



REVISED Media Release

Response to the Report on the Budget 2024 Consultation

Vancouver, BC – Today’s release of the [Report on the Budget 2024 Consultation](#) by the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Service may mark a decisive commitment by the Provincial Government to the creation of a coordinated wrap-around mental health crisis response system for British Columbians - if the recommended funding of at least \$5 million to the ten centres that answer the 1800SUICIDE and 310-6789 Mental Health lines is in addition to the \$5 million currently invested in crisis lines.

“We appreciate the discussion at the Finance Committee supporting our work as crisis lines. In order to answer the calls we receive, we will need a doubling of the Province’s current investment in crisis lines. We would welcome an additional \$5 million to invest towards ensuring folks calling 1800SUICIDE and 310-6789 hear a voice on the other end of the line when they call,” says Stacy Ashton, Chair of the BC Crisis Line Network.

All recommendations put forward by the BC Crisis Line Network were acknowledged by the Committee members, who recognized the need for consistent and adequate funding for crisis lines and the importance of coordination between first responder services in order to improve care for British Columbians in distress by connecting them with the services they need.

The budget submission made by the BC Crisis Line Network were reflected in the Committee’s Recommendation 121, calling for the Provincial Government to:

Provide sufficient funding of at least \$5 million to the BC Crisis Line Network to enable crisis centres to answer all the calls they receive and invest in the BC Crisis Line Network’s efforts to build consistent protocols with 911, police, ambulance, health authorities, and peer-assisted crisis teams.

The Committee also recognized BC Crisis Line Network’s request for “investment into the Crisis Centre of BC re-development project, which would involve buying adjacent properties and developing a multi-use building to hold a crisis centre and affordable housing” (pg.74).

The Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division, a trusted BC Crisis Line Network partner, identified a need for greater investment into community-based mental health crisis care by way of peer-assisted care teams that provide a community-led, trauma-informed, and appropriate response to mental health crises and divert patients from the expensive and overwhelmed health care and criminal justice systems.

The BC Crisis Line Network is pleased to see the recommendations put forward by the Select Standing Committee on Finance and looks forward to working with the Provincial Government and stakeholders to bolster our systems of care for all British Columbians.

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