

Health Services Continuum for Underserved Populations

Underserved populations include people experiencing homelessness or live in supportive congregate housing facilities. These populations often face multiple, complex health care (including mental health and substance use) and social service needs. Within the contexts of a 'housing first' approach and the dual public health emergencies of COVID-19 and the overdose crisis, Island Health partners with local governments, public agencies and community organizations to address the health needs of underserved populations.

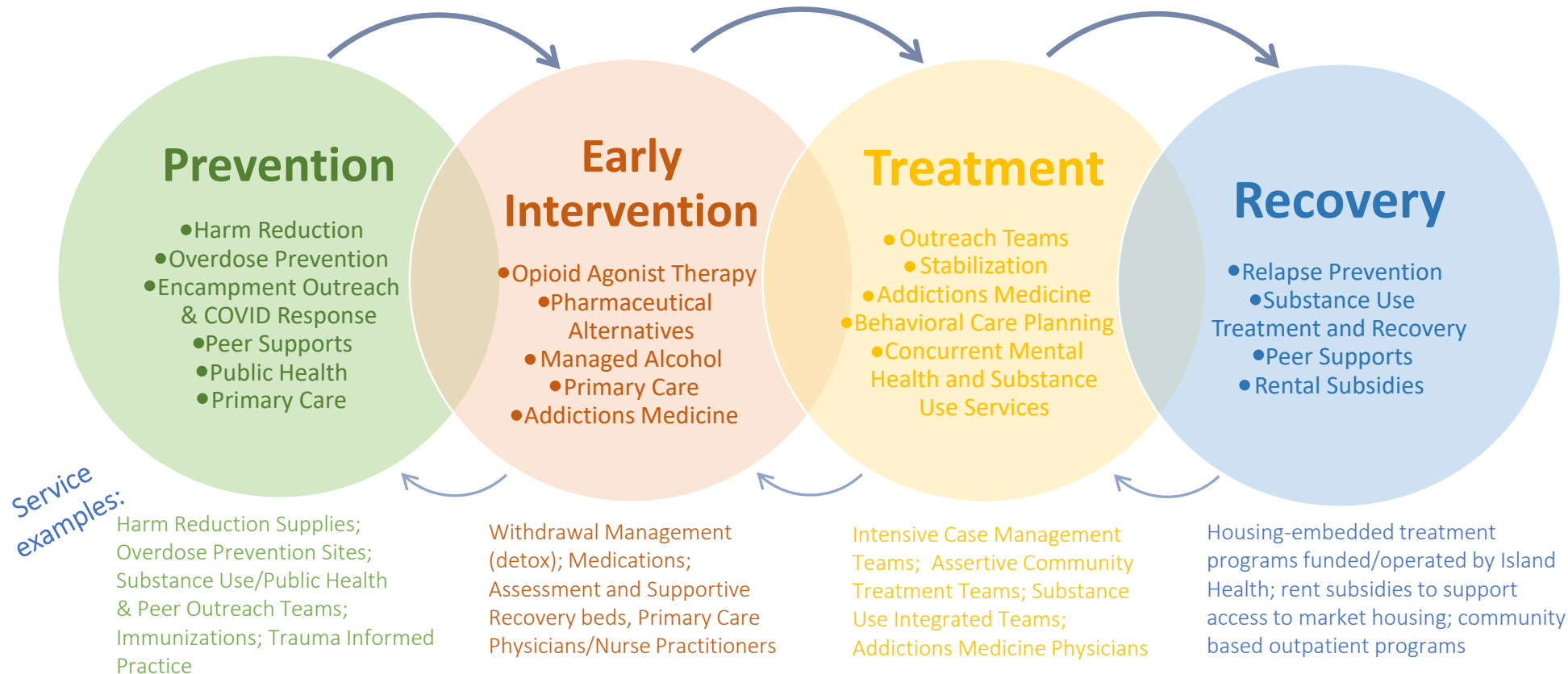


Health Services Goals

1. Improve access to health services for individuals experiencing homelessness or live in congregate housing who are struggling with serious and persistent mental health and/or substance use issues
2. In partnership with BC Housing, optimize use of rent subsidies to support individuals to access market rent housing.
3. With a vision to the sustained stability and enhanced quality of life for vulnerable populations, address gaps in the continuum of health care, focusing on access to substance use treatment and mental health supports.

Measuring Success

- Improved access to culturally appropriate, family inclusive services
- Reduced # of overdoses
- Increased # of people connected with outreach teams, early treatment, addictions medicine
- Increased retention in housing
- Increased retention in care
- Improved access to residential and outpatient treatment
- Reduced hospital use
- Improved housing tenure
- Improved health outcomes and client satisfaction



 **Indigenous Cultural Safety and Support**

Due to the legacy of colonization and racism, Indigenous people are disproportionately impacted by the Social Determinants of Health. Island Health is partnering with the First Nations Health Authority to apply an Indigenous cultural safety lens to our approach and care.