

In an effort to support the design and overall planning for a new purpose built community health centre, to be located at 58 West Hastings, VCH Community Engagement held 2 focus groups with 20 individuals who have had experience using CHC services in the area. This compilation of their feedback provides their perspectives, ideas and feedback on what a client focused community health centre could be.

This narrative format reflects multiple suggestions for the design features described.

This input will be provided to the facility design team to make the facility as welcoming, safe, comfortable and barrier-free as possible. Not all of this feedback may be possible to implement, but we are looking for every opportunity to make the site and the services work best for the people who use them.

What we asked....

- *What would make the space feel safe, welcoming, comfortable, and barrier-free to you?*
- *What features would you like to see in the; reception/waiting areas and the clinic and meeting spaces?*

What we heard ...

My community health centre

In my community, when I need health care, I go to my community health centre at 58 West Hastings. The outside is clean and modern with lots of glass, cedar posts and trees and shrubs. There is a large art piece; etched feathers on glass that really welcomes the neighbourhood to this space and also acknowledges those who have passed. When I walk inside it is clean, warm and I am greeted by a peer worker. I go over to the kiosk with the iPads and check in by answering a few questions or if needed I can check in with the person who greets me. The waiting area is large but has different areas where I can sit and wait. It is a warm and welcoming space with lots of natural light and a water feature. I usually don't have to wait very long to see a health care person but while waiting there are TV's have on different programmes. I like Planet Earth and the one that provides healthy living tips. There is a space with information brochures that I can read and take with me. The security person who is friendly and sits just past the entrance in the waiting area but a little apart from the main reception desk. There is a needle exchange with access right off the front entrance or through a window that opens from the street. If I bring my bike there is a safe locked space to store it in with windows facing into the area so I can look at it while waiting. The security can also watch over my stuff while I am in my appointment. Some people have carts or scooters and there is room with shelves for bags and stuff while people are waiting or in their appointment.



I like coming here, it is a welcoming and safe space to receive care and healing

The reception area is so open and welcoming and I really like that there is no Plexiglas between me and the staff. The staff are kind and do not judge me. They ask me how I want to be addressed while I am here. There is an amazing amount of artwork in this area with murals on the walls, posts and dividers.

The chairs are comfortable and there is a lot of wood on the walls which makes it a warm space. There is an area of the waiting room for young children to play, it is a cool space with stars and planets. There are books and colouring supplies for kids and also colouring supplies and art materials in the adult waiting area. There are tables in the waiting area that I can use to colour or read or some people do homework while they wait.

Wifi is available in the waiting areas and there is a charging dock for phones. There is a wall display to alert me so I know when it is time for my appointment. There are lots of options for washrooms and they are welcoming to all genders. The washrooms have alert systems to let staff know if someone has collapsed or stopped moving and there are no black lights in them. The washrooms are always clean and you can tell there is someone who regularly checks in and cleans them. There are even showers available if I need one. There is a bug sauna on site so I can blast my clothes or bags if needed.

The entry and waiting areas are so calming and have warm, soft colours with soothing music playing and artwork that changes on the walls. The lighting is softer and the light fixtures are unique and look like you are seeing the outside. There are buttons on the wall that a person can press if there is an emergency. There is a small kitchen where I can go to eat or get water and tea and some days there is fresh fruit in baskets and granola bars. There are often boxes of condoms and sunscreen or other hygiene items that I can take if I need them.



The entire space has a healing and wellness focus and you can feel it in the design of the space and the way staff interact with clients.

There is a pharmacy on site, right next door with an inside entrance off the waiting area so if I am prescribed any medications I can get them right away including medical cannabis. There is even a place where I can get photo ID taken and provided right away which is very helpful. The waiting area has a small space where people can just rest if they need to or get a bite to eat. There are peer

workers in the waiting areas to support me and others who need help. There is a message board where I can leave notes for other people who come to this clinic so they can know if I am trying to reach them or find out if they are ok. Also there is a space on the board where we can acknowledge the passing of friends and people we know; their pictures are put up and we can leave notes. Some areas are dedicated to people who have died. The peer workers let me know that if I need anything, shoes, clothes, or take me to the Giving Space where I can look through what is available and find what I need.

I am trying to quit smoking but I am having a really hard time so still need a smoke. I used to worry about missing the call for my appointment when I was outside having a smoke but here there is a small space next to where the bikes and carts are stored where I can smoke. It is a funny looking room enclosed with glass so I can see my bike and stuff and the staff can see me if I am having a smoke.



Seeing my health care team

This space has two floors but most of my appointments take place on the first floor but some; those with the MH team or consults, happen on the 2nd floor. Every area in here is open and the spaces are warm and welcoming with soft colours. The walls are interesting to look at with wood and plants and art. The rooms where I see my health care team are clean and warm not cold or clinical. These rooms are used for different types of appointments. Sometimes I see a doctor or a nurse and sometimes I see the social worker or counsellor. The glass walls in these rooms is different and smart; it can be clear or frosted if you need more privacy. These rooms can be used for confidential discussions. It is hard to hear bad news but being in a warm, welcoming space where you can sit and recover from the news is supportive.



I sometimes attend groups sessions like SMART, AA or other educational sessions. The group room is warm and comfortable and easy to access as it is just near the waiting area. There is a TV in the room which is used for the education and group sessions. This room has a wall fountain and lots of light which makes it a very calming space. Just off this room there is a small space for meditation or ceremony. There are Elders on site and they support people to heal. Smudging ceremonies take place either in the larger group room or the smaller sacred space.



There is small garden space off the second floor where flowers and vegetables grow. A small seating area is available for clients to sit and there is another separate area for staff.

The space inside and out is filled with Aboriginal healing images and artwork. It is place of health and wellness and one I like to come to receive health care.

