



Joe Cressy 周凱捷

City Councillor | Ward 20, Trinity-Spadina

May 30, 2018

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

From: Councillor Joe Cressy
Chair, Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel

Re: Provincial response to the opioid overdose crisis

At its meeting in May 2018, the Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel discussed the provincial response to the opioid overdose crisis. In particular, the need to build on existing provincially-funded prevention, harm reduction and treatment measures.

The overdose crisis has not abated, and indeed, may even get worse in the days to come. The number of people in Toronto dying from opioid overdoses continues to rise. Recent data from Coroner revealed that in 2017, 303 people in Toronto died from opioid overdoses. This represents a 63% increase from 2016, and a 121% increase from 2015 (Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario. *Opioid Mortality Data, January-October 2017*. February 9, 2018).

The situation remains urgent, and we need to do everything possible to save lives. The Province plays a key role in our response to this crisis, and regardless of the outcome of the provincial election we need to ensure that leadership continues.

The Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel therefore asks the Board of Health and City Council to endorse the following motion:

That the Board of Health and City Council reaffirm its support for a comprehensive, evidence-based response to the opioid overdose crisis that includes prevention, harm reduction and treatment. In particular, to reaffirm the critical role that harm reduction measures such as naloxone distribution, peer support, supervised consumption services and overdose prevention sites play in saving lives and improving health.

And further, that City Council call on the Province of Ontario to continue its response to the opioid overdose crisis by supporting and expanding existing provincially-funded prevention, harm reduction and treatment measures in Toronto.

Sincerely,

Councillor Joe Cressy
Ward 20 Trinity-Spadina
Chair, Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel