

# Minister's Opioid Emergency Response Commission

## Record of Discussion: October 2, 2017

### 1. Welcome and Personal Reflections

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

### 2. Review of Agenda and Conflict of Interest Declarations

The Commission reviewed the agenda and purpose for the one-day meeting. The Commission expressed interest in the public posting of past Commission recommendations.

Members had an opportunity to update their conflict of interest declarations.

### 3. Co-Chair Updates

Dr. Klein will continue to co-chair MOERC meetings in place of Dr. Grimsrud.

Dr. Hyshka updated the Commission on the federal government's Access to Urgent Public Health Drugs mechanism.

### 4. Response Update - Ministry and Commission Round Table

Alberta Health presented updates on the opioid response including budget details and the working groups created based on Commission recommendations.

Commission members expressed interest in hearing how the working groups and Commission will work together and share information moving forward.

### 5. Rapid Access in acute care settings

Members heard a presentation from Alberta Health Services regarding expanding the ARCH (Addiction Recovery and Community Health) clinic at the Royal Alexandra Hospital and implementing a new opioid agonist therapy (OAT) program in Edmonton and Calgary Emergency Departments.

The Commission formulated the following **recommendation**, for consideration by the Minister:

- Implement an opioid agonist therapy (OAT) initiation program (using Suboxone) in Calgary and Edmonton Emergency Departments. Expand the ARCH program operating at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Edmonton and initiate an ARCH program in Calgary.

#### Decisions and Next Steps:

The Commission suggested Alberta Health work with ARCH on the details of their proposed budget and request a strong connection between the Emergency Departments, Primary Care Networks, and community providers to support continuity of care.

### 6. Communication and Knowledge Translation

The Commission heard a presentation from Alberta Health regarding their communications plan based on feedback from the Commission at the September meeting. The Commission recommended including people with lived experience in the early stages of product development.

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The Commission formulated the following **recommendation**, for consideration by the Minister:

- Support the proposal from Alberta Health Communications to provide grants for community initiatives to support the urgent opioid response. The Commission recommends that these initiatives and subsequent urgent opioid response Communication products be developed with meaningful engagement of people with lived experience.

**Decisions and Next Steps:** The Commission requested to hear more details about this project at future meeting.

### **7. Exempted Codeine Products**

The Commission heard a presentation from Alberta Health about Health Canada's public consultation regarding rescheduling low-dose codeine products. The Commission members agreed to share the Health Canada consultation information with relevant parties that may have feedback.

### **8. PHAC Harm Reduction Fund**

The Commission heard a presentation from Alberta Health regarding the Public Health Agency of Canada's Harm Reduction Fund for supporting key populations. The Commission will consider ideas for proposals, and will provide feedback to the Secretariat.

### **9. Punjabi Community Health Services Calgary Society**

Commission members heard a presentation from the Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) Calgary Society on a proposal to expand their addiction program.

The Commission formulated the following **recommendation**, for consideration by the Minister:

- Support the proposal from Punjabi Community Health Services Calgary Society for the expansion of their Addiction program to support the urgent opioid response. The expansion of this program will include an opioid prevention support group, case management, family enhancement, and enhancing currently offered programming to include opioid-use supports.

#### **Decisions and Next Steps:**

The Commission requested Alberta Health work with PCHS to focus on the urgent opioid related, harm reduction efforts contained in the proposal and request people with people with lived experience be engaged in the development and delivery of programs and services. The Commission also requested Alberta Health explore opportunities to leverage the PCHS grant to facilitate actions to support other impacted communities.

### **10. MOERC Planning**

Commission members were asked to provide input on agenda items for the remaining meetings in 2017 and early 2018, based on the strategic areas of the commission's focus including prevention, surveillance and analytics, enforcement and supply control, harm reduction, and treatment.

### **11. Conclusions and Next steps**

The next Commission meeting will be held November 6-7.