



## Windsor-Essex Community Opioid Substance Strategy Leadership Committee MEETING MINUTES

**Monday, December 9, 2024 | 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**Microsoft Teams**

*\*Minutes are draft until approved at a subsequent meeting\**

**Present:** Anastasia Adams (Welcome Centre), Michael Akpata (LaSalle Police), Dr. Mehdi Aloosh (WECHU), Rio Anzolin (WRH), Jenny Bradt (WECHU), Erica Bassakos (WEOHT), Jennifer Cline (WE Housing), Celine Damphouse (WECHU), Elizabeth Dulmage (Brentwood Recovery Home), Alexis Erickson (WECHU), Francis Kalamba (WECHU), Lori Kempe (Children First), Whitney Kitchen (City of Windsor), Patrick Kolowicz (HDGH), Michelle Oak (City of Windsor), Joseph Refuse (WPS), Natasha Sheeler (Ontario Health), Nicole Sbrocca (CMHA), Ron Sheppard (Windsor Family Health Team), Jennifer Vale (Ontario Health), Amy Visser (WECHC), Karen Waddell (House of Sophrosyne), Kim Willis (CMHA-WECHB).

**Co-Chair:** Patrick Kolowicz (HDGH)

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<p><b>Review of Action Items from September 23, 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Complete the WECOSS Leadership Committee partnership evaluation survey – reviewing today.</li> <li>2.2 Share WECOSS wallet card with Leadership Committee members – Complete, some modifications considered is to add addresses and adding crisis centre.</li> <li>2.3 Contact Eric Nadalin or Patrick Kolowicz if interested in the vacant Co-Chair positions for the Enforcement and Justice and Harm Reduction Working Groups.</li> <li>2.4 Bring the 2025 priorities identified by the Leadership Committee to the WECOSS Working Groups to inform project planning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Approval of Minutes from September 23, 2024 - Approved</b></p>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Meeting Objectives</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Provide closing updates on 2024 projects.</li> <li>3.2 Discuss proposed 2025 projects for the Working Groups.</li> <li>3.3 Review WECOSS partnership evaluation results.</li> <li>3.4 Vote on new candidate member for the Leadership Committee.</li> <li>3.5 Discuss updates to the WECOSS Terms of Reference and membership.</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Business Arising</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>New Business</b>
	<p>5.1 WECHU Department Structure and Substance Use Work (J. Bradt)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be some changes in department structure at WECHU in response to the upcoming changes in the public health standards.</li> </ul>

- Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention department will be splitting into two departments, Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction department and Comprehensive Health Promotion department.
- These two departments will continue to support WECOSS in the new year. E. Nadalin will follow up with group with further details.

## 5.2 Opioids and Substances Data Dashboard Review (J. Bradt/ M. Aloosh)

- Emergency department visits in 2024 as of week 49, there is a substantial decrease since the summer. Two weeks ago, 0 ER visits due to an overdose.
- Drug related ER visits, 2020-2023
- EMS Calls for suspected overdose 2022-2023
- EMS for suspected drug use 2022-2023
- Opioid alerts by year – criteria for alert was changed in mid-2024.
- Opioid related deaths by year in Windsor and Essex County – showing an increase from 2014 – 2023
- Opioid related deaths by type of opioid – showing the most prominent being Fentanyl.
- Opioid related deaths by location – showing a lot indoors/private residence (to note these are mainly accidental and the majority being in males 25-45 years of age)
- Opioid related deaths by WEC location.
- To note, opioid related deaths have increased, however ED visits have not increased.
- Currently looking into new data sharing agreement which may bring some change in information and data available. This may also make it feasible to identify gaps in data and gathering.
- Some barriers exist in obtaining data, for example cyber breach, however hopefully new data sharing agreements may change that.
- Dashboard review will become standing item on meeting agenda.

### 5.2.1 OSUNS update (J. Bradt)

- Opioid and substance use notification system.
- Survey and focus groups launched.
- 4 recommendations were presented.
- Update alert materials to address substance use-related knowledge gaps – updated WECOSS alert poster to include a QR code to WEC Connect, signs and symptoms of overdose, added WECOSS.ca, updated alert template, added three social media posts to promote WEC Connect to communication toolkit.
- Expand alert poster distribution to include high traffic areas in Windsor’s Downtown core to increase visibility and awareness of alerts – working with Windsor police to see if we can increase the distribution of these posters with alerts, planning to meet with Windsor downtown BIA to see if businesses would be open to posting alerts.
- Explore additional communication channels for alerts including advertising options and text message subscriptions. Looking into text messaging subscription in 2025 to improve alert system.



- Explore opportunities for regular peer and/or community feedback, engagement, and outreach. – included some additional surveys both on WECHU.org and WECOSS.ca asking for feedback on this.

### 5.3 Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub Update

- Built 4 working groups and assigned leads in preparation of work
- Working on Terms of reference, goals and measurables.
- Announcement is expected by mid-December in terms of funding approval.

### 5.4 Emergency Treatment Fund Update (W. Kitchen)

- City applied for federal funding for implementing emergency treatment funds with up to \$2,000,000 available.
- Proposal is to be running dialectical behaviour therapy, targeted to those that are service resistance. Teaching on the effects of trauma to strengthen skills, street therapy program.
- No update yet but anticipate an announcement soon.
- City would offer tender for service.

### 5.5 WECOSS Working Group and Sub-Committee Updates

#### 5.5.1 Harm Reduction (A. Adams)

- Community events were planned to provide community members with naloxone kits and training, as well as prevention education resources and overdose response training.
- Original plan was for 4 events which increased to 9.
- March 22 – New Song Church.
- April 24 – Aquatic Centre
- July – DWCC
- Several Glengarry Community Housing events
- Legal Assistance of Windsor
- August – St. Clair Centre for downtown businesses
- Safety Village – construction industry
- So far, over 100 kits have been distributed and trained for.
- Evaluation report in progress and will be shared as it becomes available.
- The ‘Implementation and Oversight of Ontario’s Opioid Strategy’ performance audit in the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario’s 2024 report was discussed and can be accessed at <https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arbyyear/ar2024.html#>.

#### **Purpose**

- Implement a comprehensive community education/anti-stigma campaign on harm reduction as a valued and evidence-based practice to support people who use drugs and the community.

#### **Draft Goals**

- Improve community knowledge and awareness about harm reduction, lower risk use methods, and overdose response/prevention strategies.
- Dispel harmful ideologies and reduce stigma towards harm reduction practices.
- Increase use of harm reduction models within community service settings.

#### **Draft project Activities**



- Develop an education campaign plan outlining key activities and methods for engaging the community around harm reduction (e.g., media marketing, community service workshops, peer engagement, policy/position statements).
- Develop, promote, and distribute campaign content and materials.
- Continue to collaborate with community partners to deliver overdose response/prevention and safer consumption training events.
- Evaluate the efficacy of the campaign and its training activities in achieving project goals.
- M. Oake from City of Windsor to be added to WG members as this aligns with Windsor Essex Regional Community Safety and Well Being Plan.

**Proposed Plan Approved**

5.5.2 Prevention and Education (K. Willis/J. Bradt)

- Continuous communication toolkit and social media calendar shared with WECOSS membership.
- 19 campaign messages posted on WECHU social media channels over June to September, with a total of 29,352 reaches on Facebook.
- 4 additional social media messages issued in November – performance data is forthcoming.
- Three-month block of in-transit bus advertisements on approximately 10 buses in Windsor’s downtown core released over September to December.
- Six-week block of Google display advertisements issued over September to November, with a total of 429,765 reaches.
- Evaluation report in-progress with key results from campaign.

**Purpose**

- Engage the community around a comprehensive and coordinated SUPHP strategy for Windsor-Essex County (WEC).

**Draft Goals**

- Increase key community stakeholders’ understanding of the current availability, arrangement, and distribution of SUPHP services across WEC.
- Identify community needs, gaps, and priorities for SUPHP and established best practices to meet these needs.
- Solidify community readiness and stakeholder support for a comprehensive, multi-sectoral SUPHP strategy for WEC.
- Develop and acquire community endorsement for a SUPHP plan for the community.

**Draft Project Activities**

- Conduct a multi-sectoral community assessment to identify local strengths, needs, priorities, and community readiness for a comprehensive/coordinated SUPHP strategy.
- Complete an evidence review of established best practices at the provincial, national, and international levels for addressing community needs related to SUPHP (e.g., Icelandic Prevention Model).
- Use findings from the community consultation and evidence review to plan a strategic community approach with an accompanying evaluation framework for SUPHP.
- Gather local endorsement of the SUPHP strategy for implementation in 2026 and beyond.

- Children First with some lead agencies are mapping addictions services available to children and youth. Hoping to bring it to mass table. This may align well with some of this work.
- ProsperUs would also be beneficial partnership for this work.

**Proposed Plan Approved**

5.5.3 Treatment and Recovery (E. Dulmage/J. Lear-Zylstra)

- The WEC Connect Online Inventory was officially launched on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, at a 2-1-1 training event: [https://wecoss.ca/wec\\_connect](https://wecoss.ca/wec_connect).
- The inventory includes substance use, mental health, and behavioural addiction services available at the local, provincial, and national levels, both publicly and privately funded.
- The inventory was promoted through various media engagement activities, advertisements on buses and social media, and print materials.
- Between October 23<sup>rd</sup> and November 12<sup>th</sup>, there were 3,311 visits to the WEC Connect page on WECOSS.ca. Social media advertisements had over 22,000 reaches, 3,100 engagements, and 220 link clicks.
- If interested in promotional materials for WEC Connect, please contact [tsarkis@wechu.org](mailto:tsarkis@wechu.org).
- Next steps involve continued partnership with 2-1-1 and the WE-OHT for sustainability of the inventory, data sharing, and connectivity between programs.

**Purpose**

- Support improved use and access of OAT among those with opioid use disorder.

**Draft Goals**

- Improve knowledge and awareness amongst health and social service providers about OAT as an evidence-based care method for people living with OUD.
- Increase confidence and skill level of service providers to facilitate supportive and judgement-free conversations with clients/patients who may benefit from OAT.
- Create additional clinical/care pathways across the health and social service system to support clients/patients in gaining timely and low-barrier access to OAT.

**Draft Project Activities**

- Identify organizations and/or service providers to engage for OAT education and training (e.g., ED, primary care, independent physicians, shelters, pharmacies).
- Develop and deliver relevant education/training and resource materials to service providers.
- Collaborate with community partners to create, implement, and promote additional care pathways for OAT across health and social service settings.
- Evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of service provider education resources and care pathways established through this project.

**Proposed Plan Approved**

5.5.4 Enforcement and Justice (J. Rafuse)

- Four substance use in corrections workshops offered in 2024:

- South-Essex Community Council (April 12<sup>th</sup>)
- Southwest Detention Centre (June 20<sup>th</sup>)
- St. Clair College (Police Foundations Students) (September 27<sup>th</sup>)
- University of Windsor (School of Social Work) (November 21<sup>st</sup>)
- In total, 197 individuals participated in one of the four workshops.
- 83% of evaluation respondents across all workshops indicated that they had increased confidence to support people who use substances following their session.
- Currently exploring opportunities to continue workshops in 2025.

**Purpose**

- Support implementation and expansion of the neighbourhood safety plans developed through SSNAPP.

**Draft Goals**

- Strengthen community safety and well-being across Windsor-Essex County.
- Address opioid and substance use-related crime across Windsor-Essex County.

**Draft Project Activities**

- Collaborate with partners to identify community housing units to target within safety plan areas in Windsor for additional training and implementation support.
- Develop and deliver training and support strategies to community housing based on identified needs for units.
- Engage and gather endorsement from key stakeholders to develop a neighbourhood safety plan targeted to the Leamington area (e.g., Municipality of Leamington, OPP).
- Develop and distribute a neighbourhood safety plan for Leamington based on area needs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of safety plan engagement and expansion activities in meeting project goals.
- Valuable to have representation from Erie Shores Healthcare

**Proposed Plan Approved**

5.7 WECOSS Partnership Evaluation Results (A. Erickson)

- In the Summer of 2024, a partnership evaluation survey was distributed to the WECOSS Leadership Committee.
- The purpose of the survey was to gather input from members on the effectiveness of the WECOSS-LC partnership and to identify opportunities to improve the strategy moving forward.
- The survey was adapted from previous evaluations conducted with the WECOSS, the last survey occurring with the Leadership Committee in 2020.
- The survey examined three dimensions of the WECOSS-LC partnership – Process & Structure, Group Functioning, and Membership Participation.
- Results include 11 total complete responses.
- Process and Structure – Score 3.79
- Group Functioning – Score 3.63
- Membership Participation – Score 3.62
- Areas identified for improvement at the WECOSS-LC level:
  - Progress monitoring
  - Adding value rather than duplicating services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Active participation</li> <li>○ Fair assignment of work</li> <li>○ Decision-making</li> <li>○ Satisfaction with current plans in place</li> <li>● Areas identified for improvement at the WECOSS Working Group level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Role clarity</li> <li>○ Active participation</li> <li>○ Fair assignment of work</li> <li>○ Productivity of meetings</li> <li>○ Decision-making</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Link to WECOSS Working Group Partnership Evaluation Survey:</b>  <a href="https://survey.wechu.org/index.php/213863?lang=en">https://survey.wechu.org/index.php/213863?lang=en</a> </li> <li>● Membership lists for leadership committee will be circulated shortly for review and suggestions.</li> <li>● Formal membership review will be early in 2025.</li> </ul> <p>5.8 New Member Vote (Co-Chairs)</p> <p>5.7.1 Jean Laforge – Executive Director, Mental Health Connections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Approved</b></li> </ul> <p>5.9 Annual Terms of Reference and membership Review (J.Bradt/Co-Chairs)</p> <p>5.9.1 MHASt/WECOSS Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MHASt has asked to add updates to agenda for continuous communication and knowledge sharing.</li> <li>● Addition to Terms of Reference proposed – that co-chair will provide WECOSS update at all MHASt meetings.</li> <li>● Member of MHASt will provide update at all WECOSS LC meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Community Partner Updates</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<p><b>Next Steps &amp; Recap of Action Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Approvals taken back to working groups</li> <li>● Membership reviews</li> <li>● Moving forward with additional planning</li> <li>● Will take partnership evaluation results to inform recommendations of changes for next year</li> <li>● Welcome to new members communication will be early in 2025</li> <li>● Terms of reference proposed additions to be sent to co-chairs for considerations</li> <li>● Check EMS calls and refusal of care for data collection.</li> <li>● Check into data sharing agreement for mapping capabilities</li> <li>● Membership lists of all working groups to be shared for review</li> <li>● Anyone looking for WEC Connect promotional materials, reach out to Theresa</li> </ul> <p>Adjourned 2:54pm</p>