



WINDSOR-ESSEX  
COMMUNITY  
**OPIOID &  
SUBSTANCE**  
STRATEGY

## **WECOSS Treatment and Recovery Working Group Meeting**

**Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup> from  
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

# Treatment and Recovery (A. Erickson)

## *Expanding Access to Opioid Agonist Therapy*

### **Project Purpose:**

Support improved access to opioid agonist therapy (OAT) for individuals living with opioid use disorder in the community.

### **Key Activities and Outputs:**



Deliver training sessions for health and social service providers on facilitating conversations and supporting connections to OAT.



Improve navigability of OAT on WEC Connect.



Develop provider and client resources to support understanding of OAT treatment options.



# Treatment and Recovery (A. Erickson)

## *Expanding Access of Opioid Agonist Therapy*

### Status Updates:

- ❖ Issued a needs assessment survey to community partners to understand knowledge gaps and learning needs of frontline providers as it relates to OAT.
- ❖ Key learning needs identified through the survey were as follows:
  - ❖ Baseline information about OAT (i.e., what it is, how it works)
  - ❖ OAT options available in the community and how they differ
  - ❖ Initiating conversations with clients/patients about OAT
  - ❖ When and how to connect clients to OAT treatment
  - ❖ Navigating the OAT service system
  - ❖ Anti-stigma education about OAT
  - ❖ Person-centered and trauma-informed lens to supporting individuals accessing, looking to access, or may benefit from OAT.
- ❖ OAT training materials and resources are currently being developed for frontline providers and their clients/patients based on the needs assessment results.

# Treatment and Recovery (A. Erickson)

## *Expanding Access of Opioid Agonist Therapy*

### Status Updates:

- ❖ OAT training webinar for frontline providers is tentatively scheduled for **Friday, November 28<sup>th</sup>**. The session will be recorded for those who cannot attend the live session.
- ❖ The webinar will be facilitated by Jennifer Burton (*Nurse Practitioner/Program Manager of VON Chronic Pain Program*)
- ❖ A peer speaker will also be present to share their lived experiences with OAT.
- ❖ To supplement the training, a list of OAT services is also being integrated onto WEC Connect to support service navigation and access.

### Call to Action for the WECOSS Leadership Committee:

Encourage frontline providers at your community organization to attend the upcoming OAT webinar. Further details will follow by email over the coming weeks.

# Treatment and Recovery

## *WEC Connect Update*

### *(J. Bradt)*

# WEC Connect Update

## Status Updates:

- ❖ There have been **8** new organizations added to the inventory since its launch in October 2024.
- ❖ The most recent update to the listings was completed from April – June 2025.
- ❖ Total active listings is now **116** services.
- ❖ Over 22,000 site visits.
- ❖ Next update is scheduled to occur from November – December 2025.
- ❖ WEC Connect trainings and live demonstrations of the inventory have been provided to **110+** community members, service providers, and health care professionals, across **12** outreach events and **24** drop-ins to various community locations.
  - ❖ **98.2%** had a better understanding of where and how to access substance use treatment and prevention services following these sessions.

# WEC Connect Update

## *Upcoming Media Campaign*

 **Goal** - Raise awareness of WEC Connect as the go-to hub for substance use, mental health and behavioral health services.

### **A second, expanded media campaign through:**

- Social media (both paid + organic posts)
- Radio ads
- Bus transit advertising (bus interiors & shelters)\*

 **Call to Action** - Visit [https://wecoss.ca/wec\\_connect](https://wecoss.ca/wec_connect) to explore services.

*\*Copies of the WEC Connect poster and wallet card are included in your agenda package. Extra copies are available at the coffee table, if you'd like to take more for your agency before you leave!*

# WECOSS Action Plan Consultation

## *Results and Discussion*

# Recap of WECOSS Action Plan Renewal

## Why a New Action Plan for the WECOSS?

✓ It has been almost four years since the WECOSS' action plan was last updated.

✓ The last action plan from 2021 has been addressed through many projects and initiatives.

✓ Community issues and concerns surrounding substance use have greatly evolved since 2021.

✓ Community capacity to address substance use issues has grown significantly over the years.

✓ A new action plan will allow the WECOSS to adapt its plans to meet new needs and address current gaps in the community.

# WECOSS Action Plan Consultation

Over the months of September and October, a community consultation was conducted with community partners to guide the development of the new WECOSS Action Plan. Community partners were consulted on the following topics:

## Community Strengths

- What is our community and/or the WECOSS currently doing well to address substance use at the community level?
- Where are there existing resources and capacity to support this work?

## Community Issues and Concerns

- What are the most pressing issues and concerns currently impacting our community as it relates to substance use?

## Community Needs

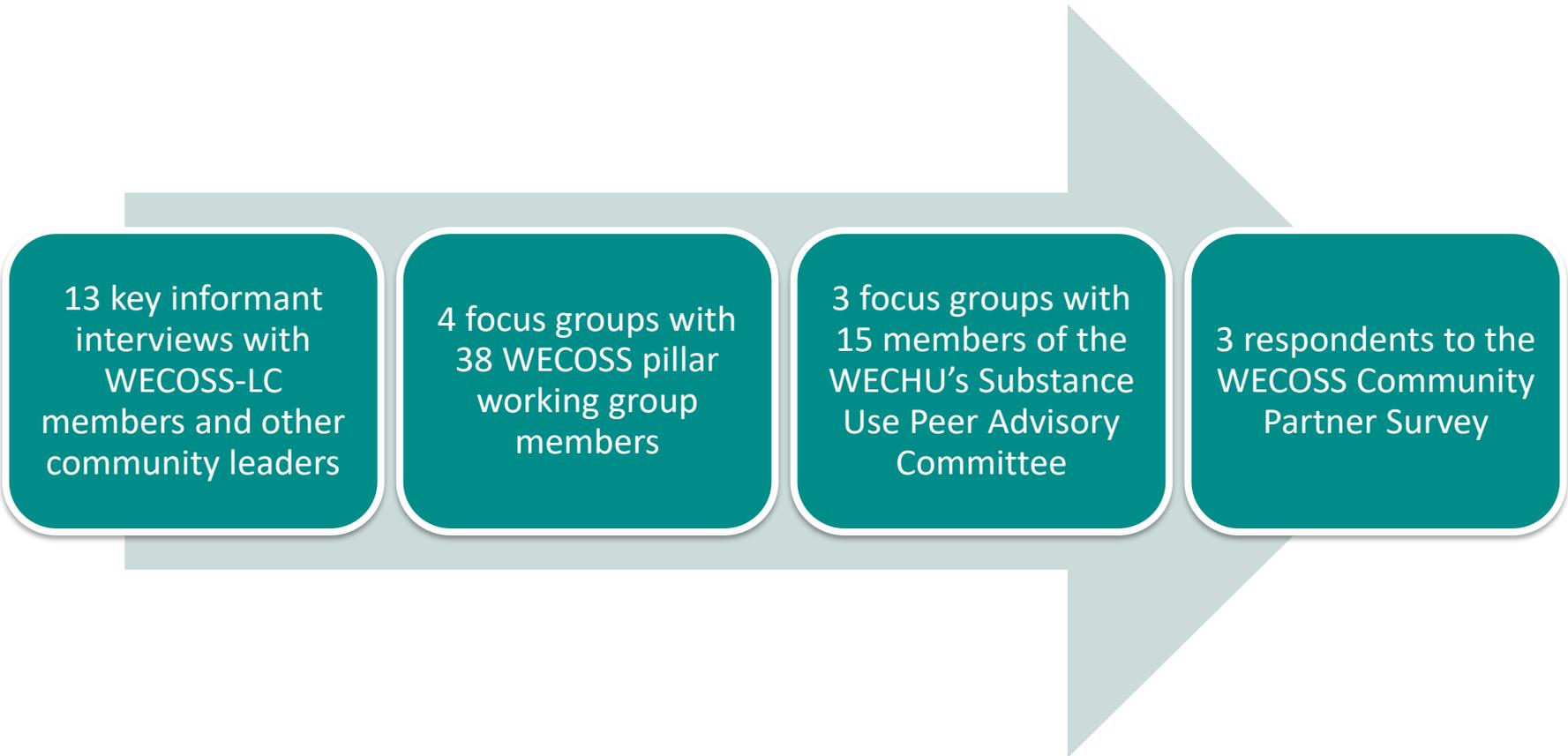
- What community-level actions need to be taken to address substance use in the future?
- What unique gaps in services and supports can the WECOSS help to address?

## Community Coordination

- What strategies can be used to improve coordination between the WECOSS and other community groups with similar goals?

# WECOSS Action Plan Consultation

## *Methods*



13 key informant interviews with WECOSS-LC members and other community leaders

4 focus groups with 38 WECOSS pillar working group members

3 focus groups with 15 members of the WECHU's Substance Use Peer Advisory Committee

3 respondents to the WECOSS Community Partner Survey

# WECOSS Action Plan Consultation Results

## *Key Community Strengths*



**Sustained  
collaboration and  
diverse  
partnerships**



**Data sharing and  
communication**



**Harm reduction  
and anti-stigma  
efforts**



**Education and  
prevention**



**Accessible and  
transparent  
information**



**Community & peer  
engagement and  
outreach**



**Community Safety**

# WECOSS Action Plan Consultation Results

## *Pressing Issues, Concerns, and Needs*

### Stigma and Discrimination

- Service delivery approaches and practices
- Lack of community understanding and misconceptions about substance use and harm reduction

### Systems and Policies

- Current legislative frameworks
- Funding and capacity challenges
- Lack of investment in social determinants of health
- Fragmented service systems

### Barriers to Access Existing Services

- Wait times
- Transportation barriers
- Geographical gaps in rural communities and outside of downtown core
- Utilization of best practices in service delivery

### Service Gaps

- Treatment for youth and justice-involved individuals
- System navigation
- Substance use support in primary care
- Follow-up and aftercare services
- Safer consumption options
- School-aged and family systems supports
- Culturally sensitive and trauma-informed services

# WECOSS Action Plan Consultation Results

## *Summary of Key Priority Areas Identified for WECOSS*

### Harm Reduction

- Standardize harm reduction practices
- Expand harm reduction efforts to county areas
- Address stigma
- Prioritize trauma and violence-informed care

### Prevention & Education

- Early school and family intervention
- Incorporate voices of youth
- Professional development opportunities
- Public awareness campaigns

### Data & Accountability

- Increase data and surveillance efforts
- Transparent data sharing
- Increased accountability of organizations

### Advocacy & Policy

- Advocate for healthy public policy
- Justice-involved support
- Workforce inclusion for PWLLE
- Streamlining resources

# WECOSS Action Plan Consultation Results

## *Potential Collaboration Opportunities for WECOSS*

### **Community Safety & Well-Being**

*Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan*

### **Treatment & Recovery**

*The Mental Health and Addictions Sector Table & Providers of Addiction Treatment Committee*

# Group Discussion

## *Identifying the Pathway(s) Forward for Treatment and Recovery*

### Individual Level

- Substance use education

### Family Level

- Parent/family education and engagement

### Community Level

- Community connection programs
- Peer engagement and support
- Community capacity-building (data-sharing, public/professional education)

### Societal Level

- Stigma reduction
- Healthy public policy (access, availability, and affordability of substances)
- Advocacy for treatment services/resources

# Group Discussion

1. What is your level of agreement with the four priority areas that were identified for the WECOSS?
2. In reviewing the results, is there anything you felt was missed or requires deeper exploration?

# Group Discussion

*Identifying the Pathway(s) Forward for Prevention and Education*

