

WECOSS Harm Reduction Working Group Meeting

Thursday, February 27, 2025 | 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Via Microsoft Teams

Present: Anastasia Adams (Welcome Centre Shelter), Jennifer Cline (WE-Community Housing), Alexis Erickson (WECHU), Avri MacFarlane (Pozytive Pathways), Dr. Katherine Rudzinski (University of Windsor), Francis Kalamba (WECHU), Dominique Chauvin (WECHU), Deanna Parent (Welcome Centre Shelter), Dr. Adrian Guta (University of Windsor), Kelly Barill (WECHU).

Regrets: Stacey Shepley (Essex-Windsor EMS), Nicole Wilson (LAW), Melissa Major (HDGH – MHART), Heather Johnson-Dobranksy (Hiatus House), Michael Brennan (Pozytive Pathways), Rio Anzolin (WRH), Ashley Lavin (Downtown Mission of Windsor), Laura Liebrock (CMHA Health Centre), Margo Cameron (CMHA), Jordan Urquhart (St. Leonard’s House), Amy Visser (weCHC), Jacob Riches (Medical Student – Schulich School of Medicine)

Chair: Anastasia Adams

Recorder: Kelly Barill (WECHU)

		<i>Action Required</i>
1.0	Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to everyone. 	
2.0	Approval of Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda approved. 	
3.0	Review of Action Items and Approval of Previous Minutes from December 5th, 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Anastasia Adams or Alexis Erickson if interested in the second Co-Chair position (A. Adams & A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The second Co-Chair position remains vacant. Contact Anastasia and Alexis if interested in the role. • Forward any other feedback on the WECOSS partnership evaluation to Anastasia Adams (A. Adams). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any other input on the WECOSS partnership and how it can be improved can be forwarded to Anastasia and Alexis. Feedback will be used to develop and implement recommendations to enhance the partnership. • Map 2025 HRWG goals onto the Auditor General’s performance audit to ensure that identified gaps are addressed (A. Adams & A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete – The performance audit was reviewed and accounted for when framing out 2025 project goals and activities. Further updates on the 2025 project will be provided later in the agenda. • Present the 2025 project proposal to the WECOSS 	Contact Anastasia and Alexis if interested in the vacant Co-Chair position.

	<p>Leadership Committee at next meeting for approval (A. Adams).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete – The 2025 project proposal, <i>Building Community for Harm Reduction</i>, was reviewed and approved with the WECOSS Leadership Committee in December 2024. Next steps for implementing the 2025 project will be discussed later in the agenda. ● Forward any other feedback or ideas on 2025 project work to Anastasia Adams or Alexis Erickson (A. Adams & A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete – No other feedback received. Project planning has continued using feedback provided by the group to date. ● Forward any other feedback on HRWG membership to Anastasia Adams or Alexis Erickson (A. Adams & A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete – No other feedback received. ● Complete the annual membership review for the HRWG in early 2025 (A. Adams & A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If anyone in your network may be interested in joining the HRWG, please reach out to Anastasia and Alexis. ○ Membership to be reviewed further later in the agenda. ● Contact Jennifer Cline if interested in attending the Glengarry community event on December 18th (J. Cline). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To be discussed during the Community Agency Roundtable later in the agenda. ● Contact Kelly Barill (kbarill@wechu.org) if interested in promotional resources for WEC Connect (A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members are still welcome to reach out to Kelly if interested in WEC Connect promotional resources. 	<p>If anyone in your network may be interested in joining the HRWG, please reach out to Anastasia and Alexis.</p>
4.0	<p>Approval of Minutes from December 5th, 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes approved. 	
5.0	<p>Meeting Goals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide closing updates on 2024 HRWG projects. 2. Discuss new proposed drug checking service for Windsor-Essex County. 3. Discuss strategies and next steps for 2025 project implementation. 4. Review 2025 membership for the HRWG. 	

6.0	<p>2024 Project Wrap-Up</p> <p>Community Overdose Prevention Trainings (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2024 project focused on coordinating community events to distribute naloxone kits/drug test strips and other overdose response/prevention training to community members. • Attended and/or facilitated ten community events over the course of 2024 to offer these supplies and training. Events were held with a variety of target audiences, including the public, staff at community agencies, downtown businesses/agencies, community housing units, and the construction industry. • Nearly 150 naloxone kits and almost 600 drug test strips were distributed through these events. • A project evaluation report has been prepared and will be circulated with the minutes. • Other agencies on the HRWG that offer naloxone training can let the WECHU (Alexis) know so it can be documented in future reports. • Assessing ongoing opportunities to attend and/or hold additional events in the future. If anyone is interested in becoming more involved in future work, please reach out to Alexis. 	<p>Circulate evaluation report for the 2024 community overdose prevention training events with the minutes (A. Erickson).</p> <p>Reach out to Alexis if interested in becoming involved in future community overdose prevention training opportunities (All).</p>
7.0	<p>Drug Checking Services (A. Erickson, F. Kalamba, & D. Chauvin)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WECHU is participating in a research project led by Western University and Scatr, who is a drug checking development company. • The purpose of the project is to use the Scatr Series One device locally to provide individuals with information on their drug supply and support decision-making about their use. • The Scatr Series One won Health Canada’s drug checking technology challenge in 2021 for being an innovative drug checking technology. • Using the Scatr device, real-time drug checking results will be provided to individuals at the point-of-care. Clients can keep their sample after the test, as the device does not destroy the sample. Clients can also choose to donate their sample to Western University for additional mass spectrometry testing. • Mass spectrometry results support the development of 	

	<p>the Scatr device, as well as updating its drug library, which allows for more substances to be accurately detected over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To participate, a legal exemption needs to be acquired from Health Canada. The exemption application is currently underway. Research ethics board approvals also need to be obtained by Western University and the University of Windsor. • Peer engagement is also built into the research project, which will involve gathering input from peers on using the service and reducing barriers. • Dominique Chauvin is the WECHU Social Worker who will be responsible for operating the service. Francis Kalamba and Alexis Erickson will support the service in the background. • Additional information on how the research project/drug checking service will be delivered is forthcoming. • Question: Can the drug checking device be brought to other locations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Currently, the plan is to pilot the device at one central location, but other locations may be explored in the future. ○ The Scatr Series One is a portable device that can be moved from one location to another, but additional exemptions or a mobile exemption would need to be acquired if using it in multiple locations. • Question: What will the peer engagement component look like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Details on the procedures that will be used to conduct peer engagement will be outlined in Western University’s research ethics documentation. Awaiting documentation from Western University with further details. 	
8.0	<p>2025 Project Implementation – Building Community for Harm Reduction</p> <p>Project Overview and Current Status (F. Kalamba)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A presentation was provided on the 2025 project, <i>Building Community for Harm Reduction</i>. • The goals of the project are to educate the community on the importance of harm reduction, dispel harmful misconceptions about harm reduction, and advocate for the integration of harm reduction services in relevant community settings. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mediums that will be used to implement this project are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An organizational anti-stigma policy template, guided by the principles of trauma-informed care and harm reduction, will be developed and delivered to community agencies to promote safe and inclusive service environments for people who use substances. ○ Organizations who decide to adopt the policy will be provided with anti-stigma training and education to support implementation. ○ An anti-stigma educational campaign on social media will also be implemented through the project. • A copy of the presentation will be provided with the minutes. • Discussion: Some agencies already provide some level of anti-stigma training to their staff. Suggest working with agencies to understand existing training provided and to identify remaining knowledge gaps that can be addressed through this project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First planned activity for the project is to issue surveys to community agencies to assess current attitudes/beliefs towards harm reduction and relevant education needs. Can include questioning around existing training received/provided and current knowledge gaps. <p>Strategies and Next Steps for Project Implementation (All)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of polls were launched in Microsoft Teams to gather input from the group on strategies that can be used to implement the 2025 project. • Multiple Choice Poll: Which audience(s) might benefit most from anti-stigma education and training? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Healthcare providers and community service organizations ranked the highest. ○ The group discussed that primary care providers/physicians, paramedics, and police officers may be appropriate target audiences for further anti-stigma training. ○ To gather uptake amongst primary care providers, consider engaging physicians in the development and delivery of training content. It is impactful for physicians to receive education from other physicians. ○ Consider offering credit hours for completing training. Many professionals have to complete a certain number of accreditation hours per year 	<p>Circulate a copy of the 2025 project presentation with the minutes (F. Kalamba).</p>
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	<p>(e.g., social workers, lawyers, physicians).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Suggest collaborating with the Local Health Integration to support outreach and engagement with health agencies. ○ Look at having all staff trained, not just forward-facing staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multiple Choice Poll: In which community service settings might we offer anti-stigma education and training? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shelters and primary care settings ranked the highest. ● Single Choice Poll: Which medium should be used to deliver anti-stigma training? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In-person training ranked the highest. ○ Depending on the target group, virtual or hybrid training could also be beneficial. ● In 2024, educational workshops on substance use were provided to Police Foundations students at St. Clair College and School of Social Work students at the University of Windsor. The trainings were well-received. Have discussed opportunities to partner again in the future to offer additional training/education to students, which could include anti-stigma training. ● Offer core training/education for new hires. <p>Group Discussion Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What type of messaging would be impactful for public education and dissemination (e.g. social media and other materials)? ● Are you aware of any training or education resources that have already been developed on this topic that can be leveraged for the purposes of this project? ● How can we adapt messaging to target PWUD that reside in residential dwellings? ● What partnerships might we explore to support project implementation? ● Do you know of any community organizations that would benefit from the policy implementation and training components of this project? ● How might we outreach to stakeholders about potential anti-stigma policy implementation and training? <p>Group Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advertise using community events and fairs while offering food and other necessities. ● Use basic and simple information and photos so those at all literacy levels can understand. ● Use the main languages spoken in each area. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate on drug testing. Most of this population wants to know what is in their drugs before deciding to use them. They are less interested in statistics. • Evidence behind services and data can be shared with service providers to promote understanding and reduce stigma. • When engaging directly with the population that would be using the service, the simpler we can put the terms the better. • Resources to support training development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://www.catie.ca/catieca ○ Toolkits from other health units ○ Label Me Person Anti-Stigma Campaign: https://labelmeperson.com ○ WECHU is involved in a regional group called the Anti-Stigma Harm Reduction Messaging Group, which is comprised of our health unit and other health units across the Southwest region. They are interested in working together on this and issuing shared social media messaging/ads. • Be mindful of the context. Discussion on local leadership needing training/education relative to the forced treatment discussion: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/boshcoff-reaction-1.7248873 • Partnerships to explore to support project implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Police and paramedics ○ Welcome Centre Shelter (Anastasia is happy to support) ○ Dr. Jen Bondy – Supports Shelter Health Network to offer in-person medical supports to shelter clients at H4, the Downtown Mission, the Salvation Army, and the Welcome Centre Shelter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ https://www.ctvnews.ca/windsor/article/housing-is-healthcare-this-physician-thinks-she-has-the-key-to-solving-homelessness-in-windsor-essex/ ▪ https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/solutions-needed-as-local-family-physician-crisis-growing-worse ○ Pain management clinics or physicians who are already working in this area. • Next step: Start putting together a list of stakeholders to connect with regarding potential anti-stigma policy implementation/training and have this group contribute to and add to the list. 	<p>Develop a list of stakeholders to connect with to offer anti-stigma policy template/training opportunities and have this group contribute to and add to this list (F. Kalamba).</p>
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9.0	<p>2025 Working Group Membership (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexis reached out to each HRWG member by email in advance of this meeting to ask that all please confirm their membership status for this year. • Thank you to those who responded thus far. A friendly reminder to please respond if you haven't already, as this will help the group to finalize its membership list for the year. • Additional suggestions for HRWG membership were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Jen Bondy ○ St. Clair College ○ Salvation Army ○ Windsor Police Service ○ HDGH Withdrawal Management Services ○ Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative ○ RE:ACT • WECHU to reach out to suggested partners to assess interest in joining the Working Group this year. 	<p>Reach out to suggested partners to assess interest in joining the Working Group this year (A. Erickson/F. Kalamba).</p>
10.0	<p>Community Agency Roundtable (All)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windsor-Essex Community Housing Corporation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hosting health fair initiatives in collaboration with community partners: Three held at Glengarry, one held at 920 Ouellette, and one coming up in March. ○ Christmas Dinner (Glengarry) – Over 400 residents attended, with 22 community partners present. Lots of uptake with drug test strips. Food was offered. The Humane Society was also present with the recent parvo virus outbreak. ○ 920 Ouellette Event – Close to 200 people attended. Geared towards the older adult population. Primary care offered onsite to provide intake, referrals, and book appointments. Started offering private counselling space and intervention support. ○ March Event will be for families. • Welcome Centre Shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to offer women's warming center, in addition to the 120 beds already in place. ○ Health Box harm reduction vending machine is currently being repaired. Hope is to have the health box onsite to offer anonymous after-hours access to harm reduction and other essential supplies. More to come. ○ Drop-in program put on hold last year due to staffing shortages. Should be back and running 	<p>Reach out to Anastasia and Deanna if interested in offering presentations or facilitating activities for women that participate in the drop-in program at the Welcome Centre.</p>

	by the beginning of March.	
11.0	<p>WECOSS Pillar Update (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment and Recovery Working Group – Working on a project to educate and train service providers on opioid agonist therapies (OAT) and create new care pathways to this service. • Enforcement and Justice Working Group – Looking to sustain and expand the neighborhood safety plans started by the Substance Supports in Neighbourhoods Accessed through Police Partnerships (SSNAPP) team to community housing units and the Municipality of Leamington. • Prevention and Education Working Group – Developing a coordinated substance use prevention strategy for the school-aged population. One model being reviewed is Planet Youth, which is a five-year prevention strategy that has been well-researched and successful in other countries. 	
12.0	<p>Summary of Action Items and Next Steps (A. Adams)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Anastasia and Alexis if interested in the vacant Co-Chair position (All). • If anyone in your network may be interested in joining the HRWG, please reach out to Anastasia and Alexis (All). • Circulate evaluation report for the 2024 community overdose prevention training events with the minutes (A. Erickson). • Reach out to Alexis if interested in becoming involved in future community overdose prevention training opportunities (All). • Circulate a copy of the 2025 project presentation with the minutes (F. Kalamba). • Develop a list of stakeholders to connect with to offer anti-stigma policy template/training opportunities and have this group contribute to and add to this list (F. Kalamba). • Reach out to suggested partners to assess interest in joining the Working Group this year (A. Erickson/ F. Kalamba). • Reach out to Anastasia and Deanna if interested in offering presentations or facilitating activities for women that participate in the drop-in program at the Welcome Centre (All). 	
13.0	<p>Meeting Wrap-Up (A. Adams) Adjourned: 2:45 p.m.</p>	
14.0	<p>Next Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, May 22nd from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. 	