

WECOSS Leadership Committee MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 23rd, 2024 | 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare (Brown Auditorium)

Minutes are draft until approved at a subsequent meeting

Present: Mike Agostinis (LaSalle Police), Rio Anzolin (WRH), Jenny Bradt (WECHU), Michael Brennan (Positive Pathways), Luciano Carlone (CMHA), Celine Damphouse (WECHU), Elizabeth Dulmage (Brentwood Recovery Home), Alexis Erickson (WECHU), Surjeet Gill (WPS), Lori Kempe (Children First), Jennifer Cline (Windsor-Essex Community Housing Corporation), Patrick Kolowicz (HDGH), Judy Lear-Zylstra (HDGH), Amy Lofaso (WECDSB), Eric Nadalin (WECHU), Slawomir Pulcer (EWEMS), Ron Sheppard (WFHT), Karen Trotter (CSC Providence), Amy Visser (weCHC), Karen Waddell (House of Sophrosyne), Kim Willis (CMHA-WECB).

Co-Chairs: Eric Nadalin (WECHU) & Patrick Kolowicz (HDGH)

1.0	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome all and to our new members • Roundtable introductions 	
2.0	<p>Standing Items & Consent Agenda (E. Nadalin/P. Kolowicz)</p> <p>2.1. Recap of Action Items from June 17th Meeting</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">2.1.1. Complete the WECOSS Partnership Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available for completion at the following link or by scanning the QR code to the right. <p>2.2 Approval of Minutes from June 17th, 2024 – Approved</p> <p>2.3 Approval of Agenda for September 23rd, 2024 – Approved</p>	
3.0	<p>Meeting Objectives</p> <p>3.1 Review 2024 project progress</p> <p>3.2 Recap and provide updates on action items from Opioid Alert Response Meeting on July 8th</p> <p>3.3 Determine 2025 priorities</p>	
4.0	<p>Business Arising</p> <p>4.1 SafePoint/Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hubs Update (E. Nadalin/P. Kolowicz)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email circulated to the WECOSS Leadership Committee and the Working Groups regarding the Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) provincial update. • Per the announcement, no new CTS sites are being funded across Ontario. As a result, the WECHU’s CTS application has been declined and will not be moving forward. • There is a new funding stream offered by the province under the HART Hub model. Local organizations have met to prepare and submit one application for this program, led by Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare (HDGH) (<i>see addendum below</i>). 	

Addendum: Co-lead agencies have since been identified for the local HART Hub application. Co-lead agencies include HDGH, the Windsor-Essex Community Health Centre, and the House of Sophrosyne.

- **M. Brennan:** Harm Reduction will continue to support advocacy for CTS and support the community in working within harm reduction models.
 - Review of importance of harm reduction working model as being a part of the HART Hub model is currently being considered.
 - Will first address the need for expanding first response training for bystanders and reducing toxic drug poisonings.

4.2 WECOSS Working Group and Sub-Committee Updates

4.2.1. Harm Reduction (M. Brennan)

- The 2024 project for the WECOSS Harm Reduction Working Group is the “Community Overdose Prevention Trainings” project.
- The purpose is to provide community members with naloxone kits and training and other overdose response/prevention education and resources.
- Six community overdose prevention training events were held from March to August.
- Events have been held with the public, staff at community agencies, and downtown businesses/agencies.
- 114 naloxone kits distributed, 106 individuals trained on naloxone administration, and 260 fentanyl test strips distributed at events to date.
- Next event is scheduled with construction workers for Tuesday, November 19th at the Safety Village (WECHU, CMHA-WECB, Windsor-Essex Labour Management Committee).

4.2.2. Prevention and Education (K. Willis & J. Bradt)

- The 2024 project for the WECOSS Prevention and Education Working Group is the “Continuous Communication” project.
- The purpose is to promote shared messaging about substance use and the WECOSS across the community.
- A continuous communication toolkit and social media calendar was shared with the WECOSS membership.
- 15 campaign messages were posted on WECHU social media channels over June to August, with 19,460 reaches on Facebook.
- Additional social media campaigning is scheduled for September and November.
- In-transit bus advertisements and Google display advertisements are planned for the Fall and will encourage community members to subscribe to WECOSS alerts.

4.2.3. Treatment and Recovery (E. Dulmage & J. Lear-Zylstra)

- The 2024 project for the WECOSS Treatment and Recovery Working Group is the “WEC Connect Program and Service Inventory” project.
- The purpose is to create a locally developed online program and service inventory that can support system navigation and service access until coordinated access models become available. The target audience is people who use substances and their loved ones.
- The WEC Connect Online Inventory was developed on WECOSS.ca and includes substance use, mental health, and behavioural addiction services at the local, provincial, and national levels (publicly and privately funded).



- A pilot study for the inventory was completed over the Summer of 2024 with the WE-OHT Patient, Family, and Caregiver Partnership Council.
- Feedback was used to generate recommendations on how to improve the efficacy, impact, and usefulness of the inventory prior to its public release.
- Promotional materials and a sustainability strategy will be developed, with the goal of launching the inventory before year-end.
- The TRWG also supported the EMS suboxone project by developing a WECOSS wallet card. The wallet card covers safer use strategies and where to find support for individuals who do not want to be transported for further care.
- These cards were shared electronically with the TRWG and will be circulated to the WECOSS Leadership Committee. Printed versions can also be requested from the WECHU.

4.2.4. Enforcement and Justice (A. Erickson)

- The 2024 project for the Enforcement and Justice Working Group is the “Substance Use in Corrections Workshops” project.
- The purpose is to support successful reintegration of justice-involved individuals who use/d substances back into their communities through education to corrections officers, post-secondary students, and service providers.
- Two substance use in corrections workshops were offered over April to June:
 - South-Essex Community Council (April 12th)
 - Southwest Detention Centre (June 20th)
- In total, 65 individuals participated in one of the two workshops.
- 75% of evaluation respondents across both sessions stated that they had increased confidence to support people who use substances following their session.
- Next workshop is scheduled for September 27th with Police Foundations students at St. Clair College.
- Planning a final session with Social Work students at the University of Windsor, tentatively for November.

4.2.5. SSNAPP Update (C. Damphouse & S. Gill)

- A presentation with SSNAP updates was delivered by Celine Damphouse and Surjeet Gill.
- Goals and objectives of SSNAPP were reviewed.
- SSNAPP Goals:
 - Strengthen Community Safety and Well-Being
 - Address Opioid and Substance Use Related Crime
 - Increase Frequency of Preventative Care and Early Interventions
 - Improve Awareness of Existing Mental Health and Substance Use Services
 - Improve the Safety and Effectiveness of Emergency Response to Those in Crisis
- SSNAPP Objectives:
 - Establish Neighbourhood Safety Plans for high priority areas related to opioid use and overdose.
 - Develop a promotional campaign for available services, GSDOA, stigma, and police as a community resource.
 - Provide reciprocal education and training opportunities for the community and constables working in identified high priority areas.
 - Create a safe and effective emergency response for WPS services responding to a substance use crisis.
 - Build in data tracking practices and obtain data support for tracking success in project outputs.



- Project achievements to date are as follows:
 - Education: Provided education through non-traditional and traditional media outlets and through Downtown Windsor Community Collaborative (DWCC) park events attended by over 500 residents.
 - 82% of survey participants from the events reported improved awareness of available supports.
 - Engagement: Developed Neighbourhood Safety Plans for four high-priority neighbourhoods; focused on substance use and providing residents, community members, and businesses with clear guidance on how to respond to a variety of situations.
 - Training: Facilitated 27 training sessions for local service providers, including training on de-escalation, addictions and mental health, motivational interviewing, naloxone and overdose prevention, and complex trauma training.
 - 89% of participants felt better prepared to support individuals experiencing complex trauma.
 - Nurse Police Team: Statistics from January 1st to September 19th include:
 - 1652 calls for service
 - 1032 substance or mental health calls
 - 163 MHA apprehensions
 - 553 persons diverted from ED
 - 377 referrals to substance use/mental health providers
 - 357 referrals to social service providers
 - 192 naloxone kits distributed
 - 46 doses of naloxone spray distributed
 - 116 individuals trained to administer naloxone
 - 34 overdoses/naloxone administered
 - 124 fentanyl test strips distributed
 - 124 substance-related wounds addressed
 - 48 times medication administered
- Neighbourhood safety plans:
 - Provide clear instruction for managing safety concerns, accessing resources, and emergency response.
 - In alignment with the Windsor-Essex Regional Community Safety & Well-Being (CSWB) Plan, the Windsor-Essex Community Opioid & Substance Strategy (WECOSS), and SSNAPP goals and objectives.
 - Safety plans developed for N9A, N8X, N8Y, and N8W postal code areas. These areas were identified as high-priority areas for substance use based on local data, as they have the highest rates of opioid-related deaths in Windsor-Essex County.
 - Downtown core identified amongst Windsor Police Service and community partners as a priority.
- Community engagement activities for neighbourhood safety plans:
 - 9 focus groups with community organizations and businesses across Windsor-Essex region.
 - 442 community survey responses across N9A, N8W, N8X, and N8Y neighbourhoods.
 - Key findings:
 - Theme 1 (Training and Education) – Anti-stigma language, resources around mental health, addiction and substance use, and information on naloxone. Clarification between 911, 211, and 311.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Theme 2 (Common Situations) – 98% of survey respondents reported mental health and substance use is the most pressing situation in Windsor. Others included harassment, homelessness, discrimination, vandalism, and other conflicts. ▪ Theme 3 (Tailored Resources) – Tailored resources for vulnerable groups, including youth, women and men, and international subgroups. Translated resources would be extremely beneficial to international subgroups. ▪ Theme 4 (Delivery of Safety Plans) – Distributed to existing networks in Windsor (businesses in Windsor, frequent gathering sites, supported by BIAs) with attached communication. History of community engagement and feedback sessions leading to no change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postal code area tailored information for neighbourhood safety plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ N9A (Downtown Windsor) – Opioids, domestic violence, services for Indigenous peoples and 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and public urination ○ N8X (South Central Windsor) – Theft and trespassing ○ N8Y (Walkerville and East Windsor) – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (‘CPTED’), property safety, and road safety ○ N8W (South Walkerville) – Road safety, auto burglary, and services for seniors • Distribution for neighbourhood safety plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Direct distribution to BIAs, City Councillors, WECOSS membership (PDF, hard-copy by request), and direct to businesses, community centres, public libraries, etc. ○ Promotional distribution by social media, transit ads, and media launch. ○ Will be made available online at www.ssnapp.ca in English, Arabic, Spanish and French • Evaluation for neighbourhood safety plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Online Feedback Survey – Measuring the effectiveness and usefulness of Neighbourhood Safety Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will be made available on www.ssnapp.ca ▪ Will be made available in Arabic, Spanish, and French <p>4.2.6 Vacant Working Group Co-Chair Positions (E. Nadalin/P. Kolowicz)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an interest in Co-Chair leadership within the Enforcement and Justice Working Group. There are also vacant Co-Chair positions within the Harm Reduction Working Group. • Anyone interested in these positions can contact Eric Nadalin and Patrick Kolowicz.
5.0	<p>New Business</p> <p>5.1. Recap and Updates on Action Items from Opioid Alert Response Meeting on July 8th</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WECOSS issued five opioid alerts over the months of June and July. • In response to these increases, the WECOSS-LC organized an emergency meeting on July 8th to discuss potential short-term interventions that could be implemented to help slow the rise in overdose numbers locally. • Multiple interventions were identified and actioned in the weeks and months following the meeting. • Updates on action items from July 8th meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WECOSS alert modifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added community submission form to WECOSS.ca

- Added link to [WECOSS Statistics page](#) and information about the [National Overdose Response Service \(NORS\)](#) to alerts
 - Updated alert criteria
 - Enhanced services and supports:
 - Held additional naloxone training event on July 25th in Glengarry
 - Met with local shelters to identify needs and strategies to support
 - Coordinated a meeting with local street/outreach services to support connections and information-sharing
 - Promoted existing care pathways:
 - Promoted the NORS on [WECOSS.ca](#), social media, and at naloxone training events
 - Provided LC members with key contacts at HDGH for referrals to withdrawal management services
 - Hospitals to assess opportunities to connect clients to follow-up care close to the ED post-overdose
 - Enhanced surveillance and monitoring:
 - Assessing potential data-sharing opportunities regarding locations of opioid overdoses to support additions to the alert system
 - Hospitals to assess opportunities to generate reports on frequent ED visitors for opioid overdose to support appropriate follow-up care
- Updated alert criteria:
 - Previous criteria:
 - The number of opioid overdoses reported by hospitals must exceed the Mean + 2 SD mark for the **overall average across all weeks** for **both** the three-year **and** five-year averages for opioid overdoses in the ED, as reported by the Ministry of Health (MOH).
 - The number of opioid overdoses in the ED reported by hospitals must exceed the Mean + 2 SD mark for the **specific week being considered for the alert** for **either** the three-year average **or** the five-year average.
 - New criteria:
 - The number of opioid overdoses reported by hospitals for the week in question must exceed the Mean + 2 SD for the previous 7 weeks.
 - The number of opioid overdoses in the ED reported by hospitals must exceed the Mean + 2 SD mark for the **overall average across all weeks** for the three-year historical average for opioid overdoses in the ED.
 - The number of opioid overdoses in the ED reported by hospitals must exceed the Mean + 2 SD mark for the **specific week being considered for the alert** for the three-year historical average.
- Opioid and Substance Use Notification System (Alert System) data from WECOSS Data Dashboard shared on emergency department visits, opioid alerts issued by year, and opioid alerts issued by month: <https://wecoss.ca/statistics>.

5.2. 2025 Priorities

- [WECOSS Data Dashboard](#) Review:
 - Opioid-related deaths have been increasing year by year.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deaths were primarily accidental. ▪ Men ages 25-44 and 45-64 had the highest incidents. ▪ Indoor (private residences) were most occurrences. ▪ Fentanyl was the most common type of opioid involved in these instances. ○ N9A postal code area and surrounding postal code areas had highest rates of opioid-related deaths from 2020-2023. ● Discussion Question – What community needs, gaps, or priorities are you seeing through your work when it comes to substance use? Where might the WECOSS focus its efforts in 2025? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to learn if individuals are alone or in a group when overdosing. ○ Need to include harm reduction to reduce overdoses. ○ Alerts are useful from a surveillance point; however, they are not as effective for those currently using substances to help them. ○ Focus on making kits and education available to sites to reach the population that cannot access fixed locations. ○ More substantial need for emphasis on wound care. ○ Increase in need for opioids for management of chronic pain – education on safer consumption of pain management substances. ○ Need for partnership with organizations with outreach programs that may have capacity for further outreach to clients. ○ Address pain and pain management, both physical and mental. ● Discussion Question – What kinds of interventions might be needed to address these issues? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Imperative for education on who to contact if overdosing, Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act, and safer use guidelines. ○ Do we need mass mail out of naloxone kits to the affected areas? ○ Possibly have naloxone kits available at LCBO for distribution. ○ Partnership with Windsor-Essex Community Housing Corporation, as the majority of housing is in highly affected locations. This can include distributing safety plans and naloxone kits. ○ Provide education on and access to wound care for individuals that may not seek or receive care. ○ Opportunity to work further with law enforcement for reintegration education and harm reduction focus. ○ Possible to address safer use throughout programming and not only abstinence-based education/programming.
6.0	<p>Meet Adjournment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.