

Meeting the Moment: Integrating Street Health, Addictions Medicine and Primary Care (Winnipeg)

Stream 3: New Approaches to Address Problematic Methamphetamine Use

Project Overview

This project aims to meaningfully engage people who use drugs in the design, promotion, implementation and evaluation of low-threshold primary care interventions. Secondary goals of the project, include establishing an inter-professional community of practice leadership table (CPLT) and subcommittees, which includes people with lived experience, to gain a better understanding of best practices which support the health needs of those in our community who are often overlooked. The benefits of inter-professional collaboration between agencies and through the larger Community of Practice, led by Nine Circles and Main Street Project include improved community care outcomes, reduced costs to the health care system, and improved relationships with other disciplines.

This project asks- what is the best way to connect people who inject methamphetamines and other drugs with much needed primary care and social support services? How can partnerships between agencies be more effective and responsive to the needs of this priority population? What does best practice look like when providing services for people who use drugs that are marginalized; transient; and unstably housed-in Winnipeg's downtown core areas?

Through structured peer-led evaluations, the CPLT will oversee a continuous quality improvement initiative, which uses in-the-moment data and client feedback to re-design primary care services that improve outcomes for marginalized clients using methamphetamines. By incorporating activities such as street outreach; community management of methamphetamine psychosis and withdrawal; addictions medicine; cultural programming; and social support and housing services to meet people who use drugs in the moment, when and where care and services are needed.

Overall Project Objective:

Improve the accessibility and acceptability of primary care and social services for people who: inject methamphetamines and other drugs; and are street involved or unstably housed; or otherwise experience a degree of social exclusion/isolation- in Winnipeg's Downtown and Point Douglas neighborhoods- As evidenced by: increased uptake of health and social services; increased knowledge of self-care practices; improved collaboration between health and social service agencies and increased involvement of people who use drugs in the design, promotion, implementation and evaluation of low-threshold primary care interventions by March 31st, 2023.

Sub-Objectives:

1. Understand current, and changes over time to priority population's knowledge-level and perceptions of: a. Safer drug consumption, sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections care, treatment and prevention of transmission; b. Primary care access, reproductive health services, vein care and wound care; c. Addictions and Mental Health Services; d. Social support service(s) access

2. Understand current, and changes over time to target audience's perceived level of comfort and effectiveness providing care and services at the community level
3. Understand and disseminate specific needs and best practices to effectively provide services to the target population within the local context; and
4. Understand and share findings and best practices with other agencies and Community Health Centres through the Community of Practice Leadership Table.

Primary Priority Population:

People Who Use Drugs in Winnipeg. Specifically, those who inject methamphetamines and other drugs; and are street involved or unstably housed; or otherwise experience a degree of social exclusion/isolation in Winnipeg's downtown/Point Douglas neighborhoods. We expect to provide primary care or other health and social services at 208 half-day clinics over 1.75 years, with an estimated 1,200 contacts during that time period.

Primary Target Audience:

Creation of community of practice leadership table, which includes: peer leadership; physician leadership; nursing leadership; policy makers and community/public health administrators. Indigenous elder to provide leadership and support

Key Activities:

1. Create and sustain a community of practice in Winnipeg for practitioners providing care and support for people who: inject methamphetamines and other drugs; and are street involved or unstably housed; or otherwise experience a degree of social exclusion/isolation
2. Support peer-involved program development/training
3. Support peer-led implementation and evaluation of services and dissemination of program findings
4. Pilot and evaluate models for low threshold access of wrap-around care for members of the target population requiring:
 - Primary Care services, including wound and vein care
 - Reproductive health services
 - Addictions and Mental Health services
 - STBBI testing and treatment
 - Social support services
 - Peer support and outreach services
 - Safer drug and safer sex supply education and distribution
 - Self-care education for management of acute and chronic conditions
 - Indigenous cultural programming
5. Develop and Publish resources that identify and support best practices for priority population relevant to the local context (Downtown Winnipeg and Point-Douglas)