

PROMOTING SAFER SUPPLY AND BEST PRACTICES IN CARING FOR PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTIPLE CRISIS

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Background:

Since 2016 Canada has been facing an overdose crisis related to opioid use. Between 2016 and 2021, an estimated 26,690 people died from opioid-related poisoning. The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated the vulnerability of people who use drugs (PWUD). In the context of multiple crisis, health services have had to adapt to meet the critical needs of these individuals in particular through the implementation of safer supply.

Description of model of care/intervention:

L'Équipe de soutien clinique et organisationnel en dépendance et itinérance (ESCODI) was created in 2020 with the goal of supporting the health care network in the province of Québec in adapting services for PWUD according to best practices. To do so, ESCODI collaborates with various experts in the field, including people with lived experience, to develop tools that meet the needs of care teams and offer individualized support. ESCODI's productions include clinical guides for prescribers on the topic of safer supply, explanatory videoclips and tools for members of the care team. In addition, ESCODI leads a francophone community of practice in Québec that brings together physicians, pharmacists, nurses, managers and psychosocial workers and aims to promote dialogue on the practice of safer supply. Finally, ESCODI is currently conducting a survey on the practice of safer supply in Quebec that will help creating resources that respond to the needs of clinicians

Effectiveness:

The tools and activities developed by ESCODI reach care teams throughout the province of Québec. Since 2020, a dozen meetings of the community of practice have been held, reaching close to two hundred people (n=194) and bringing together an average of 55 clinicians per meeting.

Conclusion and next steps:

The creation of a team to promote and support the implementation of safer supply and of best practices in the field of addiction has made it possible to respond to an important local need exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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