



Women's Sexual
Assault Centre
healing, education & prevention

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Women's Sexual Assault Centre Looking for a New Home

VICTORIA - The Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre is looking for a new home and they're asking for help from the community. Currently located in the St John's Ambulance building on Pandora, the Centre will be moving as a result of the pending purchase of the site by VIHA in order to house the needle exchange and other related services.

"This is not the year we would have chosen to move," states Sandy McLellan, Executive Director. "We face continuous funding challenges and a budget that is already stretched thin. Major transitions this year, including my retirement at the end of June and an urgently needed overhaul of antiquated computer systems, are adding extra stress and expense to an already overburdened staff and budget."

With a lack of suitable rental options and lease rates that are twice what the Centre is currently paying, they are facing some very difficult times ahead. Moving costs, necessary renovations and increased rent will add costs to the budget that are equivalent to two full-time positions.

"We recognize the need and certainly support enhanced services for those dealing with addictions," says McLellan. "We are committed to finding an accessible, adequate space for the Women's Sexual Assault Centre that is conducive to the healing work that we do. It is for this reason that we are choosing to go public and let the community know that we need their help."

The Centre has served the Capital Regional District for 26 years and is recognized as a leader in healing, education and prevention of sexualized violence. Last year over 2,800 survivors and their families accessed services and over 1,500 youth were reached with prevention education through a program called Project Respect. The demand for services continues to grow.

The Centre is asking for help in locating at least 3,400 square feet of accessible office space that is suitable for counselling services. They are also asking for financial donations to help offset increased costs and they encourage everyone in the community to convey to government, both municipal and provincial, the urgent need to maintain the current level of services that the Centre provides. For additional information, contact the Centre at 383-5545 or visit the website at www.vwsac.com.