



**Public Health
Santé publique**
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

October 11, 2023

Heidi Eisenhauer
Executive Director
Réseau ACCESS Network
101-111 Larch Street
Sudbury, ON P3E 4T5
heidie@reseauaccessnetwork.com

Dear Heidi Eisenhauer:

Re: Support of Sudbury Supervised Consumption Site

I am writing to express Public Health Sudbury & Districts' continued support of Minoogawbi, La Place, The Spot Supervised Consumption Site, operated by Réseau ACCESS Network, as one of many critical strategies needed to save lives from drug poisonings in our escalating crisis of toxic drugs. Public Health's position regarding supervised consumption services as a harm reduction strategy has not changed since your submission for provincial funding in August 2021. Our community needs a supervised consumption site that is fully operational with stable ongoing funding.

As you are aware, since 2019 opioid-related death rates in Sudbury and districts continue to be triple those of the province. In 2022, 112 residents of the Sudbury and Manitoulin districts died from an opioid-related drug poisoning. This represents a local annualized mortality rate of 54.1 deaths per 100,000 population per year, significantly higher than the comparable rate in Ontario overall, 16.8 deaths per 100,000 population per year. This crisis in our communities is ongoing and disproportionately impacts Northern communities.

Supervised consumption services are one piece to the complex puzzle of addressing the toxic drug crisis. These services provide a myriad of benefits to the community including, preventing drug poisonings and drug-related deaths, thus saving lives; increasing access to referrals for essential health care and social services; access to drug checking services; access to safe/sterile harm

Sudbury

1300 rue Paris Street
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.522.5182

Elm Place

10 rue Elm Street
Unit / Unité 130
Sudbury ON P3C 5N3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.677.9611

Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est

1 rue King Street
Box / Boîte 58
St.-Charles ON POM 2W0
t: 705.222.9201
f: 705.867.0474

Espanola

800 rue Centre Street
Unit / Unité 100 C
Espanola ON P5E 1J3
t: 705.222.9202
f: 705.869.5583

Île Manitoulin Island

6163 Highway / Route 542
Box / Boîte 87
Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0
t: 705.370.9200
f: 705.377.5580

Chapleau

34 rue Birch Street
Box / Boîte 485
Chapleau ON POM 1K0
t: 705.860.9200
f: 705.864.0820

toll-free / sans frais

1.866.522.9200

phsd.ca



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reduction supplies which reduce the transmission of bloodborne illness as well as other infections; and a safe and inclusive space for people who use drugs to connect and feel a sense of community.

Since opening its doors nearly 13 months ago, on September 28, 2022, The Spot has proved itself to be an indispensable resource to Sudbury. To date in 2023, The Spot had almost 1,000 visits and reversed all 15 overdoses that occurred onsite, saving lives. Furthermore, newly introduced drug checking services have been used dozens of times since their inception in August, preventing the risk of overdose and empowering people who use drugs to make informed decisions.

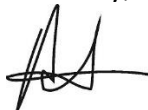
The Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts has continuously worked to sound the alarm on the toxic drug crisis and advocate for adequate and equitable resources for the communities in our area. In May 2021, the Board of Health passed motion [#14-21](#) sounding the alarm on the opioid crisis calling for collective action and to explore options for immediate, medium-, and long-term solutions. Additionally in February 2023, the Board of Health passed motion [#11-23](#) reaffirming the previous motion sounding the alarm on the local and regional opioid crisis and urging the provincial government to approve funding for the Supervised Consumption Site. Furthermore, motion [#39-23](#) was passed by the Board of Health in June 2023, acknowledging the severity of the toxic drug crisis in the North and motioning for a local drug crisis leadership summit to allow key partners and executives, including those with lived and living experience in Sudbury to collectively reach actionable items to change the tide of the toxic drug crisis in our area.

We believe that investing in an array of harm reduction services, including supervised consumption services, is a cost-effective strategy that saves lives, reduces healthcare expenditures, and strengthens our communities. Furthermore, offering harm reduction services and education serve as an important piece of the multipronged approach to addressing substance use stigma and improving the health and wellbeing of people who use drugs.

Thank you for the leadership, dedication, and compassion you and your staff continue to show members of our community, and for the life-saving care you provide through The Spot Supervised Consumption Site.

Your organization's work is making a significant impact on our community's health.

Sincerely,



Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer