



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Social Work

of

MARK STREIBEL

BSW (University of Victoria, 2013)

**“Exploring Experiences of Men Accessing Residential Addictions
Services: Towards an Anti-oppressive Policy Development and
Implementation Perspective”**

School of Social Work

Friday, April 10, 2015
1:30PM

Human & Social Development Building
Room B347

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Leslie Brown, School of Social Work, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Bruce Wallace, School of Social Work, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Michael Hayes, School of Public Health & Social Policy, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Pan Agathoklis, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, UVic

Abstract

Many men seek support to address their substance use issues in a wide variety of resources including hospitals, detoxification centres, treatment programs, supportive recovery housing and more. How policy is constructed and implemented has a direct impact on how effectively clients achieve their recovery goals. A review of the literature on this topic showed that qualitative research on policy development and implementation in residential addictions services is very sparse. Most policy seems to be based on the opinions and experience of paraprofessionals and professionals making judgements about what clients need. What appear to be lacking are the voices of the clients themselves. The goal of this research is to gain insight into the experiences of people accessing residential addictions services to inform policy development at residential centres. Thorne's (2008) interpretive description was the methodology used to guide this study. Eleven qualitative interviews with men accessing services at the New Horizons Recovery facility in Surrey, B.C. were conducted. The data was analyzed using Morse's (1994) four sequential cognitive processes of comprehending, synthesizing, theorizing, and recontextualizing. Several themes were identified and the following interpretive description was made: *clients of residential addictions services in the lower mainland want to be seen as people equal in value to the rest of society. They do not want to be seen as incompetent or unworthy of inclusion in the decisions that affect their lives while in residential addictions services. Clients recognize that they have perspectives that other stakeholders do not and these have value in informing policy development and service delivery. They understand that they are afflicted with a problem that affects their judgment and behaviours and they want structure and comprehensive services to help them increase control of their thinking and change their behaviours. They rely on facilities to provide boundaries and assistance for them and prefer that the management and staff of these facilities do so in an understanding, supportive, egalitarian fashion.* Eight theories are proposed. Several recommendations were formulated based on the findings of this study. Three suggestions for future research considerations are discussed.