



Substance Use and Harm Reduction

Harm Reduction Team
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Continuum of Use



Questions to consider within the continuum of use:

- Does it get in the way of work, school, or other activities?
- Does it result in problems with relationships?
- Does it harm mental or physical health?
- Does it cause financial problems?

Source: CAMH <https://moodle8.camhx.ca/moodle/mod/book/view.php?id=113&chapterid=213>
retrieved on 11 November 2021

What is Harm Reduction?

- A way to meet people where they are at, support them, and provide them with the information and resources they need to stay healthy and alive.



Harm Reduction in a Nutshell

- Meet person where they are
- Develop relationship and trust (be careful with language!)
- Help with immediate needs
- Understand that the person can make their own choices in their care path
- If in doubt, ASK!



Harm Reduction in Hamilton*

- Needle Syringe Van Program
- Street Health Clinic
- Community Points Program
- Consumption and Treatment Site
- Rapid Access to Addiction Medicine Clinic
- Social Navigator Paramedics
- Hamilton Social Medicine Response Team
- Keeping Six – Hamilton Harm Reduction Action League
- National Overdose Support Service



Stigma

- Stigma includes negative stereotypes that result in discriminatory behaviour.
- Stigma can have a negative impact on quality of life and mental health. It can cause people to not get the care they need.
- Speak openly, respectfully, and compassionately.
- Substance use disorders are medical conditions deserving of care like any other.



Stigma originates from the Greek word meaning to tattoo or puncture mark with a sharp object. This stems from the practice of branding slaves to ensure their status was recognized.

Stigma prevent honest dialogue about drugs, may cause people to hide their use and feel shamed, causing isolation and missed opportunities

Can be done unintentional, afraid to increase meds r/t drug seeking concerns

Leads to self stigmatizing



Language Matters

- Clean
- Dirty
- Abuse
- User
- Junkie
- Overdose



Opioids*

- Morphine
- Hydrocodone
- Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)
- Methadone
- Oxycodone
- Percocet
- Carfentanil
- Codeine
- Fentanyl
- Heroin
- Tramadol
- Buprenorphine (Suboxone)

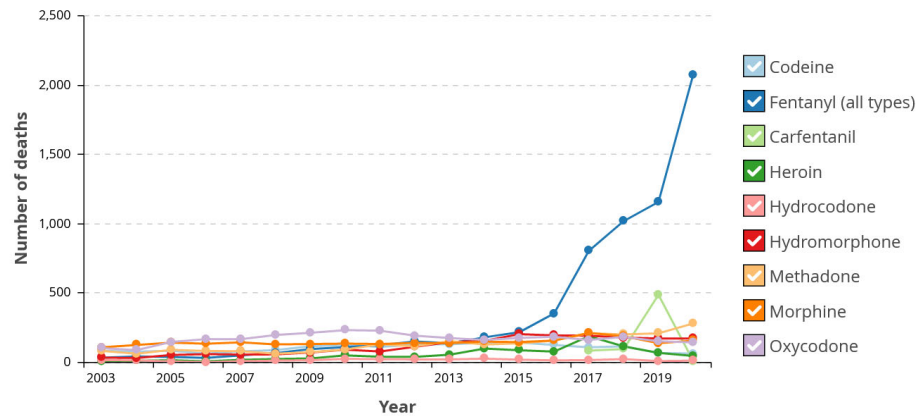
Opioids Treat Pain

- Physical pain
- Psychological pain
- Prescribed opioids
- Unprescribed opioids



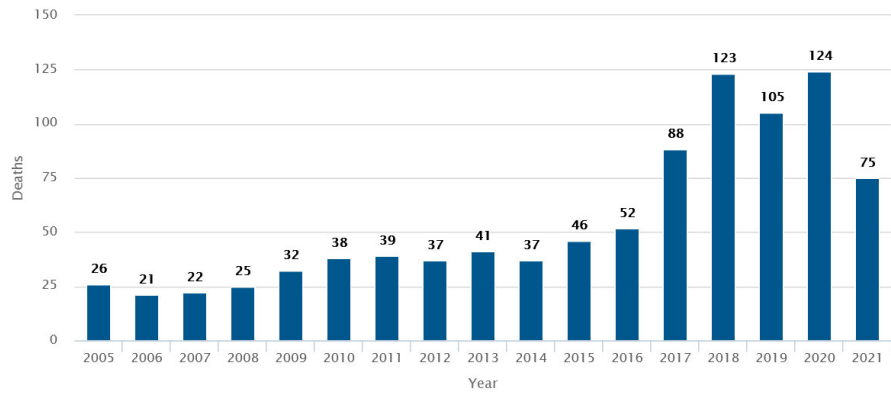
Opioid-related Deaths in Ontario

Type of opioid present at death, Ontario, 2003 – 2020



Retrieved from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/substance-use/interactive-opioid-tool#/drug> (10Oct2021)

Opioid-related deaths in Hamilton



Note: Preliminary data for 2020 and 2021; contains confirmed and probable cases.

Source: Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, extracted from the Public Health Ontario Interactive Opioid Tool, September 22, 2021.

Retrieved from: <https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/reporting/hamilton-opioid-information-system-deaths> (10Oct2021)

Naloxone (Narcan)



- Can stop an overdose and save a life
- Can take 2-5 minutes to work
- Lasts for 30-90 minutes
- May lead to withdrawal
- When it wears off the overdose can return



Know what poisoning looks like:

Opioids	Stimulants
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slow or no breathing• Blue lips and/or fingertips• Pinpoint pupils• Not able to wake up• Snoring or gurgling sounds• Cold and clammy skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rapid breathing• Chest pain and/or racing heart• Shaking or seizures• Confusion, anxiety and/or psychosis• Sweating
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unconscious	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unconscious

Next steps: what can I do?

Personal:

- Challenge own biases and experiences with stigmatizing language
- Increase knowledge base – opioid crisis, local resources
- Carry Naloxone and respond if needed

Local:

- Support harm reduction sites and supervised consumption and treatment sites

National:

- Support decriminalization and safer supply of drugs



Thank you!

