

Minister's Opioid Emergency Response Commission Record of Discussion: November 6-7, 2017

1. Welcome and Personal Reflections

The Commission started their meeting by reflecting on members' experiences with the opioid crisis.

2. Review of the Past Record of Decision and Agenda and Purpose of the Day

The Commission reviewed the agenda and purpose for the two-day meeting. The Members had an opportunity to update their conflict of interest declarations.

3. Co-Chair Updates

Dr. Hyshka provided an update on the Access to Medically Supervised Injection Services Edmonton (AMSISE) supervised consumption site (SCS) progress and the upcoming Issues of Substance Conference in Calgary on November 13-15, 2017.

Dr. Klein noted that Alberta began offering supervised consumption services for the first time on Oct 30, 2017 at the Sheldon Chumir temporary site in Calgary. Alberta Health's new Deputy Minister, Milton Sussman, and Ministry work related to the opioid response were also noted.

4. Supervised Consumption Services: Needs assessments

The Commission heard a presentation from the Alberta Community Council on HIV (ACCH) regarding needs assessments for supervised consumption services carried out in six communities in Alberta, including: Calgary, Edson, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat and Red Deer.

Members discussed criteria that could be considered when evaluating proposals for future supervised consumption service sites in Alberta.

Next steps: The Commission will hear proposals from the coalitions that completed the needs assessments at a future meeting.

5. Update on Recommendations

Alberta Health presented opioid response updates including information regarding the Commission's grants and implementation working groups.

Members heard updates from representatives of the Indigenous grant working group as well as representatives of the Primary care grant working group.

6. Edmonton Remand Centre

Members travelled to the Edmonton Remand Centre where they received a tour of the facility and heard a presentation from AHS Correctional Health Services and Alberta Justice and Solicitor General for options for enhancing the opioid response in correctional settings.

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Next steps: The Commission expressed an interest in hearing from presenters in the future regarding opportunities to support initiating and maintaining people in correctional settings on opioid agonist therapy, as well as opportunities to support transitioning people receiving OAT to the health care supports in the community when exiting the correctional setting.

7. Surveillance presentations

Members heard presentations from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, Alberta Health Surveillance and Analytics Division, and the Opioid Medical Analyst.

Members discussed potential gaps and opportunities related to identifying additional sources of data, outcomes, presentation style, knowledge translation, key messages and targeting suburban/urban users.

Next steps: Alberta Health will review Commission suggestions and advise feasibility at a future meeting.

8. Urgent public health drugs update

The Chair of the Urgent Opioid Treatment Drugs Clinical & Scientific Advisory Group, struck by Alberta Health, presented an update on the work of the group to date. The group has been tasked with making a recommendation to the Chief Medical Officer of Health regarding the clinical need, safety and efficacy of opioid treatment drugs not approved in Canada for use but available through the Federal government's new Access to Drugs in Exceptional Circumstances regulatory pathway.

9. Backgrounder on the legislative process

The Commission heard an overview of Federal and Provincial legislation related to the opioid crisis.

Members identified issues and asked questions as to how specific issues could be address by legislation (including regulations).

10. 2018 Agenda setting

Members reviewed a list of topics areas generated by members previously as well as topics collected from the Urgent Opioid Response Coordinating Committee and Alberta Health staff. Potential actions to support urban/suburban populations affected by the opioid crisis were brainstormed.

Next Steps: Members will consider potential actions to support underserved populations for discussion in December.

11. Conclusion and Next Steps

The next Commission meeting will be held December 4-5.