

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa
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**Submitted by
Soumis par:**

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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2019-OPH-HPP-0003

**SUBJECT: UPDATE: CONSULTATION ON OPIOIDS, SUBSTANCE USE AND
MENTAL HEALTH IN OTTAWA**

**OBJET: MISE À JOUR : CONSULTATION SUR LES OPIOÏDES, LA
TOXICOMANIE ET LA SANTÉ MENTALE À OTTAWA**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la ville d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du présent rapport à titre d'information.

BACKGROUND

Substance use exists across a spectrum, ranging from abstinence to beneficial or non-problematic use, to potentially harmful use, to the development of dependence or substance use disorders. It is common for people to experience co-occurring mental health problems and problematic substance use. Positive mental health, which is associated with better overall health, resilience and the ability to cope with life's challenges, is an important protective factor in preventing the onset or worsening of mental health disorders and problematic substance use. Preventing substance use is also a protective factor to prevent mental health disorders. The concurrent treatment of both substance use and mental health disorders leads to better outcomes.

An estimated 3% of the Ottawa population aged 19 and over reported using an illicit drug in the past year.ⁱ This is likely an under-estimate of use in Ottawa. Eleven percent of Grade 7 to 12 students in Ottawa reported using opioids non-medically in the past year.ⁱⁱ In Ottawa, drug overdose emergency department visits more than doubled between 2011 and 2017 with most of this increase due to opioids.ⁱⁱⁱ People 65 and older are most at risk for an opioid-related hospitalization.^{iv} Opioids make up the majority of drug overdose related deaths (82% in 2016)^v and opioid related deaths increased 60% from 40 in 2016 to 64 in 2017.^{vi} Fentanyl and fentanyl analogues directly contribute to 71% of accidental opioid overdose deaths and almost half of those who died from an accidental opioid overdose from May 2017 to June 2018 were between 25 and 45 years old.^{vii}

OPH identified the need to address opioids in the [Enhanced Harm Reduction Services in Ottawa – Data, Guiding Principle and Next Steps](#) report, received by the Board of Health in 2016. Following [direction](#) from the Board of Health, OPH began operating a permanent supervised consumption site at 179 Clarence Street. To further increase awareness of the risks associated with illicit fentanyl and prevent overdose, OPH collaborates with community partners to deliver public awareness campaigns, naloxone administration training, and comprehensive overdose cluster prevention and responses across the City of Ottawa.

The Ottawa Public Health (OPH) Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018 identified the Strategic Direction: Foster Mental Health in our Community to address mental health disorders, poor mental health, and problematic substance use in Ottawa. In 2016, the Board of Health adopted the report: [Ottawa Public Health's Plan to Foster Mental Health in our Community](#), which included six strategic initiatives in the broad areas of mental health awareness and stigma reduction; building a more resilient community by reducing

harms from substance use; and suicide prevention. In November 2018, the Board of Health received the report: [Building a Healthier Ottawa: Ottawa Public Health Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018 – Final Report](#), which presented a summary of the 2015 – 2018 accomplishments.

DISCUSSION

Improving the health of Ottawa residents by promoting mental health and preventing substance use requires an integrated, collaborative approach. OPH, in collaboration with community partners, is conducting a multi-phased community engagement process leading towards a Comprehensive Mental Health and Substance Use Strategy.

The lens through which stakeholders assess community needs, and subsequently respond, varies depending on perspective, function, audience, and the clients being served. From December 2018 to January 2019, OPH commissioned an external consultant to conduct consultations with external organizations, agencies, and people living with or with lived experience to inform the development of a comprehensive mental health and substance use strategy, with a focus on opioids. Several areas of common ground were identified to achieve progress moving forward. Stakeholders identified the need to focus on public awareness and education, improve access to treatment and counselling, and address ways to reduce stigma. Enhanced system-wide collaboration between partners and stakeholders is necessary. People with lived experience are at the centre and must be part of the dialogue to set priorities and drive the work towards solutions.

As part of an ongoing consultation process, The Ottawa Summit was held on February 7, 2019. The Summit was a joint initiative between The Royal and Ottawa Public Health. The Summit brought together 200 people with lived experience, clinicians, researchers, educators, police, paramedics, funders, and people working in social services (see supporting Document 1 for a full list of stakeholders). The Ottawa Summit provided an opportunity to gauge the current state of mental health and substance use and identify future strategies.

Summit participants initially developed ideas for action to prevent stigma and problematic substance use, reduce harms associated with opioid use, and improve collaboration and integration across the system to increase access and uptake of services. Given the range and volume of ideas generated by Summit participants, expert panels were in place to review, consider, and compare the ideas. The expert panel membership was made up of representatives from various sectors and perspectives, including mental health, addictions and harm reduction workers, treatment

providers, those working in education and law enforcement, and people living with or with lived experience. Each expert panel provided a number of recommendations back to the participants who then identified the top three in each area:

Preventing stigma and problematic substance use

- Create a collaborative table across systems to advance a mental health and substance use strategy across sectors and lifespan that is designed with vulnerable populations and people with lived experience;
- Implement broad public and stakeholder education on mental health and substance use that addresses stigma and language to shift public and professional opinion; and
- Develop a stigma and prevention strategy that includes social engagement and acknowledges and addresses the effects of trauma, housing, and adverse childhood experiences.

Emerging harm reduction initiatives that can reduce harms associated with opioid use

- Increase access and funding to opioid addiction treatment and managed opioid programs;
- Establish a call to action for allied system-level partners to integrate harm reduction practices and philosophies into their services; and
- Expand accessibility and diversity of harm reduction services (i.e., 24-hour access to harm reduction services, fewer dosing restrictions).

Collaborating and integrating across the system to increase access and uptake of services

- Create a funding model that encourages comprehensive, collaborative, integrated, and client-focused care (one-stop shop);
- People with lived experience, including their family, should be integrated into the design and delivery of all services; and
- Collaborating across the system, providers and services should be required to address stigma, using existing evidence-informed models.

Next Steps:

1. Community Engagement

Moving forward, OPH and The Royal will continue to analyze findings from the Summit. OPH, with support from The Royal, will re-engage those who participated in the community consultations and the Summit. This will include continuing to engage people with lived experience through organizations such as the Community Addictions Peer Support Association (CAPSA). OPH will also seek opportunities to consult other stakeholders, such as housing providers, mental health and substance use agencies, and newcomers. Further dialogue will contribute to identifying gaps and developing a meaningful, community-driven approach to address mental health and problematic substance use in our community, including how best our community can act.

2. OPH's Future Strategic Plan

OPH has been collecting data to inform the development of its next strategic plan, findings from the consultations and the Ottawa Summit will contribute input into OPH's next strategic plan.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

No public consultation was undertaken in preparing this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receiving this report for information.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – List of Stakeholders

DISPOSITION

This report is presented to the Board for information purposes.

ⁱ Ottawa Public Health. Canadian Community Health Survey 2015/16. Ontario Share File. Statistics Canada.

ⁱⁱ Ottawa Public Health. Public Health Monitoring of Risk Factors in Ontario – Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey 2017. Centre for Addictions and Mental Health.

ⁱⁱⁱ National Ambulatory Care System (2008-2017). Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care IntelliHealth Ontario. Extracted Oct 2, 2018.

^{iv} Discharge Abstract Database (2008-2017). Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care IntelliHealth Ontario. Extracted Oct 2, 2018.

^v Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, extracted April 2018. Analyzed by Epidemiology Team, Ottawa Public Health.

^{vi} Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Interactive Opioid Tool. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2018. Available from: <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/DataAndAnalytics/Opioids/Opioids.aspx>

^{vii} Coroner's Opioid Investigative Aid, May 2017 to June 2018, Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, extracted October 29, 2018.