



WECOSS Harm Reduction Working Group Meeting

Thursday, October 3rd, 2024 | 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Via Microsoft Teams

Present: Anastasia Adams (Welcome Centre Shelter for Women and Families), Michael Brennan (Positive Pathways), Alexis Erickson (WECHU), Heather Johnson-Dobransky (Hiatus House).

Regrets: John Antoniwi (Essex-Windsor EMS – VPN/MHART Department), Rio Anzolin (WRH), Jennifer Cline (Windsor-Essex Community Housing Corporation), Meg Gregoire (Student - University of Windsor), Dr. Adrian Guta (University of Windsor), Emily Kydd (University of Windsor), Ashley Lavin (Downtown Mission of Windsor), Laura Liebrock (CMHA Health Centre), Melissa Little (Essex-Windsor EMS – VPN/MHART Department), Dr. Katherine Rudzinski (University of Windsor), Stacey Shepley (Essex-Windsor EMS – VPN/MHART Department), Jordan Urquhart (St. Leonard’s House), Amy Visser (Windsor-Essex Community Health Centre).

Chair: Michael Brennan

Recorder: Theresa Sarkis (WECHU)

		<i>Action Required</i>
1.0	Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexis Erickson (Program Coordinator, WECHU) stepping in for Selena Scebba, who is no longer with the WECHU. 	
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 June 6th, 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone who may be interested in taking on the role of Co-Chair, please contact Michael Brennan. Kristen Dwyer is no longer with Positive Pathways and therefore, has stepped down as Chair of this group. Michael will step into the role in the interim until a new Chair(s) is brought on. Co-Chairs are supported by WECHU. • Anastasia Adams has expressed interest in Co-Chair position. Approval of Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved. 	<p>Anyone who may be interested in taking on the role of Co-Chair, please contact Michael Brennan.</p> <p>Alexis Erickson to forward roles and responsibilities of Co-Chairs to Anastasia Adams.</p>
4.0	Meeting Goals <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review progress and next steps of ongoing projects 2. Discuss 2025 project planning 	
5.0	Project Updates – Community Overdose Prevention Trainings (A. Erickson) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of project is to provide naloxone kits and training and other overdose response education/resources to the community. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held 6 community training events from March through August. Positive feedback from events. • Distributed 114 naloxone kits at these events. • Trained 106 individuals on naloxone administration. • Distributed 260 fentanyl test strips. • One more event planned in November targeted to the construction industry. <p>SafePoint / Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART Hubs) (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement of the hard work of this group for the SafePoint initiative. • Message sent to all WECOSS committees and partners conveying the provincial decision regarding SafePoint – SafePoint’s application for ongoing provincial funding has been declined, as the province will no longer be funding new Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) sites. A new model, Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hubs, is being funded by the province moving forward. • Organizations have met to confirm that a local HART Hub application will be prepared. Co-lead organizations (HDGH, House of Sophrosyne, and Windsor-Essex Community Health Centre) have been identified and will submit an application, which is due by mid-to-late October. • Group Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Michael Brennan has links to many opportunities to support advocacy for harm reduction work. ○ With harm reduction being a gap in the HART Hub model, it eliminates the space for connectivity to treatment and recovery. ○ Public education will be more important than ever in order to continue advocacy for harm reduction. ○ The Windsor-Essex Community Health Centre continues to provide harm reduction on-site. 	<p>If interested, please contact Michael Brennan for links to opportunities to support advocacy for harm reduction work.</p>
6.0	<p>New Business</p> <p>2025 Project Planning (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project planning presentation delivered. • Aiming to generate a 2025 project proposal for review at next meeting. • Seeking input from the group on where to focus our efforts next year. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided an overview of goals and activities of the HRWG and key data/resources to inform discussion. • Working group goals and previous interventions reviewed. • Priorities identified by the WECOSS Leadership Committee shared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tailor harm reduction interventions and education to those using alone versus in groups (e.g., overdose prevention, safer use, Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act education). ○ Expand access to harm reduction kits and education to those who cannot access fixed locations. ○ Increase access to wound care services. ○ Continue to expand access to naloxone through distribution and outreach. ○ Expand partnerships with outreach, housing, and law enforcement organizations to reach priority populations through harm reduction. ○ Collaborate with community partners to engage in drug policy advocacy. ○ Support community partners in working within harm reduction models. • Windsor-Essex Community Housing Corporation is open to take on partners for further work on harm reduction. • Support groups for men to help them reconnect to community suggested. • A review of HRWG goals and membership would be valuable. • It is important to continue work with harm reduction efforts and education. • Include education for support staff for more knowledge and understanding of the benefits of harm reduction. • Michael Brennan is looking to use remaining Label Me Person budget to host an education campaign/workshop surrounding harm reduction before March 2025. • There is a lot of data around males in trades and construction industry that have a high rate of substance use and depression. • There is a lot of work being planned around pain and pain management. • Grey Bruce Public Health and Grey Bruce EMS are offering mobile drug checking services. WECHU has met with Grey Bruce to learn more about this service and see if something similar can be done locally. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WECHU is also working with the Windsor Police Service regarding data collection around substance use to support ongoing surveillance efforts. • Michael Brennan: Drug test strips have been difficult to use, as they have limitations that may hinder their efficacy and some are hesitant to sacrifice a portion of their substance to test it. • Ontario Drug Checking Community of Practice led by Toronto Public Health offers resources to support engagement with people who use drugs around drug checking. Resources are available at https://drugchecking.community/. 	
7.0	<p>Community Agency Roundtable</p> <p>Welcome Centre Shelter for Women and Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tentative relaunch date of Health Box on October 28th. • Restructuring peer program to include more part-time positions. <p>Pozitive Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing harm reduction positions for any merging that can be done. • Planning for 2025 has begun. 	
8.0	<p>WECOSS Pillar Update</p> <p>Enforcement and Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on the substance use and corrections workshops project, which supports reintegration of justice-involved individuals back into their communities following release from custody. • Have done three workshops to date. • One was with staff at the South-Essex Community Council in April. • Another held at the Southwest Detention Center in June. • Last was with Police Foundations students at St. Clair College, which occurred at the end of September. • Planning for another session with School of Social Work students at the University of Windsor in November. • Evaluation work for workshops is underway. <p>Treatment and Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on the WEC Connect program and service inventory launch, which is a locally developed online program and service inventory. It aims to support system navigation and service access until we have a 	

	<p>formal coordinated access model established in our area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inventory has been developed on the WECOSS website. It includes substance use, mental health, and behavioral addiction services. Both publicly and privately-funded services are represented, making it distinct from other inventories. • The inventory has been piloted with a family/patient advisory group. Currently working on integrating feedback gathered through the pilot prior to public release of the inventory. <p>Prevention and Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous communication project aims to promote shared messaging about substance use and the WECOSS across the community. • Developed a continuous communication toolkit and a social media calendar and distributed them to the WECOSS membership to promote shared messaging. • Issued 15 campaign messages on social media over the months of June and August. Pulling from the calendar developed to continue with messaging in September and November. 	
9.0	<p>Next Steps & Recap of Action Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft 2025 project proposal for review at next meeting. • Review HRWG membership to ensure appropriate stakeholder representation. • Review Working Group goals and identify gaps moving forward. 	
10.0	<p>Meeting Wrap-Up and Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m. 	
11.0	<p>Next Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday, December 5th, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. 	