

Safer Opioid Supply Community of Practice Newsletter

July 2021

GET INVOLVED

Join the advisory council

- We are establishing an advisory council to help guide development of the National Safer Supply Community of Practice.
- Who are we looking for? YOU!
 - Anyone currently involved in safer supply work or who are working to have safer supply in your community
 - Current or former people who use/d drugs; clinical team members: prescribers, RNs; Community health workers, harm reduction workers, and other wrap-around providers; Program Coordinators and managers; Pharmacists; Researchers; Advocates and activists; Policy folks
- What to expect:
 - A monthly meeting for the first three months (August, September, and October) and then every three months via Zoom
 - Opportunities to participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the CoP
 - Opportunities to inform the organization of the National Safer Supply Conference 2022

Provide mentorship to people new to safer supply

- **Do you have experience prescribing safer supply? WE NEED YOU**
 - Support new prescribers to start offering safer supply. This is critical to expanding access to safer supply
 - Different ways to provide mentorship and the CoP will support you
- **Do you have experience designing a safer supply program?**
 - Program managers, coordinators, and program staff: we need your experience to support new programs to quickly get off the ground

Share your skills

- We'd like to create opportunities for skills sharing. Let us know if you would like to offer a workshop or present to the membership.

Share your successes

- Share your success stories, your reports, and safer supply resources that you develop with the NSS-CoP membership through
 - Our meetings
 - Our newsletter
 - Our resource library (currently housed on Google Drive)
 - The Google Group / listserv

Key Themes from June Meetings

Meeting minutes can be found in the [meeting notes and resources folder](#) on the [SOS Google Drive](#)

June 3

- Observed dosing of Kadian in pharmacy
- Transitioning from Kadian to M-Eslon & drug shortages
- Injectable formulation
- Harm reduction supplies

June 10

- Substance Use and Pregnancy Pathway, South Riverdale
- New prescriber questions & experience
- Fentanyl Patches
- Sedating medications
- Methadone to SoS transition
- EMRs

June 24th Hot topic meeting: Injecting tablets

- A panel discussion about injecting tablets. Panelists were harm reduction workers and community members from London, Guelph/Waterloo, Ottawa, and Toronto.
 - Best practices and real world advice
 - Filters – need for advocacy for funding Steri-filt filters
 - Hot vs cold fixing – when, how, why

Research

We encourage CoP members to email safersupplyon@gmail.com with submissions to include. Content examples: community led projects, peer reviewed articles, grey literature, government publications, etc.

- [Prolonged-release opioid agonist therapy: qualitative study exploring patients' views of 1-week, 1-month and 6-month buprenorphine formulations](#)
- [Community based low threshold substance use services: Practitioner approaches and challenges](#)
- [Regulation of illegal drugs: an exploration of public health tools](#)

Featured Resources

- [Toronto Overdose Action Plan: Status Report 2021](#)
- Provincial Health Services Authority video: [Guidance for Injecting Tablet Medications](#)
- [BCCDC Safer Tablet Injection](#)
- Harm Reduction Coalition. [Getting Off Right](#)
- Insite. 2018. [Cookbook](#)

- Miskovic, M., Zurba, N., Beaumont, D., Conway, J. (2020). [*Connecting - A Guide to Using Harm Reduction Supplies as Engagement Tools*](#), Ontario Harm Reduction Distribution Program, Kingston Community Health Centres, Kingston Ontario

News

- [A New National Partnership to Support a Safer Drug Supply – Alliance Announcement](#)
- [Ontario builders' group launches campaign to prevent opioid deaths among construction workers](#)
- [Opioid overdose deaths surge in Ontario: The personal impact](#)
- [Opioid vending machines could be the next big thing in safe supply](#)
- [Yukon dialogue on opioid crisis wraps up with calls for change](#)
- [Government of Canada extends safer supply project for people with Opioid Use Disorder](#)
- [NDP calls for safe supply of drugs, other actions to curb Alberta's overdose crisis](#)
- [Government of Canada helping expand access to safer supply across Canada](#)
- [B.C.'s safer supply program needs more choice, say drug users and advocates](#)

Upcoming Events

SoS Interdisciplinary Hot Topic Meetings

- Hot topic meetings for the month of July and August will be cancelled. Stay tuned for an exciting hot topic event in September!
- We will have a regular drop-in meeting for the last Thursday of the July and August! Join us!



London
InterCommunity
Health Centre



Alliance for Healthier Communities
Alliance pour des communautés en santé

A New, National Partnership to Support a Safer Drug Supply

The Alliance for Healthier Communities is linking arms with the Canadian Association of People who Use Drugs (CAPUD) and London Intercommunity Health Centre (LIHC) to advance access to safer supply for people who use drugs across Canada. On Monday, June 28, [Health Canada announced nearly \\$1 million in funding](#) to help support and build capacity for this work through a National Safer Supply Community of Practice (NSS-CoP) led by the three partner organizations.

Safer supply programs help people who use drugs access pharmaceutical alternatives to the toxic illegal drug supply. For years, this toxic supply has fueled an epidemic of drug poisonings in communities across Canada. Rebecca Penn, Project Manager of the NSS-CoP, notes that while [there are many different models for providing safe supply](#), a medical model is the most feasible and immediately actionable in our current legislative context – and this is critical during this drug poisoning crisis.

The goal of the NSS-CoP is to help scale up a low-barrier, medical model of safer supply rooted in harm reduction. It is essential that this model is responsive to the needs and goals of people who use drugs. Scott Courtice, Executive Director of LIHC, speaking at Monday's press conference, thanked CAPUD. "Your strength, your advocacy, and your wisdom are at the centre of our work. Meaningful partnership is a core principle of our approach, and will remain so as Safer Supply achieves scale and spread across Canada."

Natasha Touesnard, Executive Director of CAPUD, agrees, stating that "this collaboration will enhance the capacity of healthcare providers across Canada. CAPUD would also like to highlight that the Community of Practice is following our guiding principle – *Nothing About Us, Without Us* – ensuring the voices of people who use drugs are integral to this extremely important initiative as it grows across Canada, reaching rural and remote at-risk communities."

The funding announced last week will enable the Alliance, CAPUD, and LIHC to scale up an existing, Ontario-based community of practice for safer opioid supply into a nation-wide organization with capacity to support safer supply for a variety of substances. It will fund four full-time positions at the three partner organizations, as well as the development of an online knowledge hub. Because safer supply is an emerging field of practice, the NSS-CoP is committed to supporting mentorship and peer networking, amplifying the voices of clients, and providing coaching and training tools for evidence-informed practice.

As Penn notes, "The demand for safer supply programs is enormous - people want to live and be well. Safer supply programs provide the tools to help them do that: a pharmaceutical alternative of known quality and potency, and access to primary care and wraparound supports." Courtice adds, "We need more health care providers to offer safer supply to people who are at high risk of harms - including death and criminalization - that come from using substances procured from the poisoned illegal drug supply."

Health Canada Press Release: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/news/2021/06/government-of-canada-helping-expand-access-to-safer-supply-across-canada.html>

Scott Courtice Remarks: <https://www.allianceon.org/files/Scott-Courtice-Remarks-NSS-CoP-Funding-Announcement>

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