



HIV/Hepatitis Health and Social Services Services sociaux et de santé pour l'hépatite et vih



**Minoogawbi  
La Place  
The Spot**

October 17, 2023

Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Minister of Health  
[sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org](mailto:sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org)

Honourable Michael Tibollo  
Associate Minister of Addictions and Mental Health  
[Michael.Tibolloco@pc.ola.org](mailto:Michael.Tibolloco@pc.ola.org)

Dear Hon. Sylvia Jones and Hon. Michael Tibollo,

I am the medical director of Réseau ACCESS Network's supervised consumption site, The Spot. I am a public health and preventive medicine (PHPM) specialist in good standing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. I completed undergraduate studies and medical school at McMaster University, a Master of Public Health at the University of Toronto, and residency training at Queen's University.

When I finished medical school in 2010, I swore to uphold the Hippocratic Oath, which includes the phrase "I will prevent disease whenever I can, for prevention is preferable to cure." This has shaped my career: first, as associate medical officer of health for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, then as Regional Supervising Coroner for the North Region Sudbury Office. In these positions, I bore witness to the untenable tragedies of the opioid crisis in Northern Ontario. In my role with Réseau ACCESS Network, I am privileged to work with a team preventing these tragedies, the deaths of people who use drugs.

I accepted my role with Réseau ACCESS Network to provide high-quality care to people who use drugs, but as a public health physician, I would also like to highlight the benefits of The Spot to the general public:

1. **Reduced transmission of HIV and hepatitis C (HCV):** Supervised consumption sites are an important tool to reduce bloodborne disease transmission.<sup>i</sup> This is particularly true in Sudbury: from 2012 to 2021, the rate of new HCV infections diagnosed in the Sudbury region ranged from 50.8 to 78.7 new cases per 100,000 persons per year, which is significantly higher than the rate in Ontario as a whole (31.7 to 37.4 new cases per 100,000 persons per year over the same time period).<sup>ii</sup>
2. **Reduced health care system costs:** For example, the average total health care costs per 30 days for Canadians with both decompensated cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma caused by hepatitis C is \$8753<sup>iii</sup>. As a result of the reduction in disease transmission and improvements in health outcomes associated with supervised consumption, *sites are cost-saving*<sup>iv</sup>.
3. **Increased public safety:** Although there is negligible risk associated with public drug use and discarded needles, these can lead to public safety concerns: supervised consumption sites reduce both.<sup>v</sup> Further, supervised consumption sites either decrease or have no impact crime or public nuisance calls.<sup>vi</sup>

As you know, 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. Our temporary municipal funding expires December 31st, 2023. It is my sincere hope that you will fund a Consumption and Treatment Services site, both to support people who use drugs and also to support the broader community of Greater Sudbury.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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