



WECOSS Harm Reduction Working Group Meeting

Thursday, May 22nd, 2025 | 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Via Microsoft Teams

Present: Anastasia Adams (Welcome Centre Shelter), Jennifer Cline (WEC-Housing Corporation), Alexis Erickson (WECHU), Jenny Bradt (WECHU) Avri MacFarlane (Positive Pathways), Francis Kalamba (WECHU), Dominique Chauvin (WECHU), Dr. Adrian Guta (University of Windsor), Kelly Barill (WECHU), Nicole Wilson (LAW), Shaylene Kathiravelu (WEC-Housing Corporation - Student), Margo Cameron (CMHA).

Regrets: Michella Mollicone (Essex-Windsor EMS), EMS-MHART Representative, Melissa Major (HDGH – MHART), Michael Brennan (Positive Pathways), Laura Liebrock (CMHA Health Centre), Amy Visser (weCHC), Jacob Riches (Medical Student – Schulich School of Medicine), Deanna Parent (Welcome Centre Shelter), Dr. Katherine Rudzinski (University of Windsor), Brittany Rumble (Hiatus House).

Chair: Anastasia Adams

Recorder: Kelly Barill (WECHU)

		<i>Action Required</i>
1.0	Welcome and Introductions (A. Adams)	
2.0	Approval of the Agenda (A. Adams) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved. 	
3.0	Review of Action Items from February 27th, 2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Anastasia Adams and Alexis Erickson if interested in the vacant Co-Chair position (All). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still an opening for Co-Chair – Contact Anastasia Adams and Alexis Erickson if interested. If anyone in your network may be interested in joining the HRWG, please reach out to Anastasia Adams and Alexis Erickson (All). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing. Circulate evaluation report for the 2024 community overdose prevention training events with the minutes (A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete. Reach out to Alexis if interested in becoming involved in future community overdose prevention training opportunities (All). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing. Circulate a copy of the 2025 project presentation with the minutes (F. Kalamba). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete. Develop a list of stakeholders to connect with to 	Contact Anastasia Adams and Alexis Erickson if interested in the second Co-Chair position (All).

	<p>offer anti-stigma policy template/training opportunities and have this group contribute to and add to this list (F. Kalamba).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing – The list will be informed by results from the anti-stigma assessment survey, which will be reviewed later in the meeting. ● Reach out to suggested partners to assess interest in joining the Working Group this year (A. Erickson/F. Kalamba). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete (awaiting to hear back from partners with interest). ● Reach out to Anastasia Adams and Deanna Parent if interested in offering presentations or facilitating activities for women that participate in the drop-in program at the Welcome Centre (All). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anyone interested can contact Anastasia Adams or Deanna Parent. ○ Jenny Bradt asked Anastasia to have Deanna reach out to her. A substance use prevention presentation for parents/caregivers of youth was recently developed by the Prevention and Education Working Group (PEWG), which might be a good fit for the drop-in. ○ The Welcome Centre Shelter is working on another program called <i>Shelter Safe</i>. The focus is finding age-appropriate ways to talk to kids about harm reduction, when you see substances, etc. <p>Approval of Minutes from February 27th, 2025 (A. Adams)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approved. 	<p>Reach out to Jenny Bradt to explore opportunities to deliver the PEWG’s substance use prevention presentation for parents/caregivers of youth at a future drop-in session at the Welcome Centre Shelter (A. Adams/ D. Parent).</p>
4.0	<p>Meeting Goals (A. Adams)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review progress on the 2025 HRWG project. ● Present anti-stigma assessment survey results. 	
5.0	<p>2025 Project – Building Community for Harm Reduction (F. Kalamba)</p> <p>Anti-Stigma Assessment Survey Development and Distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An anti-stigma assessment survey was issued to community partners to identify knowledge/education gaps and policy needs amongst organizations as it relates to harm reduction and anti-stigma. Results will be used to inform the development of an anti-stigma policy template and training opportunities for organizations. ● A presentation was reviewed with results from the survey, 	

	<p>which will be shared with the minutes.</p> <p>Group Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the feedback, more education and workshops could be completed with community partners on topics such as opioid agonist therapies (OAT), safer supply, harm reduction and what it is, behaviour, and language. • Jenny Bradt: This year, the WECOSS' Treatment and Recovery Working Group (TRWG) is focusing on providing education opportunities to service providers on OAT. Could either focus on other topics through this project or collaborate with the TRWG to amplify OAT education. • Discussion on whether the anti-stigma policy template should be developed universally or tailored to specific settings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anastasia Adams/Dominique Chauvin: Suggest starting off with a universal/generalized approach, as this could lead to more buy-in from sectors once they are comfortable with the material. ○ Jenny Bradt: Agrees that we can start with an overarching policy that can then be tailored to specific settings who can provide input. ○ Anastasia Adams: Opportunities to engage first responder settings as a future target audience. Suggested having first responder organizations represented at this table. ○ Alexis Erickson: Currently exploring opportunities to onboard additional first responder agencies. Essex-Windsor EMS is currently represented. • Anastasia Adams: Should also focus on filling in gaps with education and knowledge on harm reduction basic principles, what it is, removing the stigmas, etc. This can allow for a more receptive audience, who may be open to having a policy tailored to their specific client base. • Jenny Bradt: We could look at adding in more inclusive, less judgmental language with examples of wording. • Jenny Bradt: Staff may not have enough experience working with populations who use substances, which can be a barrier. Spoke with Pozitive Pathways and they provide staff from all backgrounds with opportunities to work directly with clients who use substances to support meaningful engagement (not just staff with lived/living experience). • Anastasia Adams: Can perhaps leverage best practices from experienced organizations, such as Pozitive Pathways, to support policy development and training. • Delivery formats for workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Francis Kalamba: Can offer a presentation where 	<p>Circulate the meeting presentation with the minutes (F. Kalamba).</p>
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	<p>experts in the field act as speakers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anastasia Adams: Community of practice models are very valuable. ○ Jenny Bradt: The WECHU has a budget to support this work. Can help to hire a professional speaker or hold full-day in-person workshops with lunch provided. We had good success doing this with the SSNAPP initiative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guest speaker options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jenny Bradt: Whitney Kitchen from the City of Windsor does a lot of community presentations. The WECHU has worked with her in the past. ○ Margo Cameron: Dr. Tariq may be an option as well. He is a GP doctor for addictions medicine and one of the shelter health doctors. He is affiliated with Schulich Medicine. ● Next step is to develop the anti-stigma policy template and training content based on the survey results and discussion at today’s meeting. ● Timelines: Policy template to be delivered and workshops to start in September of 2025 (tentative). ● Will explore opportunity to hold an additional HRWG meeting in the summer to review the draft policy template and training content with the group prior to launch. 	<p>Develop anti-stigma organizational policy template and training content based on survey results and group discussion (F. Kalamba).</p> <p>Schedule a meeting to review the draft policy template and training content once prepared (F. Kalamba).</p>
6.0	<p>Community Agency Roundtable (All)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Margo Cameron (CMHA-WECB) – Starting on Monday, May 26th, CMHA and the Regional Children’s Centre will be at Brennan High School with two social workers and a registered nurse to help students with mental health and substance use. Parents can also get information on harm reduction. This is a pilot initiative. Two other schools, Cardinal Carter and Assumption, have also been selected to participate. ● Anastasia Adams (Welcome Centre) – The Welcome Centre has seen an increase in young people reaching out in the evenings and weekends for harm reduction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OATC has also been coming to the Welcome Centre once per week to provide prescriptions to eligible clients by referral or request. This service is also offered by the OATC at the Downtown Mission. ● Jenny Bradt (WECHU) – Manages the Tobacco and Vaping Enforcement Team at the WECHU. Vapour products are consistently being sold to youth. We’ve seen a new product emerge, caffeine vapes, which are easily 	

	accessible to youth. We are looking into this with our legal counsel and the Ministry of Health.	
7.0	<p>WECOSS Pillar Updates (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment and Recovery Working Group – Working on a project that aims to improve service provider understanding about opioid agonist therapy – what it is, the evidence behind it, who can benefit from it, how to connect individuals to it, etc. Starting off with a needs assessment survey that will be issued to service providers to understand knowledge gaps and education needs regarding OAT, which will be used to develop training content. • Enforcement and Justice Working Group – Continuing the neighborhood safety planning project started by the SSNAPP initiative. Attending regularly scheduled community housing events to distribute and educate residents on the existing neighbourhood safety plans. Also worked with the City of Windsor and the OPP to submit an application for another Community Safety and Policing Grant, which would be used in part to support expansion of the plans to Leamington and other Essex-County areas. The application is pending approval. • Prevention and Education Working Group – Currently working on a youth substance use prevention project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attending events/workshops to provide education and resources to students, teachers, families, and youth on substance use prevention. A mini workshop presentation is also being finalized. It will be delivered to parents at future events to help them navigate conversations around substance use with their youth. Also open to team ups with community partners to offer larger presentations to their clients. ○ There is a social media campaign currently running with relevant education opportunities. Have done lots of promotion around a new workshop series for parents and caregivers on key topics related to substance use offered by School Mental Health Ontario. ○ In the Fall, there will be upcoming activities to support schools with lesson planning and resources. 	
8.0	<p>Summary of Action Items and Next Steps (A. Adams)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Anastasia Adams and Alexis Erickson if interested in the second Co-Chair position (All). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to Jenny Bradt to explore opportunities to deliver the PEWG’s substance use prevention presentation for parents/caregivers of youth at a future drop-in session at the Welcome Centre Shelter (A. Adams/D. Parent). • Circulate the meeting presentation with the minutes (F. Kalamba). • Develop anti-stigma organizational policy template and training content based on survey results and group discussion (F. Kalamba). • Schedule a meeting to review the draft policy template and training content once prepared (F. Kalamba). 	
9.0	Meeting Wrap-Up (A. Adams) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjourned: 2:15 p.m. 	

Next Meetings:

- Thursday, October 16th from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 27th from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.