

MOTION

4. Preventing Methadone Maintenance Therapy Abuses in the Downtown Eastside

Vancouver City Council, at its meeting on July 12, 2011, referred the following matter to the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets meeting on July 14, 2011, in order to hear from speakers.

MOVED by: Councillor Kerry Jang

SECONDED by: Councillor Tim Stevenson

WHEREAS

1. On June 30, 2011, residents of the Wonder Rooms and Palace Hotel in the Downtown Eastside reported to Council several alleged incidents of methadone fraud and abuse that prevented access to Methadone Maintenance Therapy (MMT);
2. MMT is a recognized treatment option for opioid dependence in British Columbia;
3. Many residents living in these Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels do so out of necessity and suffer from multiple addiction issues that render them vulnerable to coercion and to abusive practices, such as being compelled to use specific pharmacies to access MMT;
4. In May 2010, the Centre of Addictions Research British Columbia published a report entitled "*Methadone Maintenance Treatment in British Columbia, 1996-2008: Analysis and Recommendations*" that outlined irregularities of MMT delivery, payments, accountability, and patient care across the Province and, in particular, Vancouver's Downtown Eastside SRO hotels;
5. The MMT in British Columbia 1996-2008 report outlined four broad recommendations to all levels of government to end these abuses and increase accountability and patient care.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to initiate a MMT working group with the Province, The College of Physicians and Surgeons, The College of Pharmacists, Health Authorities, the BC Coroners Office and other stakeholders to investigate the alleged abuses at the Wonder and Palace Hotels, as well as other SRO hotels that can be identified in regards to the alleged abuses, fraud, and irregularities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT staff recommend policies or by-law changes the City may undertake to mitigate these problems and prevent future abuses.

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