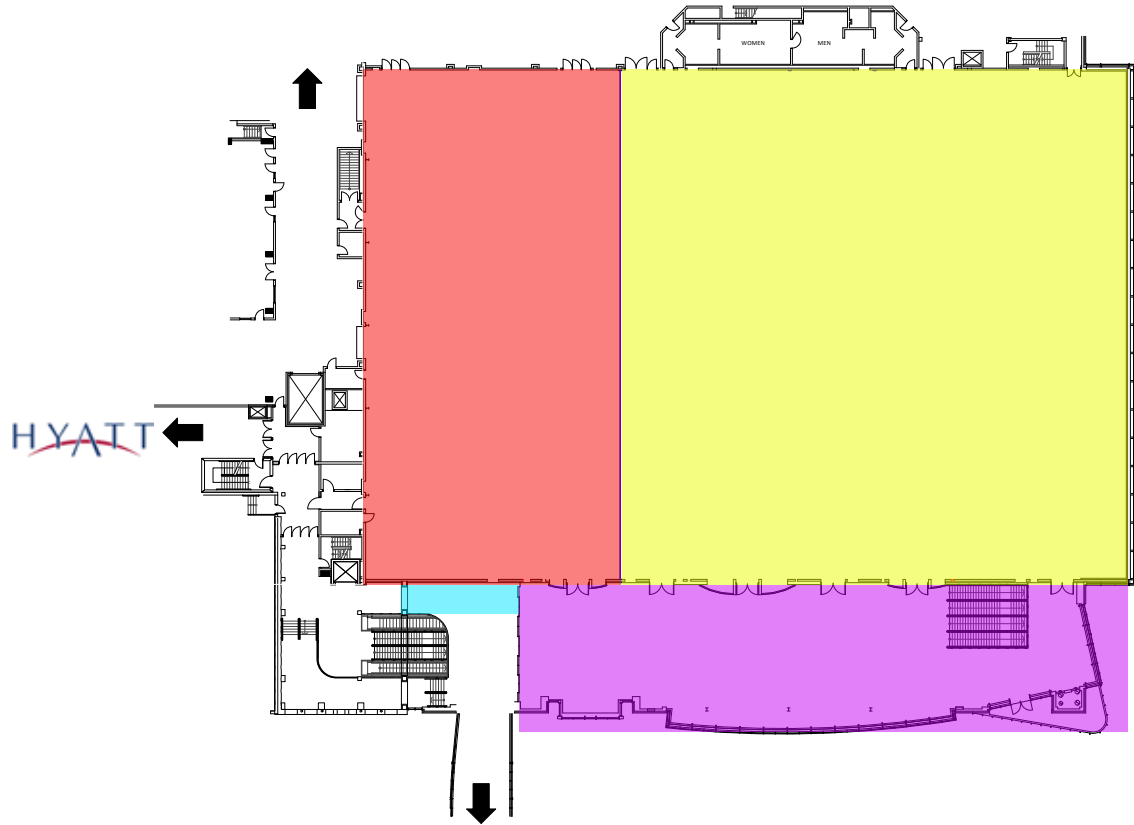
The Recovery Capital Conference of Canada is a pivotal gathering focused on building recovery capital to enhance the lives of individuals and communities affected by addiction. At the heart of this conference is the concept of recovery capital—the breadth and depth of internal and external resources that can be drawn upon to initiate and sustain recovery from addiction.

As we explore the many facets of recovery capital, from personal to social, and physical to cultural, our sessions are designed to empower, educate, and connect. Attendees will gain insight into the latest research, innovative practices, and lived experience stories of resilience. Our diverse panels, workshops, and networking opportunities are crafted to provide practical tools and foster collaboration among professionals, individuals in recovery, families, and their support networks.

Our advisory committee's expertise in counseling, scientific research, cultural awareness, and communication, has shaped a conference that reflects the multifaceted nature of addiction recovery. They have ensured that every aspect of the conference is aligned with the core mission: to improve the recovery process by enhancing all recovery capital domains.

Join us for an inspiring journey as we navigate the landscapes of recovery and discover new territories in addiction treatment and recovery management. The Recovery Capital Conference of Canada is more than an event—it is an advancement towards accessible resources in all recovery pathways.

From all of us: Thank you for attending!



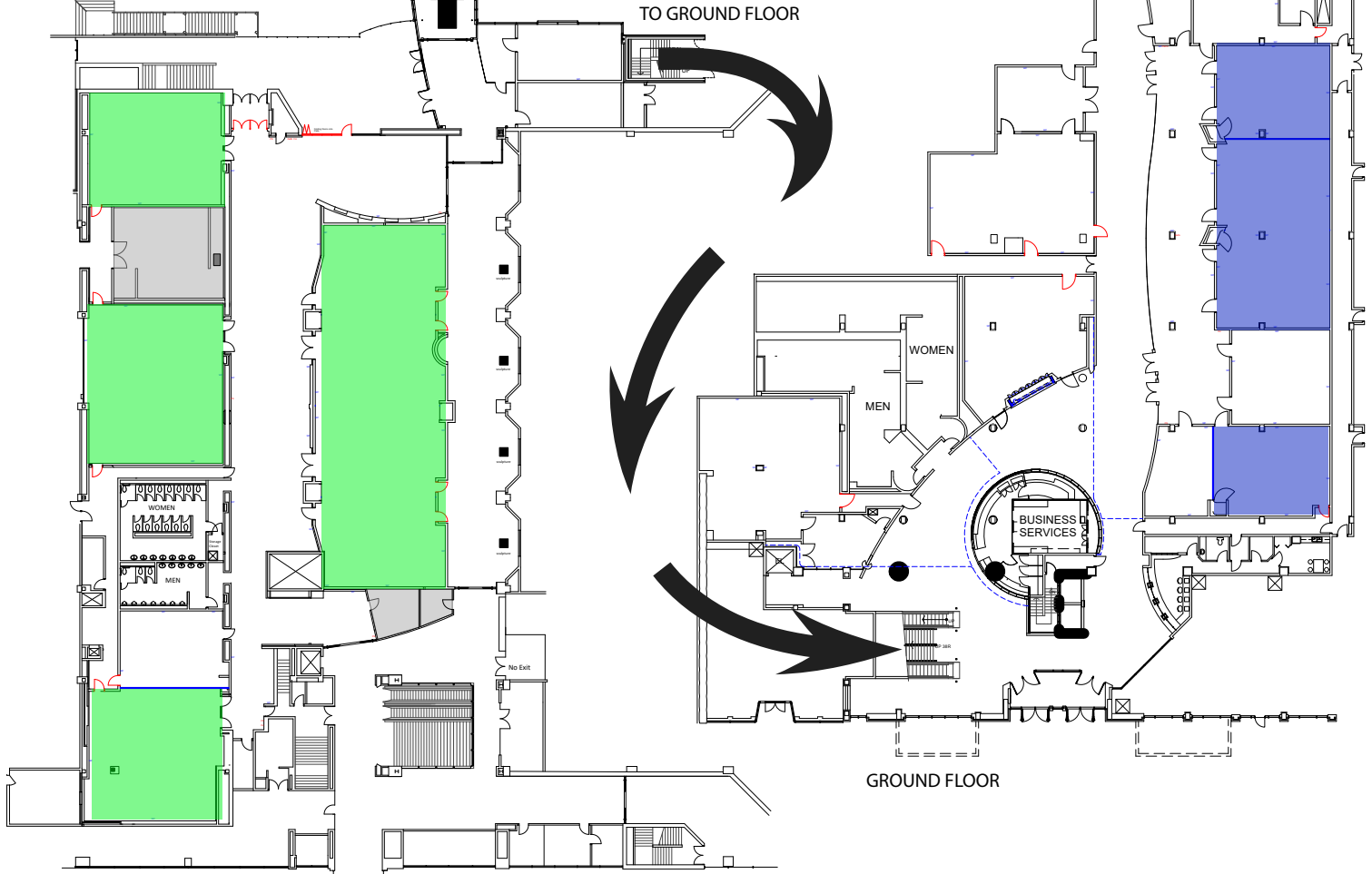
- MAIN ROOM
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- REGISTRATION
- HALL C
- GLEN ROOMS
- TELUS ROOMS

GLEN 201-210

PLUS 15  
NORTH BUILDING

ESCALATOR  
TO GROUND FLOOR

Stephen Avenue - 8th Ave SE



GROUND FLOOR

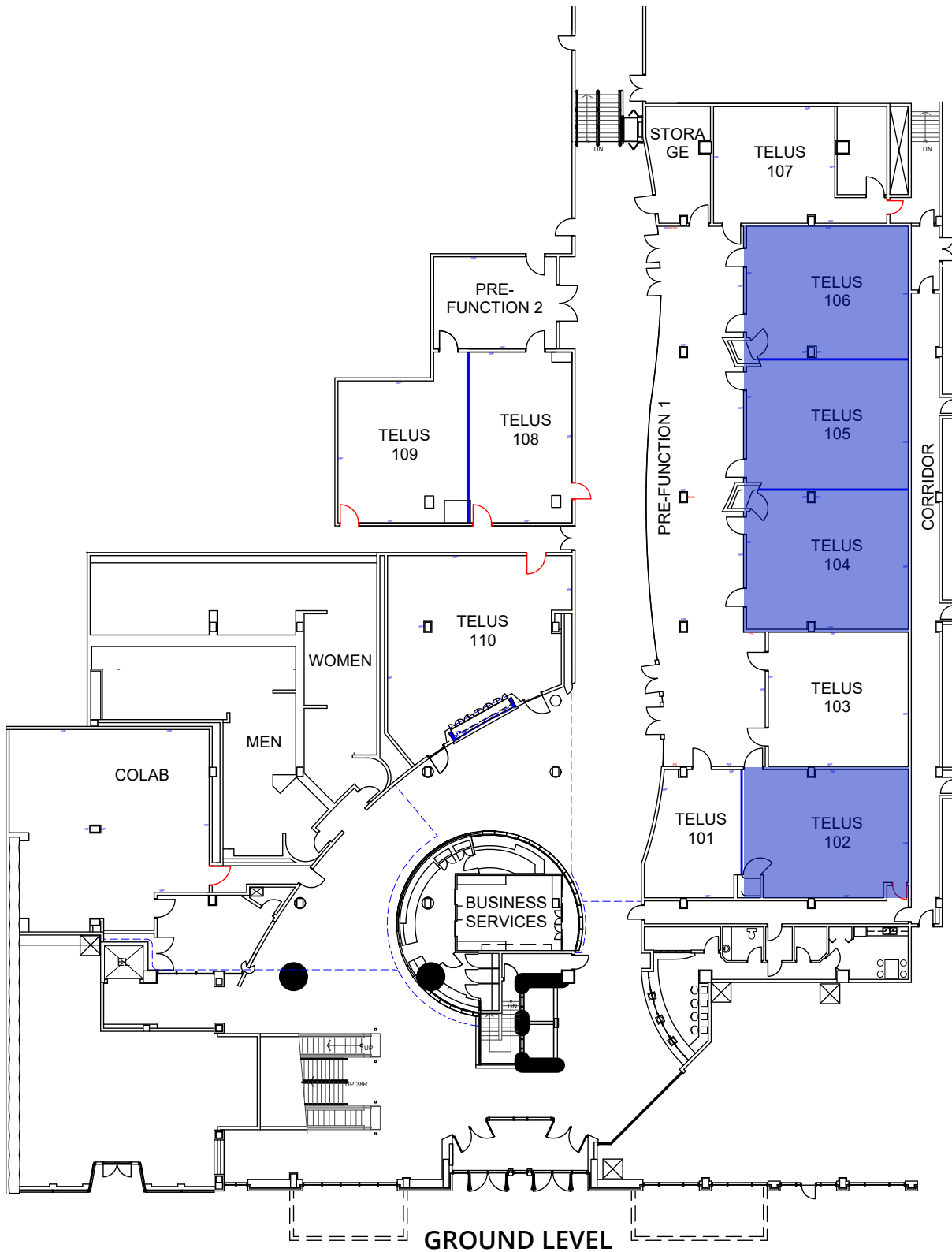
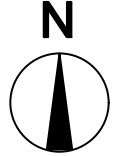
9th Avenue SE



# GLEN ROOMS DETAIL VIEW



# TELUS ROOMS DETAIL VIEW







# MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER OF ALBERTA

On behalf of the Government of Alberta, I am pleased to welcome you to Alberta for the eighth annual National Recovery Capital Conference in Calgary. This conference is an opportunity to gather and focus our efforts on supporting people in their pursuit of recovery—in Alberta, in Canada and around the world.

Throughout North America, jurisdictions are faced with an addiction crisis that is taking lives and causing pain for communities, families and loved ones. This heartbreaking situation will only get worse unless leaders come together and adopt an approach focused on long-term recovery.

We are proud to introduce the Alberta Recovery Model. Whether it is the construction of 11 new recovery communities, the removal of prohibitive user fees or award-winning programs like the Virtual Opioid Dependency Program, the Alberta Recovery Model is providing opportunities for recovery that have never before existed. Our government's vision is an Alberta where anyone suffering from the deadly disease of addiction has an opportunity to pursue recovery and live a fully engaged life.

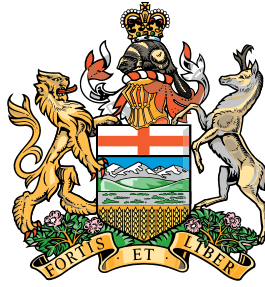
There is hope in recovery, and our government is excited to share what we're doing with all of you. Throughout this conference, I hope you are inspired to continue supporting recovery in your own organizations, provinces, states, countries and communities, as we are doing here in Alberta.

Thank you to all those who helped make this event possible.  
Best wishes, and enjoy your stay in our province.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danielle Smith".

**Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta**





# MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

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Over the past five years, Alberta's Government has been hard at work building a system of care focused on supporting the pursuit of recovery from addiction and mental health challenges. We are excited to share our Alberta Recovery Model with the world.

There are many initiatives taking place in Alberta that are a first of their kind in Canada. I am proud to share this system with you as we are all looking for solutions to the addiction crisis.

Thank you to all of our partners who have built and continue to build the Alberta Recovery Model with us. Where we are today would not be possible without the dedication of our team in the Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction, those in the non-profit and charitable sector, First Nations and Metis partners, and our publicly delivered system soon to be known as Recovery Alberta. Thank you for the part you play in the delivery of this system of care here in our province.

As Alberta's Minister of Mental Health and Addiction, I hope you will join us in supporting recovery, saving lives, and reuniting people with their families, communities, and culture.

I hope you have a productive conference.

Dan Williams  
Minister of Mental Health and Addiction

# WELCOME TO THE CONFERENCE

On behalf of the Advisory Committee, we welcome everyone to the 8th Annual Recovery Capital Conference of Canada and hope you enjoy this year's signature conference hosted in Calgary, Alberta, on April 3-4, 2024.

The Last Door Recovery Society proudly presents the 8th Annual Recovery Capital Conference of Canada. The Advisory Committee has built a conference designed to enhance knowledge from coast to coast to coast. The Recovery Capital Conference of Canada started in 2017, and service providers were intrigued by Recovery Orientated Systems of Care (ROSC). The conference grew to the national stage, where six cities across Canada participated and learned how building recovery capital and recovery-orientated systems of care support individuals, families, and communities.

The conference topics genuinely reflect current trends, recent advances, and innovative recovery-oriented approaches. The esteemed lineup of over 80 presenters includes renowned experts, academics, government and elected officials, addiction and mental health professionals, and individuals with lived experiences.

We are honoured to extend a warm welcome to all those dedicated to the transformative journey of recovery. This gathering is a platform designed to inspire, educate, and empower those navigating the intricate pathways of recovery. Addiction is a complex and pervasive issue that affects millions of lives worldwide and transcends boundaries of age, gender, race, and socioeconomic status. Yet, amidst the challenges and struggles, hope exists—a beacon of light illuminating the way toward connection, healing, and renewal.

We gather as a community of resilience,

aligned in our commitment to overcome the grips of addiction, and forge a path toward improved health. Through insightful discussions, informative workshops, and shared experiences, we aim to foster an engaged environment where individuals can find solace, guidance, and the tools needed to embark on the important work of helping individuals in their recovery journeys. Whether you are a healthcare professional, therapist, counsellor, a person with lived experience, a person in recovery, or someone here to learn how to support individuals on their journey, this conference offers valuable insights, practical resources, and a network of allies.

Join us over the next two days as we embark on this transformative journey toward breaking free from the chains of addiction and rebuilding lives filled with purpose, resilience, and boundless possibilities. Together, we can inspire change, ignite hope, and pave the way toward a future where recovery is possible and celebrated.

*Jared Nilsson*

Jared Nilsson, MBA  
Executive Director  
The Last Door Recovery Society





# LAST DOOR

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# THERAPEUTIC LIVING UNITS

*Dr. Paul Sobey*

Therapeutic Communities (TCs), termed Recovery Communities (RC) in Alberta, were originally founded to address substance use disorders (SUDs) and have proven to be effective in addressing this mental health disorder. It is essential to examine the potential therapeutic value of RCs and RCs modified for correctional setting, termed Therapeutic Living Units (TLUs) as countries worldwide struggle with current opioid and evolving polydrug use epidemics and the costs of under or untreated SUDs.

RCs and TLUs are long-term residential programs for the treatment of substance use disorders. Participants normally remain in treatment for a minimum of four months, but more commonly for up to one year. The model has more than six decades of demonstrated success in helping individuals to achieve remission from SUDs and establish sustained recovery. These outcomes are accomplished by providing people with opportunities to enhance life skills and social competencies, which in turn assists with a return to full community living.

RCs and TLUs are an evidence based, transformative model that uses the community (community as method) as the primary instrument to empower members and motivate change. RCs employ a recovery orientation that focuses on overall behavioral and lifestyle changes, not just abstinence from substances. This recovery orientation is different from the more traditional, acute-care model in several ways. Individuals in a RC are seen as members or participants in a community rather than patients being helped to attain abstinence through treatment episodes.

The model employs a social learning and social re-integration focus and has been modified for communities, correctional (termed Therapeutic Living Units) and other settings. In fact, the model has been adopted worldwide, operating

in 65 countries in community, correctional and other environments. The RC model has also been adapted to meet the needs of multiple other populations, including youth, families, individuals with co-occurring disorders, and homeless populations. Regardless of the environment, the 14 components, the essential concepts and guiding principles that assist change are present in all RCs and TLUs.

A significant body of research exists on TLUs which is drawn from multiple different country's experience. Studies confirm the following results:

1. Cost savings. In one study, TLU treatment showed a net annual savings of \$5,230 per inmate from lowered costs for arrest, conviction, incarceration, supervision, and avoided crime victimization.
2. Becoming crime free. Recidivism and rearrest rates are significantly lower for TLU graduates. Re-incarceration was reduced by more than 50% in one study of men completing TLU treatment and engaging in aftercare compared to men completing no treatment.
3. Becoming substance free. Return to substance use and/or problematic substance use is significantly lower for TLU graduates. In a 5 year study of men completing one year of treatment in a TLU in Colorado, relapse to substances occurred more than 15 months after those who did not complete the program.

There are several program variables that have been studied and which act as determinants of achieving short and long-term success.

Learn more in our session *Transforming Corrections*.

# Supporting Albertans in their pursuit of recovery

Alberta is leading the world by building a system of care focused on recovery. Suffering from addiction or mental illness can be challenging, but recovery is possible. The Alberta Recovery Model provides support through prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery to save lives and reunite Albertans with their families, culture, and community.

**ALBERTA  
RECOVERY  
MODEL**

*Alberta* 

Learn more at [Alberta.ca/RecoveryWorks](https://Alberta.ca/RecoveryWorks)



# TEENS AND SUBSTANCE USE

*Rand Teed*

Teens and Substance Use Our culture still has much of the attitude that substance use needs to be part of growing up, a rite of passage. Many of today's parents survived that experiment when they were teens and assume that it is not a big deal. For some, it might not seem significant; however, for many, it marks the beginning of a downward spiral. Ninety percent of adults in North America who meet the criteria for a substance use disorder started their substance use prior to the age of 18. Substance use by teens is considered the number one adolescent health problem<sup>1</sup>.

Unfortunately, this issue is not paid enough attention to, partly because it is normalized and partly because it is not even considered when assessing problems related to adolescents. I have worked with teens for 50 years and have seen over and over again the problems associated with substance use, primarily cannabis and alcohol. Both these substances have the potential to cause mental health symptoms ranging from attention issues to anxiety and depression.

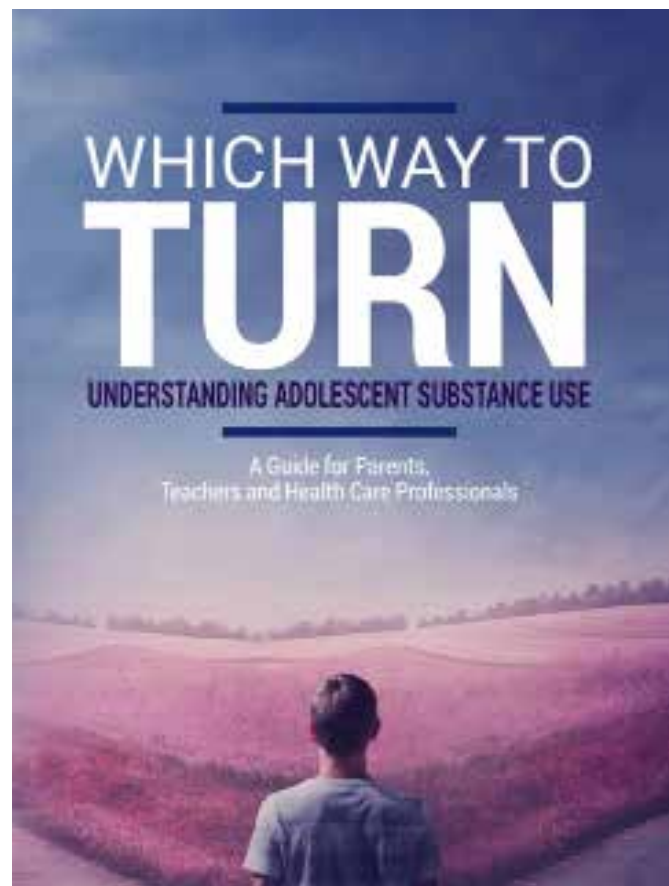
Often, parents and primary care professionals react only to the symptoms, without exploring the underlying issues. I have had many teens who are problematically using substances come back from the doctor with a prescription for an antidepressant or anti-anxiety medication; when I ask if the doctor asked about their substance use or if they disclosed it themselves, the answer is generally 'no.' This represents a system failure. We must prioritize recognizing these problems more effectively.

We also need to pay a lot more attention to providing education and prevention programs. The danger lies in what teens don't know. If they think it is normal or safe (which is what

a lot of the cannabis culture promotes), then that significantly reduces their risk perception of what they are doing. The media focus on opiates has unintentionally reduced the risk perception of other drug use. I have had many teens say, 'Well, it's just alcohol or just weed.' Teens, parents, and professionals need to have much more focused education on the effects of substance use on the developing brain.

For a more detailed look, please attend my presentation and pick up a copy of my book *Which Way to Turn: Understanding Adolescent Substance Use*.

*Garofoli M. Adolescent Substance Abuse. Prim Care. 2020 Jun;47(2):383-394. doi:10.1016/j.pop.2020.02.013. Epub 2020 Feb 21. PMID: 32423721.*





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# SASKATCHEWAN'S VISION

*Hon. Tim McLeod Minister of Mental Health and Addictions*

Addictions have a devastating impact on individuals, families, and our communities. That is why Saskatchewan has a new Action Plan for Mental Health and Addictions that focuses on three key pillars: building capacity for treatment, improving the system itself, and moving to a Recovery-Oriented System of Care.

To build capacity for addictions treatment, we are adding 500 more addictions treatment spaces to double capacity through the publicly funded health care system. We are working with third-party partner organizations to bring gold-standard addictions treatment providers to Saskatchewan while we double down on the best of our home-grown providers. A total of 183 additional spaces have been announced so far, with more announcements to come in the weeks and months ahead.


In addition to building capacity, we also need to make treatment more readily accessible, better match patients with the appropriate service depending on their needs, and provide a bridge whenever a specific service is not immediately available. That is why we are also working to implement a central intake system for addictions treatment that patients can contact directly and self-refer for treatment. We are also working to implement a Provincial Opioid Agonist Therapy program to provide province-wide rapid access to legitimate addictions medicines, similar to what is being done in Alberta. By making addictions treatment services more accessible and more responsive, we can better align with the window of opportunity that opens when a patient decides they are ready for treatment.

Moving to a Recovery-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) will take time and is the ultimate goal of our new Action Plan. Saskatchewan's model for ROSC recognizes that the traditional 28-day

model is insufficient for treating highly addictive drugs such as opioids and crystal meth. It focuses on building people back up from a holistic perspective to create the conditions necessary to support lasting recovery. Our approach recognizes that individuals have agency, and that fostering a sense of ownership over the recovery journey is a key pillar for success. Addressing concurrent mental health issues and trauma is an important part of our approach.

Saskatchewan's vision is for a full continuum of services across the province, including detoxification and withdrawal management, inpatient and outpatient treatment, post-treatment and Recovery Living, and peer support throughout the continuum of care and within the broader community. I look forward sharing more with you about the work being done in our province to address what is one of the most difficult challenges of our time.

Sincerely,



Hon. Tim  
McLeod  
Minister of  
Mental  
Health and  
Addictions  
Government of  
Saskatchewan



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# ONTARIO'S TRANSFORMATION

*Hon. Michael A. Tibollo Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions*

In the province of Ontario, mental health and addictions policy is aligned towards the creation of a recovery-oriented continuum of care. When our government first took office in 2018, decades of neglect and chronic mismanagement and underfunding had left Ontario with a broken and siloed system of mental health and addictions care.

We knew that the system needed to be rebuilt and modernized, which is why in 2020, we developed the Roadmap to Wellness – our strategic plan for the future of mental health and addictions care in the province. The future we outlined is one in which anyone in Ontario – regardless of where they live – is able to access evidence-based, low-barrier, culturally safe and appropriate services that are designed to give them their lives back.

We want everyone in our province to have the opportunity to live happy, healthy, and fulfilling lives. One of the most important ways to ensure they have that opportunity is by prioritizing prevention and early intervention, particularly for young people. 70% of all mental health and addictions challenges in adults developed during adolescence, and we know that for every dollar we spend on prevention now, we save up to \$17 on treatment later.

One of the projects that has shown the most promising results in this regard has been our Youth Wellness Hubs. Developed in partnership with CAMH and based off of a model initially designed in Iceland, these hubs are designed and operated by the communities they operate in, and their services reflect the unique cultural needs of the diverse communities in Ontario.

The other critical part of our vision involves treatment and recovery. The concept at the heart of our recovery-oriented continuum of care is that we have to meet people who are struggling where they are, but we can't leave them there.

Though our government has increased annualized funding for mental health and addictions programs by over \$525 million, we know that further specific investments are needed to expand bed-based treatment capacity in the province. That is why we created the Addictions Recovery Fund, a focused, \$90 million fund designed to open 400 new withdrawal management, addiction treatment, and supportive treatment beds in parts of the province that had historically been neglected. Of those beds, 56% went to northern and Indigenous communities.

The Government of Ontario is committed to the goals of the Roadmap to Wellness. We are making larger investments in mental health and addictions care than any other government in our province's history, and I look forward to continue working with other provincial partners to establish recovery-oriented continuums of care across Canada.



Michael A. Tibollo  
Associate Minister of  
Mental Health and  
Addictions





The opposite  
of addiction

is  
connection.



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# ELEVATE YOUR HEALTH & RECOVERY

*Vanisha Breault*

Running saved my life, something I often emphasize. Almost two decades ago, I couldn't run more than 30 seconds – it was a humble start. However, during that first attempt to “run,” I experienced an unexpected sensation – I FELT BETTER. That moment marked the beginning of the most profound relationship of my life.

Over the past decade, I've witnessed the transformative power of athletics in revolutionizing the lives of individuals grappling with addiction and mental health challenges. These aren't professional athletes, but trust me, they embody the spirit of athletes. These individuals have taken a leap of faith to elevate their health and recovery, experiencing the same exhilarating feeling I did nearly 20 years ago: WOW, I FEEL BETTER!

I've discovered that there's no better way to rewire our brains and heal our hearts and bodies than by integrating exercise with other therapeutic modalities. Using movement as a form of therapy complements and enhances our efforts to optimize health and recovery.

Countless studies support the effectiveness of running and its positive impact on mental health. The link between physical activity and mental well-being has been unequivocally established, with abundant evidence worldwide. For instance, research published in Australia's Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport demonstrated that engaging in aerobic exercise three times a week at moderate intensity over nine weeks significantly alleviated depression symptoms.

At the Terminator Foundation, the organization I founded, we recently celebrated another cohort graduating from our 12-week ABRT Program. In exit interviews, one partici-

pant exclaimed, “This is the best I've felt in ten years.” His outcome measurements indicated a remarkable improvement in mental health, overall well-being, resilience, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking skills. Additionally, we observed a significant reduction in anxiety, depression, and feelings of hopelessness. As an athlete, healthcare professional and a person in long term sobriety I am relentless when it comes to championing individuals in their recovery journey's. At Terminator we pull out all the stops when working with our athletes (clients) and work closely with many organizations, therapists, and clinicians to guide individuals towards their recovery goals.

Exercise possesses the remarkable ability to provide immediate relief and foster well-being. The list of benefits of exercising for addiction recovery are many; sleep improvement, curb cravings, boosts mood, new friend groups, improves self-image to name a few. What's truly remarkable is that we possess not just one, but two brains – the mind and the body. It only makes sense to harness the power of both, to pursue a purposeful, meaningful life! Regardless of where you are on your journey of life and recovery, moving your body can be a game changer. We were designed to move, to feel at home in our bodies.

One thing I know for certain is this: if you choose to lace up those running shoes and take one step forward, I promise, you'll feel better too.

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\* Fictitious patients, may not be representative of all patients.

References: 1. NARCAN® Nasal Spray Product Monograph. March 05, 2021. 2. Tsuyuki RT, et al. Canadian national consensus guidelines for naloxone prescribing by pharmacists *Can Pharm J*. 2020 Nov-Dec;153(6):347-351.

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# EMPOWERING RECOVERY

*Dr. Christina Basedow and Dr. Carson McPherson*

In the heart of Alberta's innovative addiction treatment and recovery landscape lies the Recovery Community program, a beacon of hope built on a foundation of structure and support. Guided by the Recovery Communities Provincial Manual - Program Guidance (2022), operators of these communities' craft programs that offer a standardized, effective approach to treatment. At the core of this model are four key phases, each pivotal in a resident's journey toward recovery:

1. **Orientation:** This initial phase acquaints residents with the Recovery Community environment, introducing them to its rules, expectations, and available support. It serves as a crucial period of adjustment and community immersion.
2. **Primary Treatment:** Residents engage in tailored, intensive treatment addressing their unique needs. Therapy, counseling, educational sessions, and skill-building activities are employed to tackle addiction's root causes and develop strategies for long-term recovery.
3. **Community Living:** Progressing residents transition into this phase, applying acquired skills and strategies to real-life situations. Participation in community activities, forming relationships with peers, and taking on increased responsibilities within the community are key elements.
4. **Community Transition & Continuing Care:** The final phase prepares residents for life beyond the Recovery Community. Collaborating with counselors and support staff, residents create personalized continuing care plans. These plans often include ongoing therapy, support group involvement, vocational training, or other services supporting their ongoing recovery journey.

Each phase builds upon the last, providing a structured, supportive environment for lasting recovery. Adhering to the Recovery Communities Provincial Manual ensures residents receive consistent, high-quality care

that aligns with the program's objectives.

A cornerstone of the program is its emphasis on community and peer support, creating a sense of belonging and motivation for residents. This supportive environment is further enhanced by the Lakeview Recovery Community in Gunn, Alberta. Set to open this spring, Lakeview will not only provide recovery support but also house the Recovery Training Institute of Alberta. This institute, through virtual and in-person training, aims to develop a workforce capable of operating all Recovery Communities and ensuring their long-term sustainability. Lakeview will be the Alberta Model's teaching hospital, setting a high standard for addiction treatment and recovery.

Already operational in communities like Edgewood Health Networks (EHN) Red Deer Recovery Community, the first to be operational in Alberta; additionally the site in Lethbridge, the Recovery Community program has shown promise. Early assessments from the Red Deer Recovery Community, through a collection of outcomes measures and standardized assessments, reveal significant positive effects of treatment, including decreases in interpersonal dysfunction, difficulties with social roles, and overall psychological symptom distress.

The program's future is bright. Additional sites, including communities in Calgary, Enoch Cree Nation, Siksika Nation, Blood Tribe Nation, and Metis Nation Alberta, are scheduled to open in 2024-2025. These new sites will expand access to high-quality addiction treatment and recovery services, ensuring all Albertans have the support needed to overcome addiction and rebuild their lives.



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# ENHANCING ADDICTION RECOVERY

*Jordan Bowman*

In the landscape of addiction treatment within Canada, a transformative approach has emerged, heralding a new era of intervention and support. My Recovery Plan, an innovative application developed by Last Door, stands at the forefront of this paradigm shift, offering a comprehensive solution to a complex problem that affects a significant portion of the Canadian populace. Substance use disorder, with its multifaceted impact on individuals and communities, has long required a treatment model that transcends traditional methodologies. This necessity has become particularly pressing as one in ten Canadians grapple with the negative consequences of drug and alcohol use, a statistic that underscores the urgency for more effective recovery strategies.

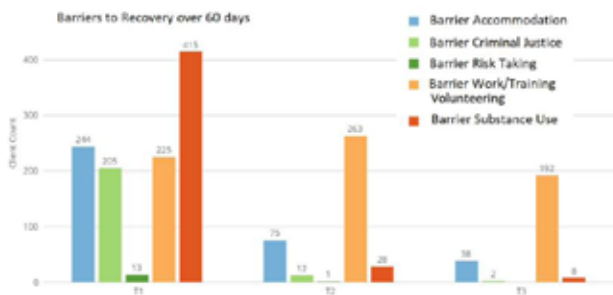
At the core of My Recovery Plan is the concept of Recovery Capital, a framework that encompasses the personal, social, and community resources available to individuals seeking to overcome addiction. The application

meticulously targets three pivotal areas—physical well-being, social connections, and community engagement—through a process that begins with a comprehensive assessment across seven domains of Recovery Capital. This initial evaluation paves the way for a personalized recovery plan, complete with specific, achievable goals, thereby ensuring that progress is not only attainable but also measurable. An assigned navigator accompanies users on their journey, offering guidance and support as they endeavor to enhance their Recovery Capital score.

Distinguished by its empowering, person-centered approach, My Recovery Plan facilitates a recovery-oriented pathway that accommodates diverse methodologies, from harm reduction to peer support. The emphasis on community engagement encourages users to forge a robust support network, a feature that is complemented by the application's data-driven, evidence-based design. This design leverages the latest research to track outcomes, providing users with tangible proof of their progress.

The impact of My Recovery Plan is both significant and far-reaching. Users have reported a 64% increase in their Recovery Capital Score within just 60 days, alongside consistent improvements in Quality of Life Scores. These results are further validated by the adoption of the application by 58 treatment centers across multiple Canadian provinces, signifying a collective recognition of its potential to redefine addiction treatment. The digital tracking of over 8,328 resources has streamlined the allocation of support services,

**Change in Barriers to Recovery over 60 days**



**Change in Service Needs over 60 days**

Evaluation Order	Alcohol Treatment	Drug Treatment	Employment Support	Family Relationships	Housing Support	Mental Healthcare	Other Specialist	Primary Healthcare
T1	286	324	132	218	132	266	127	207
T2	95	111	48	89	40	109	35	76
T3	58	63	46	48	29	58	17	36

facilitating access to everything from medical appointments to housing solutions.

In response to the growing demand for greater oversight on bed-based programs and outcomes, My Recovery Plan offers a solution by delivering concrete data on treatment efficacy. Its dashboard provides insights into what is working and what is enhancing the quality of life for users, adopting a path-neutral approach that prioritizes the client's experience over the superiority of one treatment pathway over another. For the first time, providers can evaluate the impact of their services based on client responses, shifting the focus from competing methodologies to the tangible benefits experienced by those in recovery.

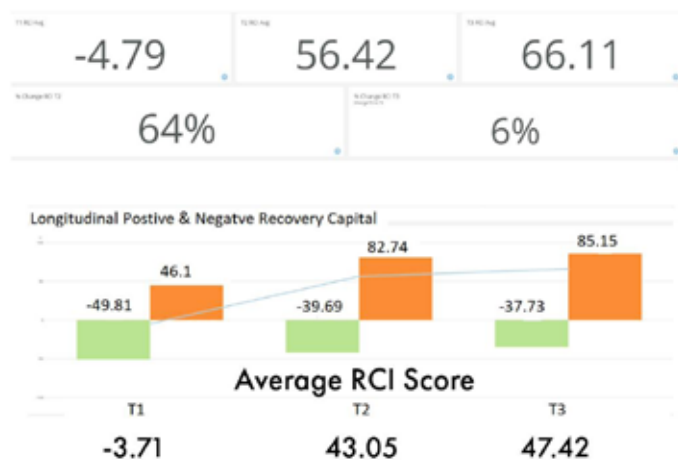
As we advance into 2024, Last Door's commitment to the success of My Recovery Plan remains unwavering. With ongoing assessments and a comprehensive outcomes report anticipated in 2025, the initiative is poised to continue leading the charge in addiction recovery innovation. My Recovery Plan transcends the traditional confines of an application; it is a movement towards a more holistic, person-centered approach to addiction treatment. By harnessing the power of technology and data, Last Door is not only transforming lives but also reshaping the future of healthcare's response to addiction.

For individuals battling addiction, or those concerned for a loved one, My Recovery Plan represents the first step towards building a healthier, happier life. By embarking on this journey of recovery and empowerment, together, we can overcome addiction and foster healthier communities across Canada.

### Change in Quality of Life Score over 60 days



### Recovery Capital Change Over 60 Days



To learn more, visit [www.myrecoveryplan.ca](http://www.myrecoveryplan.ca)



# INCLUSIVE RECOVERY CITIES

*Dr. David Best*

The concept of recovery has changed over the course of the last forty or fifty years from something that is seen as an internal quality to something that has a much more strongly social and community focus.

Recovery Capital and the language of recovery This fits with the idea of recovery capital – generally referred to as the breadth and depth of resources that supports an individual in their recovery journey. When we classify recovery capital, as I first did in a paper for the Royal Society for the Arts (Best and Laudet, 2010), we think of it as split into three areas:

- Personal recovery capital – those internal qualities that an individual has to support their recovery journey, like resilience and self-esteem
- Social recovery capital – the networks and relationships that can be drawn upon to support recovery
- Community recovery capital – which is the sum of resources available in the community to assist in the recovery journey

A recovery model operates differently from a treatment one based on two different assumptions:

1. Recovery is a journey of around five years that takes place in families and communities after acute treatment has been completed
2. Recovery starts from ‘the outside in’ – it is through positive social networks and accessing community resources that an individual is able to initiate and sustain their recovery journey

Thus, at its most basic, recovery can be described as jobs, friends and houses or, alternatively as ‘somewhere to live, someone to love and something to do’. And so the aim for supporting recovery is to create the conditions the maximises the chances for individuals to achieve these things, according to their own needs and passions.

## *So what is an inclusive recovery city?*

At its most basic, a recovery city is a place which promotes visible recovery, challenges stigmatising and discriminatory attitudes and champions multiple pathways to addiction recovery. However, it is also based on the idea that, through doing this, the whole city will grow and benefit.

Based on an idea originally written up with the Belgian academic Charlotte Colman (Best and Colman, 2018), the aim was to examine what could happen at a municipal level to maximise the likelihood that people could initiate and sustain recovery based on some really exciting things that were going on in Ghent in Belgium, Gothenburg in Sweden and Doncaster in the UK.

However, what started as an idea has turned into a social movement with 10 cities in the UK, 14 in the Balkan region and other cities all over the world (including Africa and America) engaging with the recovery cities movement.

## *What does a city have to do to become an Inclusive Recovery City?*

### *How does this challenge stigma?*

Scan the QR for the rest of the article:







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# FINDING HOPE

*LDYP ALUMNUS*

There was a time when life felt like a series of closed doors, each path leading to darker corners. My journey into the abyss started innocently enough; a young kid from Alberta trying to fit in at the local skate park. What began with stolen chocolate bars and cigarettes quickly descended into a whirlwind of alcohol, opioids, and eventually, harder substances. School expulsions, police encounters, and a troubling addiction became my reality. I was caught in a cycle of destruction, moving from one high to the next, seeking refuge in substances that only pulled me further away from the life I desired.

The decision—or rather, the series of court-ordered interventions—that led me to the Last Door Youth Program was my turning point. It wasn't an easy choice. In fact, it felt less like a choice and more like a last resort. My addiction had taken everything from me: my health, my relationships, and my future. By the time I arrived at the program, I was running on empty, a shell of the person I once hoped to become.

The Last Door Youth Program was unlike anything I had expected. Those first days were the hardest of my life. I was sunburnt, angry, and resistant to change. I wanted out. But something happened after the first week; a realization that this could be my new beginning if I allowed it to be. The program didn't just focus on detoxification; it was about rebuilding from the ground up, learning to live without substances, and finding joy in sobriety.

One of the most challenging aspects of the program was confronting my past behaviors and their impact on my family. Addiction isn't a solitary battle; it's a storm that engulfs everyone in its path. Through the program, I began to mend the broken relationships with

my parents, who had suffered immensely due to my actions. It was a painful process, filled with guilt and regret, but also one of healing and understanding.

Yet, it was the community within the Last Door Youth Program that truly transformed me. Surrounded by peers who shared similar struggles, I found a sense of belonging and support that had been missing from my life. We laughed, shared stories, and leaned on each other during our weakest moments. This camaraderie, this brotherhood, became the foundation upon which I built my new life.

Reflecting on my journey, the best part of my experience at Last Door was the realization that I could enjoy life without substances. I rediscovered laughter, formed genuine connections, and learned to appreciate the simple moments. The program taught me valuable life skills, but more importantly, it showed me that recovery is possible, and hope is never lost.

Today, my life is unrecognizable from the chaos that once consumed me. I've completed high school, enrolled in university, and started a new job. My relationships with my family and friends have never been stronger. But the road to recovery is a lifelong journey, one that I walk with the lessons learned and friendships made at the Last Door Youth Program.

To anyone struggling with addiction, feeling like there's no way out, I say this: give yourself a chance. The path to recovery is fraught with challenges, but it's also filled with moments of profound joy and fulfillment. The Last Door Youth Program didn't just save my life; it gave me a life worth living.

For more information visit <https://lastdoor.org/ldyp/>



PRESENTS

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction and  
The Government of Alberta

# ALBERTA RECOVERY MODEL AWARDS LUNCH

April 4th 12:30 to 1:30 PM | Main Room

## **Youth Advocacy Award**

Exemplary digital advocacy in the areas of prevention and recovery

## **Youth Impact Award**

A professional demonstrating exemplary work improving youth wellness

## **Recovery Systems Leader Award**

A professional demonstrating exemplary work improving recovery systems and prevention services

## **Lifetime Achievement Award**

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## **RCS announces ownership transition**

Legacy of support continues with renewed vision

Since 1991, Recovery Counselling Services (RCS) has provided addiction recovery support for thousands of individuals and families. After careful consideration, founder Hamish White has made the decision to pass the torch to a new leader. We are delighted to announce Christine McNicol as the new Owner and Managing Director of RCS.

Christine is a seasoned RCS counsellor with a profound commitment to our clients and the principles that define our practice. With 15 years of experience in the field of addictions, Christine embodies the spirit of compassion and excellence that RCS stands for. Her vision and passion will undoubtedly propel us forward as we continue to expand our services and reach.

RCS continues to offer specified assessments, recovery planning, outpatient therapy, counselling and support groups in our Toronto-based office and virtually. We value our referral relationships and we're proud of our ongoing collaboration with trusted residential treatment centres to provide the best care for our clients.

To learn more, please visit our new RCS website:  
[recoverycounsellingservices.com](http://recoverycounsellingservices.com)

**Recovery  
Counselling  
Services**



# CONTINUING EDUCATION INFO

The following certification bodies have approved CE Units

	Credits	Organization
MAINPRO+	See Website	College of Family Physicians of Canada
CACCF	12	Canadian Addiction Counsellor Certification Federation
CCPA	See Website	Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association
NAADAC	12	The National Association for Addiction Professionals
MDPAC	11 Group CE Credits, 1 CCI Credit	Medical Psychotherapy Association of Canada

As more Continuing Education information is provided by various certification bodies it will be made available on the Recovery Capital Conference of Canada website at [www.RecoveryCapitalConference.com](http://www.RecoveryCapitalConference.com)

Please check our website for additional information on claiming your continuing education units with individual certification bodies, as each have their own requirements and prerequisites.

For any inquiries please reach out to [community@lastdoor.org](mailto:community@lastdoor.org)



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**Cedars at Cobble Hill**  
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**Kelburn Recovery Centre**  
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**Westminster House Society**  
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**Fresh Start Recovery Centre**  
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# EXHIBITORS



**AWAC**  
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Bill Ward Life  
Calgary, AB  
[www.billward.life](http://www.billward.life)



Canadian Mental Health Association  
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Edmonton, AB  
[www.alberta.cmha.ca](http://www.alberta.cmha.ca)



Canadian Addiction Treatment  
Centres  
Markham, ON  
[www.canatc.ca](http://www.canatc.ca)



CARF Canada  
Edmonton, AB  
[www.carf.org](http://www.carf.org)



Canadian Addiction Counsellors  
Certification Federation  
Carp, ON  
[www.caccf.ca](http://www.caccf.ca)



My Recovery Plan  
New Westminister, BC  
[www.MyRecoveryPlan.ca](http://www.MyRecoveryPlan.ca)



Cedars Recovery  
Cobble Hill, BC  
[www.cedarscobblehill.com](http://www.cedarscobblehill.com)



EHN Canada  
Nanaimo, BC  
[www.ehncanada.com](http://www.ehncanada.com)



Emergent Biosolutions  
Mississauga, ON  
[www.emergentbiosolutions.com](http://www.emergentbiosolutions.com)



Family Solutions Group  
Edmonton, AB  
[www.familysolutionsgroup.ca](http://www.familysolutionsgroup.ca)



Fresh Start Recovery Centre  
Calgary, AB  
[www.freshstartrecovery.ca](http://www.freshstartrecovery.ca)



Homewood Health  
Guelph, ON  
[www.homewoodhealth.com](http://www.homewoodhealth.com)



Insight Psychological  
Alberta  
[www.insightpsychological.ca](http://www.insightpsychological.ca)



Kapown Rehabilitation Centre  
Grouard, AB  
[www.kapown.ca](http://www.kapown.ca)



Kelburn Recovery Centre  
Howden, MB  
[www.kelburnrecoverycentre.ca](http://www.kelburnrecoverycentre.ca)



Lakeview Recovery Community  
Alberta  
[www.alberta.ca/recovery-communities](http://www.alberta.ca/recovery-communities)



Last Door Recovery Society  
New Westminister, BC  
[www.lastdoor.org](http://www.lastdoor.org)



Narcotics Anonymous  
Calgary, AB  
[www.canaacna.org](http://www.canaacna.org)



On a Dime Transformations  
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Oxford House Foundation of  
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RAE Institute  
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