

Nova Scotia's Opioid Use and Overdose Framework Update

August 2018

UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE

- Monthly reporting on opioid-related overdose deaths posted to www.novascotia.ca/opioid/
- Expanded provincial surveillance of opioid-related harms and contributed to national reporting (see www.canada.ca/opioids)

PREVENTION

- Launched an anti-stigma social media marketing campaign in partnership with Health Canada and the Government of British Columbia (June 2018)
- Built stronger connections between health partners and post-secondary institutions to address substance use and overdose, including hosting a workshop (March 2018)
- Provided training on trauma-informed care to 160 police officers, helping direct individuals facing addiction and trauma to proper care

HARM REDUCTION

- Distributed more than 5,200 take-home naloxone kits since January 2016 through community clinics and pharmacies
- Expanded the Take-Home Naloxone Program to 285 pharmacies across the province
- 90 opioid overdoses were reversed with naloxone provided to Nova Scotians through the Take-Home Naloxone Program
- Committed \$1.38 million in multi-year funding for community-based harm reduction – Mainline Needle Exchange (\$711,000), Northern Healthy Connections Society (\$220,000), and Sharp Advice Needle Exchange/Ally Centre (\$453,000)
- Established a harm reduction implementation team to oversee funding and work toward a safer consumption model for Nova Scotia

TREATMENT AND PRESCRIBING PRACTICES

- Committed multi-year funding for ongoing opioid use disorder treatment expansion (\$880,000 in 2017–18, \$1,800,000 in 2018–19, \$1,800,000 in 2019–20, and \$1,630,000 ongoing)
- Expanded publicly funded opioid use disorder treatment programs through NSHA and Direction 180, admitting 625 new clients between Sept. 5, 2017 and July 11, 2018.
- Reduced wait times across the province:
 - Eastern zone: Average wait time¹ decreased from 102 to 14 days; 25 clients on the waitlist (July 2018)
 - Western zone: Average wait time decreased from 73 to 40 days; 10 clients on the waitlist (July 2018)
 - Central zone: Eliminated waitlist; actively accepting new clients (May 2018)
 - Northern zone: Average wait list decreased from 116 to 25 days; 36 clients on the waitlist (July 2018)
 - Direction 180: Eliminated waitlist; actively accepting new clients (May 2018)
- Established three new satellite treatment clinics in the province: Antigonish, Bridgewater, and Caledonia; plans to open a fourth in New Glasgow this fall
- Successfully transferred nearly 140 patients, now stable in their recovery, from publicly funded treatment programs to primary care practices

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND ENFORCEMENT

- Placed seven portable and in-place body scanners in corrections facilities across the province for timely drug identification
- Trained 400 officers across Nova Scotia on investigation of opioids with more training planned in 2018
- Provided 26 naloxone kits to high-risk inmates when discharged from corrections facilities
- Provided naloxone kits and training to 193 active sheriff deputies
- Continued expansion of specialized and therapeutic court programs to respond to situations involving problematic substance use that contribute to conflict with the justice system:
 - Mental Health Court in Dartmouth
 - Domestic Violence Courts in Sydney and Halifax
 - Court Monitored Drug Treatment Program in Kentville
 - Wellness Courts in Amherst and Port Hawkesbury
 - Gladue Court in Wagmatcook

¹ Average wait times were calculated based on the median wait time in each zone.