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Honorable Michael A. Tibollo
Minister of Health and Addictions
Government of Ontario
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SUBJECT: SUDBURY SUPERVISED CONSUMPTION SITE – FUNDING SUPPORT LETTER

Honorable Minister Tibollo:

I am writing in support of Minoogawbi, La Place, The Spot Supervised Consumption Site and provider of harm reduction services in Sudbury. Réseau ACCESS Network, the lead Agency has announced the sudden loss of temporary municipal funding and stalling of provincial funding, forcing an imminent closure of The Spot, on December 31st, 2023, if not sooner.

Since 2018 there has been a 346 percent 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.

The Spot Supervised Consumption Site is 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. Drug checking services for substances like fentanyl were used dozens of times in 2023 alone, preventing the risk of overdose.

Following a multi-year investment the Spot opened for services on September 28, 2022, with temporary funding from the City of Greater Sudbury. The funding provided by the city expires on December 31st, 2023, and now will not be renewed for 2024. Réseau ACCESS Network applied to the provincial government on August 27, 2021.

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. While supervised consumption services won't solve

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the complex and long-standing problems associated with substance use, they do help reduce health risks and can be part of a larger strategy to address addiction and may encourage individual to seek addiction treatment.

The Greater Sudbury Police Service (GSPS) like Police services in Ontario, and across the country, are experiencing an important shift in addressing substance abuse disorder. Supporting harm reduction approaches like supervised consumption and treatment services in communities improves life by preventing overdoses that could otherwise result in catastrophic health outcomes (e.g., brain damage, vital organ damage, or death), reduces the risk of disease transmission (e.g., HIV, Hep C, and other blood borne infections), and increases access to health and social services, which are important elements to the public safety and wellbeing continuum.

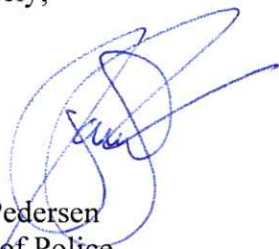
The traditional criminal justice response to substance use is no longer the only response. We support a four-pillar approach (health promotion, harm reduction, treatment and enforcement), and wish to reduce stigma and discrimination by recognizing that substance abuse disorder is not a moral failure but a medical disorder.

The response to substance abuse disorders must be balanced and comprehensive with no one action standing on its own. Success is interdependent and requires police services to embrace change, continuing to support health and harm reduction initiatives, and maintain a focus on the illegal drug supply.

The GSPS plays a pivotal role in community and public safety and works to balance the interest of citizens, businesses and people who use substances. The GSPS will continue to take a leadership role to work directly with the local community partners on substance use issues and contribute to our collective goal for a safer community.

Thank you for your leadership, and ongoing work to support harm reduction, and your dedication to addressing the impacts of substance use. This work will bring us closer to building safer and healthier communities for northerners.

Sincerely,



Paul Pedersen
Chief of Police