



Daytime Warming Centre

2023-24 Project Summary Report

PREPARED FOR:
CITY OF WHITE ROCK

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Introduction

Engaged Communities Canada Society (ECCS) is a registered non-profit organization whose initiatives work to address the systemic gaps that exist for underserved communities across British Columbia's Lower Mainland region in accessing equitable solutions to complex health, social, and economic challenges.



Our primary activities include the delivery of food, personal hygiene services and supplies, health education and resources (including overdose prevention, mobile health unit, and COVID-19 response), youth programming (academic assistance, mentorship, athletics, and outdoor adventures), and extreme weather response supports (cooling stations and warming centres) to communities in greatest need.

This report provides a summary of 2023-24 Centennial Park Daytime Warming Centre operations by ECCS in partnership with the City of White Rock. As the operator of this initiative since 2021, we remain dedicated to supporting winter extreme weather response efforts for White Rock/South Surrey communities.

For inquiries about this report, please contact info@eccsociety.org or visit www.eccsociety.org.

Operations Summary

Located in the City of White Rock's Centennial Park, the Daytime Warming Centre operates as a temporary Extreme Weather Response shelter supporting individuals experiencing homelessness in South Surrey/White Rock during the winter season. It is operated by Engaged Communities Canada Society.

The warming centre consists of a heated trailer with a maximum capacity of 30 individuals and two mobile washrooms. It was operated by a team of staff, care providers, and security personnel from November 27th, 2023 to March 8th, 2024. It was open 7 days per week during the hours of 7am-10pm, often opening earlier and closing later to accommodate the needs of shelter guests.

The warming centre provides low barrier access to a number of health and social services including; basic needs supports (such as hot meals and beverages, personal hygiene and first aid supplies, personal care services, clothing, hygiene facilities), emergency first aid and drug poisoning response, physician and nurse-directed medical services, counselling, transportation, government assistance programs, system navigation, referrals and program registration, activities, and emotional / conversational support to its guests.

It supported ~3845 visits over 103 days during the 2023-24 season. On some days over 50 individuals were assisted, particularly during extreme weather conditions.



Impact

A number of positive impacts were observed throughout the 2023-24 operations of the Daytime Warming Centre. Some examples are summarized below:

- Offered protection from extreme winter weather and reduced the risk of cold-related injuries (such as hypothermia and frostbite) and death
- Supported individuals at risk of and those experiencing homelessness to meet their basic needs. This included culturally appropriate foods and prayer spaces.
- Increased access to longitudinal medical care by providing services on site including assessment, treatment, prescriptions, lab requisitions, and referrals to community health services as per individual health-related needs
- Addressed urgent medical concerns through life-saving emergency first aid, drug poisoning response, and connection to emergency medical services
- Connected shelter guests to external services (including securing housing and income assistance programs) which helped to reduce new inflows into homelessness, returns to homelessness, and chronic homelessness.
- Roundtrip transportation supported smooth operations of nighttime shelter operator
- Contributed to public safety through de-escalation and crisis intervention, security services, regular foot patrols, responding to concerns from the City and public, and provided a regular physical presence which was especially important during periods of closure of City services.
- Ongoing in-kind electricity and plumbing services to ensure smooth operations



Pictured here is shelter guest Lisa Kwiatkowski, a 56-year old woman experiencing homelessness in White Rock, BC who sought refuge at the Daytime Warming Centre. Lisa courageously shared her story with Peace Arch News ([linked here](#)).

Moving Ahead

2023-24 Daytime Warming Centre operations saw notable shifts from previous years. For example, we saw a significant increase in the magnitude and complexity of services required to meet the needs of shelter guests. Additionally, we saw a change in client demographics including higher numbers of women, women fleeing violence, seniors, gender diverse individuals, youth, immigrants,



international students, and individuals whom were employed and/or had shelter and faced challenges with meeting their basic needs. This required our team to secure additional resources and utilize diverse skillsets to ensure the needs of shelter guests were responded to appropriately, and is an important consideration for future operations.

As in previous years, extreme weather patterns were unpredictable and continue to have life-threatening consequences for unsheltered individuals. This year, we also saw changes in legislation and policies, requiring our team to pivot accordingly and respond effectively to emerging challenges.

We acknowledge the many collaborators who contributed to the delivery of the Daytime Warming Centre and express our gratitude to the public who provided donations and warm sentiments of support.

We remain committed to supporting the health and social needs of individuals at risk of and experiencing homelessness in White Rock/South Surrey, and along with the wider community, advocate for such efforts to continue as needed.

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