

CO-CONSTRUCTION OF PRESCRIBED SAFER SUPPLY KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICES, AND PROGRAMS

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Background: The National Safer Supply Community of Practice (NSS-CoP) is a knowledge exchange and mobilization collaboration between the London InterCommunity Health Centre (LIHC), the Canadian Association of People who Use Drugs (CAPUD), and the Alliance for Healthier Communities (AHC) to support the scale up of prescribed safer supply (PSS) programs – an approach for providing care for people who use drugs (PWUD) who are at significant risk of harms related to the toxic unregulated supply. PWUDs and community-based health care providers (HCP) are co-constructing PSS models and programs, reshaping how and where substance use care is provided, and demonstrating that HCPs and PWUD can collaborate to meet the needs of PWUD, barring the regulation of a safe supply of drugs.

Description of model of care/intervention: The NSS-CoP brings together an interdisciplinary community, including PWUD and HCPs. PSS knowledge, practices, and future directions are being co-constructed through the exchange of diverse expertise in working groups, committees, and meetings. The NSS-CoP fosters collaborative spaces and facilitates PWUD equitable engagement by providing compensation, mitigating barriers to participation, and welcoming varied forms of engagement.

Effectiveness: Knowledge translation and exchange products and plans are geared towards target audiences that reflect multiple stakeholders who can facilitate or constrain the uptake of PSS (e.g., HCPs, policymakers, activists). The membership growth, membership participation rates, uptake of knowledge products, and increased adoption of PSS programs across the country suggests that this collaborative approach between HCPs and PWUDs is successful.

Consultation and next steps: Together, HCPs and PWUDs are working to build and advance knowledge about PSS models and programs, informing how it is delivered and evaluated, and creating an additional approach to providing care for PWUD in the context of the toxic unregulated drug supply alongside the absence of a regulated safe supply of drugs.

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