

March 16, 2020

Lisa Lapointe
Chief Coroner
Office of the Chief Coroner
PO Box 9259
Stn Provt Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9J4

RECEIVED
MAR 16 2020
CHIEF CORONER

Dear Ms. Lapointe

**Re: Verdict at Inquest into the death of:
EURCHUK, Elliot Cleveland
BCCS Case File #2018-1038-0053**

Thank you for your letter of January 27, 2020 addressed to our CEO Kathryn MacNeil. I respond on her behalf as Vice President of Medicine. The organization appreciates the opportunity to provide an update on Recommendation 7 made by the jury in the Verdict of Inquest.

Island Health is committed to providing a range of accessible, low barrier therapeutic service options to meet the service needs of children and youth living with substance use or mental health challenges.

As outlined in Island Health's August 6, 2019 letter to the Office of the Chief Coroner, the health authority has expanded the range of substance use services available across Vancouver Island. These include expanded capacity to provide medically supervised detox; enhanced community-based youth detox services; improved access to Addiction Medicine Consult Services in hospitals; establishment of a Medical Lead for Youth Addictions; and the creation of a Youth Intensive Case Management Team in the Greater Victoria area. Island Health also partners with Victoria and Campbell River Foundry sites to provide mental health and substance use services and supports for youth aged 12 to 24. Island Health anticipates partnering with future planned Foundry sites within our service area.

At this time, there is no plan to develop a long-term residential treatment facility for substance use disorders on Vancouver Island. At the time of the jury's original recommendations, Island Health considered this recommendation and, in consultation with Clinical Leadership, determined that there is not sufficient demand to develop a residential treatment facility. In addition, it was noted that a centralized site removes youth from their primary support networks, which are critical to a comprehensive approach to recovery and treatment. Family, peers and community are integral to supporting youth through recovery from substance use, and experience has shown that removal from these supports has a negative impact on youth's completion of treatment programs. At this time, Island Health is working to

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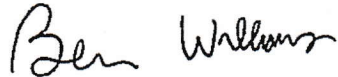
enhance the range of substance use services at the local community level. We will continue to monitor the need for a residential treatment service.

To better meet the needs of youth requiring out-of-home services, Island Health has reviewed its Family Care Home Model. As a result of this review, Family Care Home beds are being re-envisioned to provide more robust wrap-around supports for youth, including the introduction of day programming. This new model is being implemented in both South Island and Central/North Island and is supported by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions. Preliminary results of this new approach indicate increased client retention in programming and positive client feedback.

For youths assessed as potentially benefitting from a residential model, Island Health continues to have access to provincial residential treatment resources specializing in youth, including Ashnola in Keremeos, Peak House in Vancouver and Nechako Youth Treatment in Prince George.

Island Health remains committed to enhancing substance use services for youth and supports for families across the Island. We are grateful for the continued spotlight on this challenging issue, as highlighted in the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Framework, A Pathway to Hope.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Williams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ben T. Williams, MD, CCFP
Interim Vice President of Medicine, Quality and Academic Affairs
Island Health