OICH – Special Care Unit

The Special Care Unit (SCU) is a short stay program for men who would benefit from extra help with medical, mental health or addictions. The majority of people who are admitted to SCU stay less than 3 months and move on to housing.

The Special Care Unit is operated through a partnership between the Salvation Army Ottawa Booth Centre and Ottawa Inner City Health. The SCU has staff to help you which includes Personal Support Workers (available 24 hours per day), an SCU Case Worker, and Front Line Workers, Nurses and Doctors as well as a mental health Nurse practitioner.

Admission to SCU

Clients are accepted for admission to the SCU on the understanding that they wish to participate in the program and, are willing to work with staff to achieve their health and housing goals.

When you are admitted to SCU you need to be available to meet with the nurse and the SCU Case Worker within the first twenty four hours (on week-days) or on the Monday following a week-end admission. If visiting nursing services have been arranged for you by the Community Care Access Centre you need to stay in SCU until the home care nurse has visited you. The health care team normally visits the SCU on Monday and Friday. If you have been asked to be available to see the doctor you should check with the staff to see when medical rounds are for that week.

You will be asked lots of questions concerning any health problems you may have, and may need to have blood work or x-rays as part of the admission process. If you are prescribed medications, they will be delivered to SCU and administered by the staff.

When you meet with the SCU Case Worker he/she will explain the rules of SCU and will give you a Salvation Army identification card, identifying you and your bed number. The SCU Case Worker will discuss your goals for housing and will assist you in obtaining a health card and drug card if you require them.

Expectations of SCU Residents

Clients who are living in the SCU have special privileges in recognition of their health problems. However, there is an expectation that clients will cooperate with staff to address their health needs and work closely with the SCU Case Worker to arrange suitable housing upon discharge from SCU. If you are living in the SCU you have access to your room 24 hours a day which means that you should be available to meet with staff regarding your needs. If residents are never in SCU and are not available to work with staff we will assume that you do not required assistance from SCU staff and you will be discharged to the main shelter.

SCU is a communal living situation. We expect that you will treat each other and staff with courtesy and respect. Residents are expected to shower and change into clean clothing at least every two days.
Residents are expected to keep their personal area tidy and to help with chores in the lounge and common areas. If you need help with showering or keeping your room tidy please ask the staff for help.

SCU is a harm reduction program meaning that you are not required to abstain from using drugs or alcohol to receive care. However, smoking and use of drugs or alcohol on the Salvation Army Ottawa Booth Centre premises is strictly prohibited and may result in your discharge from SCU. We cannot prescribe methadone.