

Heart to Heart

Quarterly Newsletter from ICCS



377

clients supported
in housing

47%

clients over 50+
years

April
to June
2025

31,308

bed stays

9

new volunteers

78,270

meals served in
housing

1700+

basic need supplies
handed out at the
Drop In Hub





From the Heart

As I look back on April through June, I'm reminded why we share these stories in Heart to Heart. The work we do at Island Crisis Care Society isn't always easy. It comes with challenges that aren't always visible to those outside our programs. But within those challenges are moments of courage and resilience that deserve to be celebrated.

Victories don't always come in the form of grand gestures. Sometimes it's a client choosing to join a workshop after weeks of staying in their room. Sometimes it's someone landing their first job in years. These moments may seem small from the outside, but for those taking those steps, they represent hard work, persistence, and hope.

By sharing these stories, we not only honour the journeys of the people we serve but also invite our community to see the profound impact of compassion, connection, and belonging. Every step forward matters, and we're grateful to have you walking alongside us.

Jennifer

- Development & Communications Manager

Organizational Highlights

BACK HOME AT 2025 BOWEN ROAD

After more than a year away due to the January 2024 flood, our Head Office team has moved back into 2025 Bowen Road - and this time, we're joined by David's Place, now settled into its intended location after a year in a temporary rental. While renovations are still underway, the building is beginning to serve the many purposes we dreamed of when it was first purchased, bringing programs, administration, and supports together under one roof.

The move has allowed us to reconfigure the office for our growing staff, while David's Place now enjoys a space far better suited for program delivery, with a layout clients love and easy access to nearby resources. We're also excited about the future of the former bakery space, which holds incredible potential for expanding programs and creating new opportunities for connection. Being together again has brought renewed energy, collaboration, and a shared sense of possibility for the months ahead.



CULTURE, CONNECTION AND SUSHI!

Orca Place recently hosted a Japanese Cultural Awareness Day - and it was a hit! Clients enjoyed delicious sushi while learning about Japanese traditions, customs, and history.

But it wasn't just about tasty bites and fun facts. These cultural events give residents a chance to practice communication and social skills, spark conversations, and build understanding across cultures.

It's amazing what a shared meal and a curious mind can do.



TIME FOR THE GOOD CUPS

Residents at Samaritan Place were treated to an afternoon of warmth and connection over tea, cookies, live music and fondue! Hosted by our LifeSkills program, these social teas are more than just a delicious plate, they're a chance to build and rebuild essential skills like communication, confidence, and community.

One resident shared how truly special she felt sipping from fancy china, because yes, our clients are absolutely worth bringing out the "good cups" for! Moments like this remind us that dignity is in the details, and joy can be found in every carefully poured cup.

Thank you to Kenny Chalifoux for again sharing your amazing musical skills!

ART IN ACTION

Supportive Housing Residents had the chance to explore their artistic side through a special watercolour class led by Elder Daniel. With his vast art skills and gentle guidance, Elder Daniel encouraged participants to try new techniques and offered thoughtful critiques to those looking to grow in their artistic journey.

As part of our Life Skills Program, giving residents the opportunity to build confidence and express themselves creatively.

Thank you Elder Daniel for sharing your time, wisdom, and artistic gifts with our community.



NO WORK MISSED

One of our clients at HEARTH Newcastle had a tough break - his steel-toed boots split open on the top, which meant he couldn't safely go to work. Not wanting him to miss a shift, Alexis worked with the onsite and program staff to purchase a voucher from Mark's Work Wearhouse, making sure he could pick up a new pair before his shift the very next morning.

It was amazing to see everyone come together so quickly to make sure he was properly equipped and supported to keep moving forward.

This is what teamwork (and belonging) looks like!

COMMUNITY VET SUPPORT IN OCEANSIDE

Thanks to our amazing Oceanside Outreach Worker and local partners, we were able to offer basic health services for pets belonging to individuals in need. Because when someone is facing tough times, their pets are family, and caring for them is part of caring for the whole person.

These small moments of support help build trust, connection, and remind folks that they're not alone.



PROGRESS AT BRIDGE TO SHELTER

Clients at Bridge to Shelter have access to a bed for 30 days but must leave for seven days before hoping a spot is still available upon return. One woman, after many months of this cycle, has finally secured stable housing. Another client recently completed detox and is now on her way to a new home—sober and hopeful for the future. These milestones show the powerful impact of persistence and support.

CELEBRATING 18 YEARS OF SAFE HARBOUR

This June, we're proud to recognize 18 years of Safe Harbour in Nanaimo, a place of shelter, stability, and second chances for those navigating tough times. Since opening in 2007, Safe Harbour has provided supportive housing for individuals facing homelessness and complex life challenges. Working closely alongside The Bridge next door, the two programs offer a connected approach to care that helps people move forward with dignity and support.

Over nearly two decades, Safe Harbour has become more than just a housing facility, it's a community where healing and hope take root. Every day, our team works tirelessly to create a safe, welcoming environment where clients can rebuild their lives on their own terms. We look forward to continuing this vital work, deepening our impact, and standing alongside those who need it most for many years to come.

We're so grateful for the dedicated staff, resilient clients, compassionate volunteers, and generous community partners who have shaped Safe Harbour into what it is today. Here's to 18 years of impact, and the many lives changed along the way.



TWO DECADES STRONG AT HIRST HOUSE



This June marks 22 years of Hirst House in Parksville, a safe, supportive space that has been a lifeline for hundreds of individuals seeking stability, connection, and hope on their journey toward wellness. Since opening its doors in 2003, Hirst House has played an essential role in the Oceanside area, providing transitional housing and tailored supports to people facing complex barriers like homelessness, mental health challenges, and trauma.

More than just a roof over one's head, Hirst House has become a place where individuals can begin to rebuild their lives with dignity and care. Its presence in the community fills a critical gap in local resources, offering the kind of personalized support that helps clients move from crisis toward lasting stability. The impact of this work extends far beyond the walls of the building, creating stronger families, safer neighbourhoods, and a more compassionate community for all.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has contributed to Hirst House's success over the past 22 years - your commitment and compassion continue to transform lives and strengthen our community every day.

“

“During movie night, I laughed harder than I have in months. I forgot I could laugh like that.”

”

CELEBRATING 22 YEARS OF COMPASSION AND CARE AT CRESCENT HOUSE

This May, we celebrate 22 years since Crescent House opened its doors—a true testament to years of compassion, care, and hope for those facing the challenges of crisis and relapse. Since 2003, Crescent House has been a place where people find stability and support when they need it most, offering a compassionate, person-centred approach that has helped transform countless lives. Conveniently located near the hospital and vital health services, Crescent House works closely with Island Health’s Mental Health and Substance Use teams to provide the care people deserve. We are deeply grateful to every staff member, partner, and supporter whose dedication has made Crescent House a place of dignity and renewed hope for more than two decades.



Volunteer Highlights

In April, we celebrated National Volunteer Week and honoured the incredible people who choose to dedicate their time to supporting our clients and the work we do.

Over the past quarter, 50 committed volunteers contributed more than 335 hours, sharing their talents, energy, and compassion across all our programs. Their presence brings practical support and heartfelt moments of joy to those we serve.

This quarter also saw exciting new volunteer-led activities, from journaling workshops that inspire self-expression to arts and crafts sessions that spark creativity and connection. Skilled volunteers offered haircuts and foot care, providing comfort and dignity in deeply personal ways.

Whether lending a listening ear, sharing their skills, or simply showing up with kindness, our volunteers are the backbone of our community. We are truly grateful for every one of them and the difference they make every day.



Volunteer Opportunity: front desk/office support

Do you enjoy welcoming people with a friendly smile and keeping things running smoothly behind the scenes? We’re looking for volunteers to join our front desk and office support team!

In this role, you’ll be the first point of contact for visitors, greeting them warmly, answering phones, and responding to emails. You’ll also help with general office tasks that keep our programs running efficiently. Whether you’re connecting with someone walking through our door, passing along information to the right person, or lending a hand with day-to-day admin needs, you’ll be making a real difference in how our community feels supported.

We currently have Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday shifts from 1:00–4:30pm, and we’re ideally looking for someone who can commit to one of these shifts each week on a consistent basis.



Sign up to be a volunteer today!
Already a volunteer, log into your account to see available opportunities

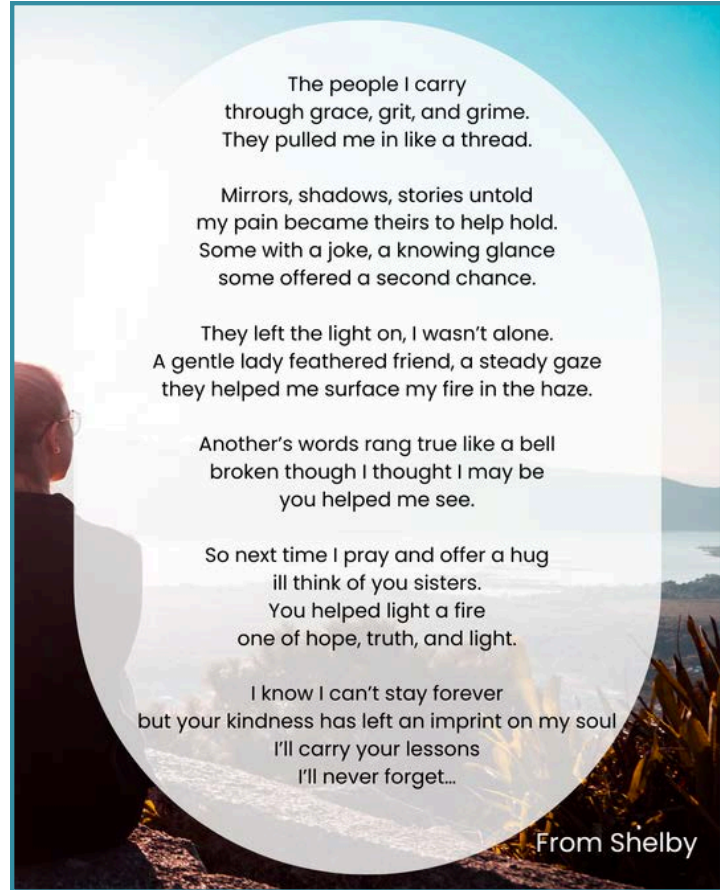
have questions? email Sara at:
volunteercoordinator@iccare.ca

Client Connections

Shelby, an ICCS client, recently sent us this moving reflection on her experience with the Bridge to Housing program. She says, "From the moment I stepped in, the staff stepped up. Jody offered resources and lifelines like they were candy. Darcy holds the line for me emotionally and mentally. Maureen helped shape my artistic and expressive side. Iyo always has kind eyes. Savannah went out of her way to ensure my safety. Michael has a great smile. Fiona offers gentle check-ins. Talon shows genuine compassion. Riley has a soft gaze. Sheila's warm smile, Esther's quiet resilience, and Patrick's wonderful guitar playing all made a difference. Theresa shares kind words. Dionne and Teri have gone above and beyond to make sure I have every opportunity to show up as myself.

"I'll admit, sometimes I'm a little chaotic, but this entire program and support staff have shown up time and time again."

Inspired by her healing journey, Shelby wrote a poem that captures the hope and connection she found here, a testament to the deep impact of the people who walked alongside her every step of the way.



When Maria and Conrad first came into the Drop-In Hub with their two dogs, Sekona and Mumoo, we sat down together and talked about life, about the challenges they'd faced and the hopes they still held onto. They shared that they were ready to take steps toward leaving opiate use behind, but weren't sure where to start.

That's when they met Lalit, a Pharmacist who took the time to listen. Lalit introduced them to Dr. Hunter, and from there, a new chapter began. It wasn't just about treatment, it was about hope, and knowing they had people in their corner.

Conrad told us how much the Hub means to him, calling it a place where he feels welcomed and heard. Maria shared how rare it is to find somewhere she can bring her dogs and still feel safe, respected, and truly seen. Now, both have met with BC Housing workers and are on the housing list. They're taking steady steps toward stability and a brighter tomorrow. As Conrad said with a smile, "I love this place and thanks for all you do, now we have hope for a better tomorrow."



Donna

• Drop-In Hub Outreach Worker

Donor Acknowledgement

From April to June 2025, your generous support has continued to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve - thank you. Every donation helps us offer personalized care and vital resources, whether it's a warm meal, mental health support, or a safe place to call home. Because of you, we can meet people where they are and walk alongside them as they work toward a brighter future.

- Nanoose Bay Lions Club
- The Meeting Place
- Nanaimo Alliance Church
- First Baptist Church
- Hammond Bay Baptist
- Black Diamond Lodge #5 Order of the Odd Fellows
- All of our individual donors!

FEELING INSPIRED?

Thinking about hosting your own event to support ICCS? Whether it's an afternoon tea with friends, a bake sale, or something bigger like a dance, we'd love to hear your ideas! Let's chat about how ICCS can support you in making a difference. Reach out to our Development & Communications Manager, Jennifer, to get started.

development@iccare.ca or
250-585-5505 ext. 102



THANK YOU EMILY!

We're incredibly proud to share the inspiring story of Emily, a local high school student who took the initiative to create the Bid for a Better Tomorrow campaign on behalf of ICCS. Emily reached out to local businesses,



collected donations, and organized this fundraiser with a clear goal, to make a positive impact on our community.

It's truly remarkable to see someone dedicate their time and energy to such a meaningful cause, and even more so when that someone is still in high school. Thanks to Emily's compassion and hard work, Bid for a Better Tomorrow raised over \$5,000 to support ICCS programs.

From all of us, thank you, Emily—you're making a real difference and inspiring us all.

A HEARTFELT RUN

Thank you to EHN Canada for hosting the Run for Recovery event this June at Westwood Lake. It was a beautiful evening filled with people passionate about supporting those on the path to recovery. Not only was the event a successful fundraiser, but it also gave our David's Place staff a wonderful chance to connect with the community and share more about the program. We're truly grateful to have been chosen as this year's recipient - thank you for your generosity and support!

