

Who are we?

This is a specialized program operating within Mental Health Services and supported by Fraser Health and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Our services are provided on an out-patient basis and may include group, family and individual counseling, as well as medical and nutritional resources and treatment.

Our team strives to create a supportive and safe environment. We believe that our practice must be guided by the needs of our clients – who are active participants in their treatment.

Our program is community based. Severely ill individuals will be referred to the Provincial treatment facilities at St. Paul's Hospital or BC Children's Hospital.

We serve the Fraser South Health area including Surrey, Delta, Langley and White Rock.

“We believe that treatment is best delivered by a group of diverse healthcare professionals with specific training, competence and experience in the area of eating disorders.”

Fraser South Eating Disorders Program

For professional inquiries, please contact the Nurse Coordinator at:

**Delta Mental Health Centre
#129, 6345 – 120th Street
Delta, BC V4E 2A6
Telephone: (604) 592-3700**

Referrals to the program can be made by your Family Physician.

Fraser South Eating Disorders Program

Providing a continuum of services to both youth and adult clients and their families who are dealing with anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa.



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How are eating disorders defined?¹

Eating disorders are medically defined conditions such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. These conditions are characterized by severe disturbances in eating behaviour, are serious psychiatric illnesses, and can have life-threatening consequences. They are often seen as being at the 'extreme end' of a continuum that includes disordered eating in general.

How common are eating disorders?

Eating disorders represent the third most common chronic illness among adolescent females. The National Eating Disorder Information Centre estimates prevalence rates of 1 - 2% for anorexia nervosa and 3 - 5% for bulimia nervosa (roughly 4,000 and 12,000 cases respectively in British Columbia). Girls and women make up 90% of those with eating disorders.

How do eating disorders affect people?

Disordered eating can affect every cell, tissue and organ in the body. It can also be

very damaging psychologically -- resulting in anxiety, depression, obsessive thoughts, compulsive behaviours, low self-esteem, loneliness, guilt and shame.

Mortality rates for anorexia nervosa are among the highest recorded for psychiatric disorders: 13 – 20% over a 20-year period.

What causes them?

Every individual with an eating disorder is unique. Therefore, the reasons that may cause someone to develop an eating disorder, will be unique to that individual.

It is generally agreed that disordered eating can be understood as a recurring pattern of expressing difficult feelings through a negative relationship with body image. This can include a preoccupation with food, weight and shape that creates a significant degree of distress and impairment for the individual. But food, weight and shape issues are only part of the picture.

Disordered eating is a complex problem that arises from a combination of psychological, biological, interpersonal and social factors. It has been described as a 'coping strategy' – as a way to deal with the complicated realities of life, including such stresses as fat phobia, trauma, violence, racism, sexism and homophobia.

It is clear that more research is necessary to help people recover from its devastating effects.

What about recovery?

Since there is no single cause of an eating disorder, treatment plans need to be tailored to an individual's unique needs for psychological, medical, nutritional, social and spiritual treatment and guidance. We believe that recovery is possible for all people suffering from anorexia and bulimia nervosa. Recovery can occur in stages and can be a very long process.

The Fraser South Eating Disorders Program provides:

- ❖ Medical, psychological, nutritional and family assessment
- ❖ Individual therapy
- ❖ Groups
- ❖ Family support therapy
- ❖ Information and education for the general public
- ❖ Information and consultation for health professionals in the community
- ❖ Information sessions

¹ From "Preventing Disordered Eating" © 2001 Eating Disorder Resource Centre of BC ; BC Ministry of Health Services; Ministry of Children and Family Development; BC Provincial Eating Disorders Program