

## **Backgrounder**

### **The LifeSkills Centre links services**

This daytime education centre offers clients basic lifeskills training, job training, employment in the facility, peer-based training, counselling and outreach. The centre provides links to health and community services including addiction treatment, mental health services, health education and assistance with housing, transportation and legal issues.

Prior to opening its doors on October 29, 2002, renovations to the LifeSkills Centre were funded by a \$550,800 contribution from Western Economic Diversification and additional funding from the private sector. Located at 412 East Cordova in the heart of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, this Centre is helping to provide a vital link towards employment for many clients.

The Lifeskills Centre is like a teaching centre for people who want to change their lives. The Centre has a lounge for women, a teaching kitchen to train people how to cook meals, showering and laundry facilities, a food store, two classrooms and a large meeting space. The Lifeskills Centre helps break the barrier between institutional organizations and people on the street so that they can be brought into the system and eventually gain employment.

The LifeSkills Centre is operated by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA), by a \$350,000 per year contract with the Portland Hotel Society, as part of a new System of Care for the Downtown Eastside. The Centre is supported by the VCHA's other health initiatives including the Downtown Community Health Centre, Pender Community Health Centre and the Health Contact Centre.