

Protection Services

Protection Services at Island Health

Protection Services Officers (PSO) are employed by Island Health to protect clients, property and information as well as respond and investigate requests from staff, patients and the public in matters of security, fire and parking. The PSO's conduct arrests, detention, searches, seizure, inspection and use of force, as required, in accordance with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Confidential Patient Information - PSO's are subject to the same confidentiality policies and laws as all Island Health staff. Under certain circumstances, client information including records of incidents involving physical interaction with clients may be shared with PSO's to help manage difficult client interactions. This information is always treated as confidential.

Code White (violent/aggressive behavior) - PSO's respond immediately to all Code White calls and take the lead where medical circumstances permit. PSO's have training in Management of Aggressive Behaviour as well as use of force, tactical communication, and medical restraint application. PSO's immediately interrupt any imminent or occurring violence and then consult with clinical staff on the most appropriate resolution or mitigation strategy. PSO's undertake the least restrictive and most compassionate approach possible when dealing with violent situations and only restrain clients in consultation with the clinical care team, unless reacting to an emergency situation.

Code Red (fire) - PSO's respond as the facility Fire Warden and, in conjunction with Facilities Management & Operations, establish the level of response required in a fire situation, as well as determining when it is safe to announce an "all clear" through collaboration with local Fire Departments. PSO's conduct fire drills, inspections and staff safety education in order to meet life safety fire codes and hospital accreditation standards.

Use of Handcuffs - PSO's are provincially licensed by the Attorney General's Office and regulated under the Security Services Act to carry and use handcuffs while on duty at Island Health facilities during a citizen's arrest or in situations where a serious risk to public safety presents. PSO's receive training in handcuff use through the Justice Institute of British Columbia and undergo regular re-certification.

Helicopter Safety - PSO's work under the direction and training of the local heliport manager to perform pre-arrival inspection of the heliport to meet Transport Canada safety guidelines. PSO's have the ability to call-off a landing if hazards are present.

Bicycle Patrol - PSO's are supplied with bikes to efficiently patrol outlying areas of hospital properties more swiftly and frequently than would be possible on foot. PSO's receive advanced in-house training on bicycle use and safety.

Staff Escorts - PSO's are available to escort staff to or from their vehicle or other outbuilding on Island Health property, providing they are not responding to more urgent matters.

Constant Security Watch - PSO's do not provide constant watch security, they provide patrol, prevention and acute incident responses only. If required, a contracted service provider is brought in for these purposes.

Excellent health and care for everyone, everywhere, every time