

How to get help

People who have concerns about themselves or on behalf of someone else can directly reach out to the VCH EPI program.

Anyone concerned can include family, friends, doctors, teachers, school counsellors and youth workers.

If living in Vancouver:



EPI Vancouver | 604-675-3875
#333-2750 East Hastings St
Vancouver, BC V5K 1Z9

If living in Richmond:



EPI Richmond | 604-244-5579
#115-8100 Granville Ave
Richmond, BC V6Y 1R4

If living in North Vancouver, West Vancouver or Bowen Island:



EPI Coastal | 604-984-5000
1337 St. Andrew's Ave (3rd Floor)
North Vancouver, BC V7L 0B8

If living in Squamish, Pemberton, Whistler, Bella Bella, Bella Coola, Sunshine Coast or Powell River, please contact a local mental health and substance use service.

For immediate help, call 911.

For more information and resources about psychosis and other provincial EPI programs, visit www.earlypsychosis.ca or scan the QR code.



Who we are

The VCH EPI Program offers treatment that is

- Easy to access
- Comprehensive
- Person-centered
- Available at EPI offices, virtually and in the community

We are also very committed to supporting families, friends and loved ones in the treatment process.

Our interdisciplinary team includes psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, clinical counsellors, rehabilitation staff and peer support workers.



Thank you

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the EPI Alumni Council and the partners and families who actively participated in the development of this brochure.

Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) Program

Getting the right treatment
quickly improves recovery.



What is psychosis?

Psychosis is a condition of the brain that can be caused by a range of treatable medical conditions.

A person with psychosis is, at times, unable to tell the difference between what is real and what is in their mind. There are changes in their perceptions, thoughts, beliefs and behaviours.

Psychosis can result from a number of different causes and is unique to each person.

Signs:

- Suddenly have odd thoughts or behaviours, be unusually suspicious or have a change in usual sleeping or eating patterns without explanation.
- Be aware that something unusual is happening, but not understand that it is not reality because it seems so real to them.

Symptoms:

- Hallucinations: seeing, hearing or sensing something that others do not. *Example: hearing voices that others cannot hear.*
- Delusions: Strongly held beliefs that other people do not think are based in reality. *Examples: thinking that someone is out to get them or feeling they have super powers.*
- Disorganization: having confused thoughts and behaving in ways that do not fit the situation. *Examples: difficulty maintaining a train of thought or dressing inappropriately for the weather, such as wearing a heavy winter coat on a very hot day.*

Care and services

When a person gets treatment early, recovery from the symptoms of psychosis and a returned sense of wellbeing are optimized.

Through the VCH EPI Program, help is readily accessible and available including:

- A comprehensive assessment
- A care plan to outline the goals of treatment
- Management of medications and side effects
- Opportunities to meet people with similar experiences and learn new skills
- Support to set goals, find work and attend school/college
- Support to develop social connections and healthy habits and lifestyle
- Support for families and friends
- Sessions for individuals, groups and families

Our program is available for up to three years to individuals who:

- Show signs and symptoms of psychosis
- Live in the VCH region
- Are aged 13 to 30

*“Processing psychosis can be challenging, and often comes about by educating yourself and those close to you.”
–Former EPI client*



Importance of early intervention

Research into early intervention strongly shows that getting help as soon as possible after symptoms appear greatly increases the likelihood of a good long-term recovery.

When a person with psychosis gets help fast, they can:

- Regain the ability to think clearly and feel like their usual self, succeed at school or work and enjoy satisfying relationships.
- Re-engage with goals, ambitions and developmental milestones.
- Reduce social isolation, depression and the potential for risk of harm to self or others.