



HIV/Hepatitis
Health and
Social Services

Services sociaux
et de santé pour
l'hépatite et vih



**Minoogawbi
La Place
The Spot**

September 26, 2023

TO: Hon. MPP Michael Tibollo – Associate Minister of Addictions and Mental Health

Tomorrow, Thursday marks the one-year anniversary of Sudbury's supervised consumption site, also known as The Spot but it is at risk unless action is taken. Réseau ACCESS Network applied to the provincial government to fund a Consumption and Treatment Services site in the City of Greater Sudbury on August 27, 2021 with no movement or response in the 25 months since the application was submitted. With our temporary municipal funding expiring, we will close December 31st, 2023, if not sooner.

We reached out to your office in July of this year and now, we can't wait.

The District of Sudbury Manitoulin is consistently among the top 3 regions in the province with the highest rate of drug poisoning fatalities per capita, and currently has the second highest rate of fatalities per capita. Like most communities across Ontario, the drug poisoning crisis is killing people at an unprecedented rate. Since 2018 there has been a **346 per cent increase in opioid overdose deaths in Sudbury** compared to 60 per cent in Ontario. 112 Sudbury and Manitoulin residents died from an opioid-related overdose in 2022, an average of 9 people a month, and we have already had 77 fatalities this year.ⁱ

In the middle of a drug poisoning epidemic The Spot has been essential for Sudbury, reducing overdose deaths, reducing the transmission of infectious diseases, reducing risk and connecting individuals with essential social and healthcare services. In 2023 alone, The Spot had almost 1,000 visits and reversed all 15 overdoses that happened on site, saving lives and drug checking services to prevent the risk of overdose. Each overdose is a person, and when we reverse an overdose that is a person who is still alive.

Without provincial funding, the site was already limited in our ability to provide services, and with the sudden loss of municipal funding we will close unless action is taken by the province. As

many of the individuals who access the supervised consumption site are unhoused, the only remaining option is to consume in public spaces such as parks, doorways, and alleys.

We implore the provincial government to grant funding so that the lifesaving care can continue to be provided in response to the ongoing drug poisoning crisis

Sudbury's supervised consumption site provides high quality and easily accessible services to many of the community's most oppressed and marginalized citizens who are often shut out of receiving services elsewhere. Investing in harm reduction services, such as our supervised consumption site, is a cost-effective strategy that saves lives, reduces healthcare expenditures, and strengthens the fabric of our community. The supervised consumption site is an evidence-based approach endorsed by public health experts and organizations worldwide.

Supervised consumption sites, when supported by all levels of government and provided with adequate funding and resources, have the capacity to prevent hundreds of deaths, sparing already grieving families and communities the pain of knowing that the death of their loved ones could have been prevented. With provincial funding, we would be able to not only stay open, but expand our hours, move to a central location, and see upwards of 50 visits a day, helping curb the drug poisoning crisis in Ontario.

We aim to work with you collaboratively to move forward funding but will be pursuing a public awareness and engagement campaign on the issue in the meantime to ensure we are taking action to support our community.

We want to broadcast a positive message tomorrow with your support!

Thank you, Miigwetch, Merci,



Heidi Eisenhauer

Executive Director

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ⁱ “Opioid Surveillance.” *Community Drug Strategy*, Public Health Sudbury & Districts, 12 Sept. 2023, [www.phsd.ca/health-topics-programs/alcohol-drugs/community-drug-strategy/research/opioid-surveillance/#:~:text=population%20per%20year,In%202021%20\(total\)%3A,per%20100%2C000%20population%20per%20year](http://www.phsd.ca/health-topics-programs/alcohol-drugs/community-drug-strategy/research/opioid-surveillance/#:~:text=population%20per%20year,In%202021%20(total)%3A,per%20100%2C000%20population%20per%20year).