

MRTC introduces drug testing

With an annual program intake approaching 600 clients per year, a client is occasionally referred to us who is not prepared for the program. Expectations are that clients will remain clean and sober over the typical five weeks of treatment.

The decision to implement drug testing was founded on consultation and feedback from clients, referral sources and other stakeholders. The announcement to begin a testing process was received with a standing ovation by in-house clients. Since the inception of testing, client endorsement is strong. A discrete washroom for specimen collection has been established and state-of-the-art test materials are used to ensure that the procedure is fair and sensitive to the dignity of the client. In keeping with MRTC's philosophy that each client is a unique individual, if a client tests positive, a process of clinical team consultation and case manager-client meetings are held in the interests of developing a sound assessment of the person's needs and a constructive support plan. In situations where program discharge is an appropriate decision, the client is invited to join the case manager, and other supports, in developing a sound discharge plan.

It should be emphasized, however, that MRTC is absolutely committed to a treatment philosophy premised on the belief that each individual is responsible for their choices, including to abstain during treatment. Drug testing is in no way intended to act as an incentive to remain clean. Mark Goheen, Clinical Coordinator, explains, "MRTC clients deserve to experience treatment where all members of the in-house community follow through on their commitment to maintain abstinence from substances. The perception that another client has been unable to remain clean and sober while in treatment can undermine the individual and collective sense of safety and trust. Testing is just one case management tool used to help ensure that a safe and trusting environment is maintained".



Meet New Staff Member Luvanda Deganais

Luvanda Deganais, BSW, formerly with *Harbour Light Detox Centre*, recently joined MRTC as the Admissions Coordinator. She currently facilitates the Open Group for clients in their first week of treatment.

Luvanda is passionate about working in the addiction field and is a valued addition to the MRTC team.

Maple Ridge Treatment Centre celebrates 40th anniversary

Jim Galligan worked hard and drank hard, a life that suited him well until he realized there was little in it to live for. World War II left scars that had him reaching for the bottle at a young age. Then he was picked up drunk and sent to serve 30 days in Alouette River Correctional Unit in Maple Ridge. There he met Wilf and Florence Jourdain who were just about to open their home as a recovery house for alcoholics leaving the correctional facility.



Jim was one of the original six men at the Haney Halfway House, the predecessor of the Maple Ridge Treatment Centre, a 60-bed residential treatment centre for men struggling with substance abuse. Now, as MRTC celebrates its 40th Anniversary, 81-year-old Jim celebrates 40 years of sobriety. MRTC has come to be known as the House of Miracles, and Jim says he's living proof that miracles can happen.

On the Path has been reviewed by Marie Nightingale, Fraser Health Communications Advisor. If you wish to have your name removed from our distribution list please contact Karen Turner, Manager Health Services at karen.turner@fraserhealth.ca or Katherine McCombie, Coordinator Food/Nutrition & Housekeeping Services at katherine.mccombie@fraserhealth.ca or call (604) 466-6970.