



## ANHP OHT Supervised Consumption Services Press Release

The drug crisis, and this includes the current and ongoing opioid overdose tragedy, is having devastating impacts on individuals, families, and our community. The Northwestern Health Unit observed the burden of the crisis in our region, and under their provincial mandate was compelled to look at harm reduction strategies and potential solutions to the very challenging situation facing individuals and our communities. The result was the "Supervised Consumption Services Needs Assessment", available at <https://www.nwhu.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SCS-Needs-Assessment-NWHU-Region-Full-Report.pdf>

The Needs Assessment identified that supervised consumption services (SCS), which include a variety of types of services, and that some people interpret solely as a safe injection site, are an important part of a comprehensive strategy. These services are also controversial and not supported by all. Therefore, understandably, this discussion results in strong feelings on all sides of the issue.

The All-Nations Health Partners (ANHP) have considered the findings and recommendations of the Supervised Consumption Needs Assessment.

The All-Nations Health Partners are an Ontario Health Team made up of Indigenous and non-Indigenous government, as well as local social service providers, patients, knowledge-holders, and health agencies that provide service in First Nation communities, municipalities, and non-municipal communities in the Kenora area. Many of our agencies also provide mental health and addiction services and other services for people with a substance use disorder. As a group, we are appropriately positioned to begin the work, on behalf of and with the citizens of our community, on the issue of supervised consumption services for the Kenora area.

It is important to acknowledge that the publication of the Needs Assessment is not a decision to implement these services. It is the beginning of important conversations amongst community members and service providers about how we collectively reduce the risk of overdose and overdose death.

The Needs Assessment is an early step in a long process. The ANHP believes a critical factor in moving forward will need to be consistent engagement with a wide range of stakeholders (including municipalities, Indigenous communities and agencies, enforcement, and the business





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community) to ensure that concerns are addressed as they emerge, and to keep the public informed of our progress. Then our work will be to develop details of the services, to create robust and relevant policies, to apply for federal exemption, and to apply for funding. It is expected that this could take months or possibly longer depending on external processes.

We know this issue matters to the public and that there are many perspectives on the topic. Our work is just beginning. The ANHP is committed to advancing evidence-based decision making and initiatives that benefit the health of the population and that allow us to meet our collective goal of a health care system that works for all.

Anyone who is interested in learning more on the research evidence of supervised consumption services, can find further information at: [Supervised consumption explained: types of sites and services - Canada.ca](http://Supervised consumption explained: types of sites and services - Canada.ca)

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