

Our Community is Coming Together to Address the Issue That Opioid Addiction is a Health and Social Crisis in Peterborough

Opioids are strong painkillers that can be addictive. Doctors and dentists prescribe opioids to people with acute or chronic pain resulting from disease, surgery or injury. Though pain medications are available by prescription and are slowly released into the body, many people who misuse these substances crush, chew, or inject them, eliminating the time-release properties.

Did You Know?

1. The misuse of opioids is growing in Canada and the United States, especially among the young population. An Ontario-wide study of students by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) found:

- 21% of students in grades 7 to 12 had used prescription opioids non-medically in the past year. This is the third most common substance after alcohol (61%) and marijuana (26%) (CAMH)
- When the distribution is broken down by grade level, opioid pain relievers are the second most used substance among Grade 7 (13%), Grade 8 (22%) and Grade 9 (24%)

2. The number of needles distributed by the local Four Counties Needle Exchange Program (FCNEP) has increased from 6,394 in 2000 to 133,452 by 2008.

3. Data from assessments at Ontario treatment centres show that 17% of the clients entering treatment report problematic use of prescription opioids (DATIS).

4. Currently there are 920 patients receiving methadone maintenance treatment (MMT) who list their city treatment as Peterborough. Representatives from three of the four clinics state that the majority of patients are using prescription pain relievers (specifically Oxycontin).

5. In 2005, there were 44 City of Peterborough residents who started methadone treatment and 39 started in 2006. This number swelled to 402 in 2007 and reduced somewhat in 2008 with 374 new individuals signing up for MMT.

6. An estimated 464 deaths have been attributed in 5 years to Oxycontin (Toronto Star, January 31, 2009).

7. Opioid addictions carry a huge cost to society in terms of social, healthcare and legal costs, with some estimates of the social cost of illicit drug use (including all illicit drugs) in Canada at 8.2 billion dollars per year (Rehm et al., 2006).

8. There is a confirmed link between opioid abuse and crime. For example, 35 of the 63 robberies committed in Peterborough in 2008 could be directly linked to illicit drug use.

The Peterborough and Lakefield community Police, the Peterborough County City Health Unit and the Peterborough Social Planning Council will be hosting a:

Community Meeting Regarding Opiate Prescription Drugs

Tuesday, April 21, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Peterborough Public Library, Lower Level

345 Aylmer Street, Peterborough

Aim: To come together as a community to address the concerns of opioid use in Peterborough
To provide background information to prepare for action

Who do we need to attend?

Any individual or community partner concerned about opioid misuse including children & youth services, seniors services, social services, health care providers, emergency services, home care providers, the criminal justice sector, and representatives from business, education, and the general public.

Presenters will include representatives from police services, criminal justice, addiction treatment and other social services, education, and the medical community. (1:00-2:30pm)

An opportunity for questions and to provide input will follow the presentations.

A questionnaire will be distributed asking:

1. In your experience, how has opioid use had an effect on you, your work, or your community?
2. What do you think are the major factors causing or fueling the opioid concern?
3. What are some possible ideas or strategies to address the opioid concern in Peterborough?
4. What stakeholders are key to be involved in taking action on opioid misuse?
5. Are there any resources (sources of funding, programs, individuals) that might help in this work?
6. Do you want to stay informed/involved with this issue?
7. If yes, when can you most often meet Mornings Afternoons Evenings
8. What do you see are the major factors causing or fueling the opioid concern?
9. What are some possible ideas or strategies to address the opioid concern in Peterborough?
10. Are there any stakeholders that are not present who should be consulted?
11. Are there any resources (sources of funding, programs, individuals) that might help in this work?
12. Do you want to stay informed/involved with this issue?



If you cannot attend the meeting but would like to be heard/involved, please answer these questions by **Monday, April 27 at 12noon** on survey monkey at the following link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=3vkc2iG5tRecC80BhIVodQ_3d_3d

or drop off your responses at:

The Peterborough Social Planning Council, 187 Simcoe St., (opposite the bus station)
or email it to dawnbm@pspc.on.ca.

Include your contact information if you want to be more involved.

A report will be compiled from the community meeting and submitted questionnaires.

A follow up meeting for action planning will be held Wednesday, May 20, 1:00-4:00 at the Peterborough Public Library.

For further information contact Tim Farquharson at 876 - 1122, Suzanne Galloway at 743-1000 ext. 223 or Dawn Berry Merriam at 743-5915.

For more information about our InfoNotes contact Dawn Berry Merriam at 705-743-5915 or email dawnbm@pspc.on.ca.



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