

# GET TO KNOW YOUR ED PATIENTS

Access more stories



## The Stories and Life Journeys of People Who Use(d) Substances

"Bear with us, some of us are just a bit scared and worried. Talk to them, get to know them, get their trust and then you'll be fine. Some people have been through so much, they want to hide the truth. Once you get their trust, they're open to your help and suggestions."



Try to let all the negative experiences go and just start over



**MS. T**

Goal: Complete her studies in Indigenous Health at SFU



Ms. T was born in a small town in Alberta and grew up in Edmonton. As the oldest child, she was responsible for raising her younger sister. She started drinking in high school and ultimately began using opioids and crystal meth after graduation. At the same time, she was coming into her own as a transgender woman. When she accessed health care, for various reasons, she felt stigmatized. During her most recent visit to the St. Paul's Emergency Department, she felt the staff "were so helpful and understanding of what I was going through". She encourages staff to not be quick to dismiss people who use drugs. "Bear with us, some of us are just scared and worried. Once you get our trust, we're more open to your help and suggestions." From her life experiences, she knows how important it is to be able to let go of the past and start over. She is hopeful that optimizing her health will help her return to school, complete her degree in health sciences, and further explore her culture.