

Centre for Addiction & Mental Health

camh.ca

June 15, 2018

City of Toronto
Clerk's Office
Attention: Julie Lavertu (via boh@toronto.ca)

Dear Ms. Lavertu,

I am writing to support the Toronto Overdose Action Plan.

Toronto is facing an epidemic of opioid-related hospitalizations and deaths. All levels of government have been working to address the problem. Locally, efforts have been coordinated through the Toronto Overdose Action Plan, which the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) endorses and supports.

Selected recommendations from the Action Plan include:

- scaled-up, low-threshold harm reduction services, including naloxone, needle exchange services, supervised consumption sites, and drug-checking programs;
- a flexible treatment system that can accommodate opioid use disorders of varying complexity, that offers a full range of psychosocial and opioid agonist treatments and allows patients to move from higher-intensity treatment to lower (or vice versa) as appropriate;
- a community dialogue on a public health approach to drug policy, an approach that addresses problematic substance use as a health rather than a criminal issue, using evidence-informed policies to reduce the burden of injury, disease and disability, and address the social determinants of health.

With increased fentanyl circulation in our community and mounting fatalities, implementation of Action Plan recommendations must be accelerated. CAMH is a willing partner and looks forward to working with the Board of Health and other stakeholders to quickly activate the Plan. We commend the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Eileen de Villa, for her leadership on this public health crisis and we hope the Board Of Health expediently accepts and acts on her recommendations.

Sincerely,



Catherine Zahn, MD, FRCP(C)
President and CEO

cc: Councillor Joe Cressy

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