

Mental Wellness Day Program

Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program. Call (250) 370-8126.

About Us

The Mental Wellness Day Program is a group-based, recovery-oriented psychosocial rehabilitation program.

Our team includes occupational therapists, nurses, a social worker and a recreation therapist.

We are an adjunct to the primary mental health clinician and psychiatrist and help support the treatment goals created with them.

Who We Serve

We serve adults with diagnosed mental health problems such as schizophrenia, psychosis, bipolar disorder and major depression.

What We Do

Provide a comprehensive individually tailored group treatment program in three broad categories.

Support for stabilization helps acutely ill individuals get better faster.

- Alternative to inpatient care
- Supports transition from inpatient to outpatient care
- Structured routine gently increases tolerance for movement, concentration and social interaction
- Daily function-based assessment of stabilization

Education and skill development helps stable individuals gain knowledge and independence.

- Illness education and management
- Coping skills
- Daily living skills

Recovery and health promotion helps individuals expand beyond the illness.

- Develop a healthy lifestyle
- Integrate into community roles
- Explore meaning and purpose

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Referral Criteria

- Intended for individuals who have a primary Axis I diagnosis and who are 17-75 years' old
- Individuals with developmental disabilities or head injuries are better served by other resources in the community.
- Participants must be receiving care from a psychiatrist

Referral Process

- Referrals can be made by any health care professional involved in the individual's care.
- Referrals external to Mental Health and Substance Use Services can be made through Mental Health Intake.
- Internal referrals are made via Pathways.
- **For questions about referral criteria please phone: (250) 370-8126.**

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Treatment Group Descriptions

Categorization and descriptions of groups are meant for general information only.

The Mental Wellness Day Program staff will help individuals create a group treatment program to meet their specific rehabilitation needs.

| <i>Support for stabilization</i> | <i>Education and skill development</i> | <i>Recovery and health promotion</i> |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qi Gong• Relaxation• Vic AM• West African Drumming• Yoga | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CBT for Psychosis• Managing Depression (CBT Skills Training)• Mindfulness• Relaxation• Sage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choices• Power Walking• Sage• Springboard• Smoking Reduction and Cessation• Strength Training• West African Drumming• Well & Wise• Yoga |

Descriptions of specific groups are found alphabetically below.

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Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for Psychosis

What

Learn and practice basic CBT skills and apply them to psychotic symptoms (hallucinations, paranoia, and delusions) and the depression, anxiety, amotivation and isolation that often accompany them.

Who

- Individuals who are receptive to thinking and behaving differently in order to feel better.
- Individuals who can tolerate a 60-minute group setting.
- Individuals who can commit to doing homework.

Why

- Individuals want to learn how to cope and manage better with ongoing psychotic symptoms.
- Individuals need to be provided with structure and support to initiate learning new ways of thinking
- Remove some of the barriers of isolation by sharing similar experiences, thoughts, and feelings with others.

Facilitators

Darryl Jackson, Social Worker, and Nadine Kot, Occupational Therapist.

When

Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Where

Room 609, 6th floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants may start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible but regular attendance is required

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Choices

Contemplative Group for Substance Use

This group is facilitated in partnership with Youth and Family Mental Health and Addiction Services

What

Raises self-awareness and provides information about drug and alcohol use.

Who

- Younger individuals (age 17-24 years old) who misuse alcohol and/or street drugs and who have experienced psychosis.
- Are open to thinking about their use of alcohol and/or street drugs, but have not made a decision to decrease their use.
- Are able to participate in a group of 8 people for 45 minutes.

Why

- Need to get information about drug and alcohol use in the context of self-assessment
- Need to become more self-aware regarding drug and alcohol use
- Need to evaluate one's relationship with drugs and alcohol
- Need to orient themselves to formal treatment services in the community

When

Tuesday: 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Where

Room 624, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- New referrals are interviewed and screened for suitability
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately

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Managing Depression (CBT Skills Training)

This group is facilitated in partnership with Psychology Services.

What

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy teaches practical skills to change cognitions (“thoughts”) and behaviours (“actions”) in order to help manage symptoms of depression.

Who

- Individuals with a diagnosis of depression or depression with anxiety
- Not suited for people with a diagnosis of psychosis, rapid cycling bipolar, or primary Axis II diagnosis
- People at any level of acuity are welcome
- Participants must be able to be present without being disruptive to the group process

Why

- To learn information about the diagnosis of depression and associated symptoms
- To learn the importance of and to practice skills for managing depression including:
 - Behavioural activation
 - Goal setting and problem solving
 - Identifying and changing unhelpful thinking patterns
 - Communication skills
 - Relaxation techniques
 - Healthy lifestyle behaviours

When

Tuesday and Thursday: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Where

Room 609, 6th floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Group is run with an open format where participants can start on any module
- Group consists of 12 Modules for 12 weeks total – participants can repeat Modules if needed to understand the material

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Power Walking

What

Uses power walking on a community track to increase general fitness. Designed to provide a structured exercise routine in a supportive environment. Clients can gain a sense of accomplishment and increased confidence. Provides opportunities to integrate into community walking events.

Who

- Individuals whose symptoms have stabilized and who are ready to increase their physical activity
- Have shoes and clothing appropriate for walking in all weather conditions (wear hat & sunscreen as needed)
- Bring water bottle
- Have a minimum walking tolerance of 20 minutes
- Have medical clearance for participation
- Are able to participate for 1 hr 15 minutes three times a week
- Are able to safely participate in a community setting with moderate to minimal supervision

Why

- Individuals who need to improve their general fitness
- Need to increase confidence with exercise
- Need to develop exercise regime to manage illness
- Need to develop leisure activities
- Need an opportunity for socialization

When

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 2:15-3:30 p.m.

Where

Group takes place at the track behind Recreation Oak Bay. Meet at the track at 2:15 pm.

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- After the referral is received medical clearance is obtained from the GP
Once medical clearance is given, participants can start at any time
- Participants are asked to commit to attending three days a week for at least six weeks to fully benefit from this program
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs

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Qi Gong

What

Simple structured exercises that gently align the body, breath and mind for inner connectedness and relaxation.

Who

- Individuals in the stabilization or recovery phases of mental illness
- Have sufficient balance and stamina to stand and gently move for up to 30 minutes

Why

Individuals whose symptoms are not yet stable and

- Need to reduce muscle tension
- Need to increase tolerance for being with others in a group setting
- Need to calm and focus thoughts
- Need to develop a daily routine

Individuals whose symptoms are stable and

- Need to manage or prevent anxiety and stress
- Need to develop a leisure activity
- Need to integrate into community based Qi Gong programs
- Need to improve balance, coordination, physical and mental stamina

When

Monday: 11:00-11:45 a.m.

Tuesday and Thursday: 11:00-11:30 a.m.

Where

Room 609, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs

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Relaxation Group

What

Increases awareness and promotes management of stress-related symptoms. Provides instruction and practice in a variety of relaxation techniques including progressive muscle relaxation, passive muscle relaxation, basic stretching, deep breathing, and meditation.

Who

- Individuals who are motivated and ready to learn relaxation techniques
- Are not actively experiencing psychosis
- Are able to participate for 30 minutes
- Are able to participate in a group setting without disrupting others

Why

- Need to increase awareness of symptoms and causes of stress
- Need to manage or prevent anxiety and stress
- Need to develop an ongoing independent relaxation practice
- Experience state of relaxation is safe, supportive environment
- To assist in decreasing an individual's stress and anxiety by teaching and practicing a variety of relaxation techniques

When

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday: 11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Where

Room 609, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted participants can start immediately
- Participants are encouraged to attend regularly for at least six weeks to eight weeks to fully benefit from this program
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs

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Sage

What

Support for the recovery process. Illness education and self-management skills for mental illness, including psychosis, schizophrenia, depression, bipolar, and schizoaffective disorder.

Who

- Individuals who have experienced several years or several episodes of mental illness. (Younger individuals with psychosis are better suited to the Springboard Group).
- Individuals whose symptoms are stable and are ready to move beyond the patient role
- Able to participate in a 1-hour group
- Are not disruptive to the group process

Why

- Need a “home room” in which to experience peer support while participating in other Mental Wellness Day Programs
- Need an opportunity to explore and make sense of the illness experience
- Need to learn information about symptoms, diagnoses and medications
- Need to learn strategies for relapse prevention
- Need to learn strategies for coping with stress and other symptoms
- Need to learn self-management skills
- Need to increase awareness of personal strengths
- Need to develop a sense of hope and purpose
- Need support in setting small weekly goals and taking small steps toward developing roles and meaningful activities beyond the patient role

When

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Where

Room 624, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs

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Smoking Reduction and Cessation Group

What

Provides education and support for individuals at various stages of the addiction continuum - from pre-contemplation to relapse prevention.

Who

- Individuals living with mental illness who use tobacco products
- Are open to thinking about their use of cigarettes
- May or may not have made a decision to decrease their use
- Able to participate in a one-hour group each week

Why

- Need to become more aware regarding use of tobacco products in a personal context (learning about effects of cigarette use, strategies for reduction and cessation, dealing with withdrawal and cravings, nicotine replacement therapy, triggers, pros and cons of use, psychological and physical aspects, why they smoke)
- Moving through stages of change is enhanced by being part of a social support network
- Being exposed to a wide array of strategies to support cessation - i.e. use of NRTs, Mindfulness meditation, The Six D's – Delay, Distract, Drink water, Deep breath, De-normalization, Discussion
- Focus attention on developing new habits for promoting a healthy lifestyle

When

Tuesday: 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Where

Room 135, Victoria Mental Health Centre

How

- Participation does not require a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program – participants must be clients of either Mental Wellness Day Program and/or VMHC
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs

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Springboard

What

Support for the recovery process from first episode psychosis.

Who

- Younger individuals who have been diagnosed with a psychotic illness within the past five years (older individuals or those who have experienced several episodes may be better suited to the Sage Group)
- Are able to participate in a 45-minute group

Why

- Need a “home room” in which to experience peer support while participating in other Mental Wellness Day Programs
- Need an opportunity to explore and make sense of the illness experience
- Need to increase awareness of personal strengths
- Need to develop a sense of hope and purpose
- Need support in taking small steps toward developing roles and meaningful activities beyond the patient role

When

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 1:00-1:45 p.m.

Where

Monday, Thursday, Friday, Room 609, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion
Wednesday, Recreation Oak Bay Lounge

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs

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Strength Training

What

A community-based exercise program that is designed to increase awareness of the positive benefits of activity, to establish a fitness routine and to promote ongoing use of a community exercise facility. The strength training group is facilitated by recreational therapists, occupational therapists and a personal trainer.

Who

- Individuals with a mental illness whose symptoms have stabilized and are motivated to become more physically active
- Have medical clearance to participate
- Are able to participate in a 1-hour group twice a week for 12 weeks
- Are able to safely participate in a community setting with moderate to minimal supervision
- Are able to record participation in an exercise journal (basic reading and writing skills)

Why

- Need to increase physical activity and overall wellness
- Need to increase self-awareness of how activity affects mood
- Need basic education on exercise components (strength, cardio, flexibility)
- Need to develop comfort and familiarity with using a community exercise facility
- Need assistance in applying for the LIFE pass
- Need a starting place to develop ongoing healthy lifestyle habits

When

Tuesday and Thursday: 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Where

Recreation Oak Bay Fitness Studio

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- After the referral is received medical clearance is obtained from the GP
- Participants can start once medical clearance is obtained
- Often this popular group reaches capacity and participants may be placed on a wait list until an opening is available
- Participants are asked to commit to attending two days a week for at least twelve weeks to fully benefit from this program
- After discharge participants can continue to exercise in the same community facility at the same time to provide familiarity and continuity

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Victoria AM Task Group

What

Structured task-based morning group. Provides daily functional assessment of stabilization.

Who

- Individuals who are stabilizing from an acute episode of mental illness
- Are able to participate in a 40-minute group

Why

- Need support and continuity while transitioning from inpatient to outpatient care
- Need support and daily assessment as an alternative to hospital admission
- Need structured morning activity to begin establishing a daily routine
- Need opportunity to increase concentration and social interaction
- Are preparing to participate in more challenging Mental Wellness Day Programs

When

Monday to Friday: 10:00-10:45 a.m.

Where

Room 605, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and based on individual needs

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West African Drumming

What

Learn to play fun and energetic poly-rhythms on West African drums in a safe and friendly environment. No musical experience needed.

Who

- Individuals in all stages of illness and recovery are welcome
- Are able to sit and concentrate for 60 minutes
- Are open and willing to try to participate
- Suitable for individuals who may have difficulty participating in verbal groups

Why

- Need distraction from distressing or intrusive symptoms
- Need an activating and engaging activity to increase motivation
- Need an alternative means of self-expression and social connection when verbal interaction is difficult or disorganized
- Need to increase attention, concentration, memory and coordination
- Need the opportunity to take risks in a supportive environment
- Need to experience success and build self-esteem
- Need to develop focus and roles outside of the patient role
- Need opportunities to integrate into community activities

When

Wednesday: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Where

Room 609, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs

Well & Wise – Healthy Lifestyle Support Group

What

Learn more about healthy lifestyle and exercise. Set weekly lifestyle goals and practice self-monitoring. Receive support and encouragement.

Who

- Individuals with metabolic syndrome or at risk of developing metabolic syndrome
- Are interested in making healthy lifestyle changes
- Are able to participate in a 90 minute group

Why

- Learn about healthy living habits – such as nutrition/eating habits, cooking, physical activity, active living resources and programs in your community
- The group provides a chance to get active (neighbourhood walk), meet others
- An opportunity to build a personalized health and wellness toolkit
- The focus is on **positive** gains (knowledge) not stressful **loss** (weight)

When

Friday: 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Where

Room 135, Victoria Mental Health Centre

How

- Mental Wellness Day Program referral not required. Participants must be a client of either VMHC or MWDP. To refer a client, please call or email Sarah OT at sarah.a.smith@viha.ca or call 250-370-8392 and provide client's name and contact information
- Once referred, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs
- Participation of at least 6 months is recommended

Victoria Mental Health Centre Wellness Clinic

Participants must be clients of VMHC

Yoga

What

Participants are led through gentle stretching postures, breathing exercises and relaxation techniques by a qualified instructor.

Who

- Individuals who have adequate physical ability to engage in gentle stretching
- Individuals who are interested in the practice of yoga to help facilitate their recovery process

Why

- To increase activity level
- To increase physical strength and flexibility
- To participate in a meaningful leisure activity
- To learn relaxation skills, including awareness of the breath and attending to the present moment
- To assist in activation and re-engagement with a healthy routine

When

Wednesday and Friday: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Where

Room 609, 6th Floor Eric Martin Pavilion

How

- Participation requires a referral to the Mental Wellness Day Program
- Once accepted, participants can start immediately
- Length of participation is flexible and depends on individual needs – group is designed to provide an introduction to the practice of yoga with the goal of participants continuing their practice in their home communities