

December 3, 2021

Toronto Board of Health

**Re: HL32.3 Actions to Respond to the Drug Poisoning Crisis in Toronto**

Dear Colleagues,

The Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel met to review the Medical Officer of Health Report HL32.3 Actions to Respond to the Drug Poisoning Crisis in Toronto and asked me as Chair to communicate the following position:

The Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel agree that Toronto Public Health should submit a request to Health Canada for an exemption from the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*, in order to decriminalize personal possession of drugs in the City of Toronto

As part of this work on decriminalization, we believe that there needs to be a robust and inclusive process to meaningfully engaging the diverse communities of people who use drugs in Toronto, including those who have been criminalized, racialized and Indigenous people, sex workers, and people pregnant or with children.

People who use drugs should inform additional work on thresholds and any role for police in a decriminalized system. We also believe that it's important that the evaluation framework and ongoing monitoring be informed by people who use drugs to ensure that measures of success are appropriate and that decriminalization is properly implemented and refined.

Sincerely,

Councillor Gord Perks  
Chair, Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel

