



ActionNews

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Addiction Recovery Movement Building Momentum in Canada

CCSA's work on the addiction recovery front has kicked into high gear in recent months with the hosting of two high-profile events to reduce the stigma of substance use disorders and promote addiction recovery as attainable and sustainable. The emphasis on recovery is important, as shown in the Canadian Community Health Survey, (2012), which found that 4.4% of Canadians — more than the entire population of the province of Manitoba — met the criteria for a substance use disorder and yet CCSA's most recent National Treatment Indicators report unveiled that only 0.4% of Canadians accessed publicly funded treatment services.

As with any health issue, treatment of substance use disorders works, and yet it remains difficult for individuals to access timely and effective supports and services. Reasons for this difficulty include a fragmented system of care that is complex and difficult to navigate, a lack of services in rural areas and for subpopulations such as youth and minorities, wait lists and wait times, and a need for more medical detoxification facilities. As importantly, the social stigma around alcohol and drug addiction can play a powerful role in preventing an individual from seeking treatment. Reducing that stigma is a key objective of CCSA's work on the recovery front.

On December, CCSA partnered with the Economic Club of Canada to host a lunch at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa. The panel of speakers included Dr. Franco Vaccarino, President of the University of Guelph and Chair of CCSA's Scientific Advisory Council, Ann Dowsett Johnston, award-winning author of the book *Drink* and herself a person in long-term recovery, and Sheldon Kennedy, former NHL hockey player, founder of the Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre and also in long-term recovery. CCSA's

interim CEO, Rita Notarandrea, provided opening and closing remarks, and journalist André Picard moderated the panel.



CCSA CEO (interim) Rita Notarandrea and Minister of Health Rona Ambrose

Guests at the luncheon, including elected officials and CCSA partner organizations, were fortunate to hear the different perspectives of panel members on the disease of addiction and the concept of recovery. Dr. Vaccarino provided an overview of the neurobiological underpinnings of substance abuse, and how the brain changes with alcohol or drug dependency. Ms. Dowsett Johnston discussed the targeting of women and girls by the alcohol industry and the rising problem of addiction among women using her own personal journey as an example. Mr. Kennedy framed the issue of substance abuse within the concept of childhood trauma, discussing how the abuse he suffered as a young man helped shape his later alcohol and drug abuse.

After the holidays, CCSA organized an historic, first-ever National Summit on Addiction Recovery in Ottawa, in partnership with AnnMarie McCullough and Ms. Dowsett Johnston from Faces and Voices of Recovery Canada, and Marshall Smith, who was at that time with



Panelists at the National Summit on Addiction Recovery, organized by CCSA

Cedars at Cobble Hill. On January 27–28, 2015, the Summit brought together 50 committed individuals from across Canada, representing addictions organizations, frontline service providers and researchers. The Honourable Rona Ambrose also attended on the first day and reinforced her support of the Summit.

Over two days, participants worked together to develop a common vision for addiction recovery in the Canadian context, to bring a recovery focus to policies, practices and programs for the millions of Canadians who suffer from substance use disorders. This vision seeks to ensure that those with addiction can receive the same quality of services and supports that are available to those with other chronic illnesses.

On the last day of the Summit, CCSA released to the media and all Canadians the [National Commitment to Recovery from the Disease of Addiction in Canada](#), a key result of the hard work and dedication of the Summit participants. The Commitment puts forth a common vision for recovery and overarching principles that put a recovery lens on how we approach substance use disorders in Canada. It speaks to recognizing addiction as a health condition that deserves an evidence-based range of services, supports and tools that will help make recovery an attainable and sustainable reality.

Through these efforts and ongoing work in the area of addiction recovery, CCSA and its many partners across Canada will continue to raise awareness, address stigma, and highlight how recovery can improve the lives of individuals, enhance the well-being of families, and create stronger workplaces and communities across the country. ◀



Signing of the National Commitment to Recovery from the Disease of Addiction Canada

Universities Collaborate in Efforts to Reduce Alcohol Harms

Canadian colleges and universities are taking steps to collectively address the shared concern of high-risk alcohol consumption and related harms on campus.

A survey of 34,039 students from 32 Canadian campuses, conducted by the Canadian Consortium of the American College Health Association — National College Health Assessment in 2013, identified many of the challenges faced by institutions. For example, just over one quarter (26.8%) of students who drink reported drinking seven or more drinks the last time they “partied” or socialized, which is well above the limits recommended by [Canada’s Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines](#) of no more than two drinks for women and three for men on a given day. Students also reported negative consequences from their drinking, most commonly: doing something they later regretted (38.5%), forgetting where they were or what they did (31.2%), having unprotected sex (20.8%) or physically injuring themselves (19.9%).

The need for a collaborative framework to help address alcohol-related harms on Canadian campuses was recognized last November when nearly 40 university and college leaders, supporting organizations and national public health organizations met in Ottawa to establish a Canadian Learning Collaborative on High-Risk Drinking and Alcohol Harms Reduction. The formation of this group was inspired by a similar group in the United States, the National College Health Improvement Program (NCHIP), a consortium of 31 universities dedicated to sharing best practices in the attempt to reduce alcohol harms. Acadia University — the only Canadian member and a founding member of NCHIP — decided to establish a similar collaborative in Canada. ▼

“Our participation in NCHIP allowed us to appreciate the value of a national collaborative and we recognized the need for a similar initiative in Canada,” said Ray Ivany, President of Acadia University. “We all care about our students and their safety, and working collectively will increase the effectiveness of our efforts to reduce the serious impacts related to alcohol consumption.”

The Canadian collaborative will provide a framework to encourage and support post-secondary education institutions in efforts such as evidence-informed decision making in the application of alcohol policies, the sharing of best practices, and regular evaluation of efforts, all working toward reducing alcohol-related harms on campus. Five working groups are actively formalizing the framework for the collaborative, which is slated for presentation and discussion at a full-day meeting in May.

CCSA is a key partner in the collaborative, along with other stakeholder organizations including the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services, and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

To learn more about the work of the collaborative, please contact Cheryl Arratoon, CCSA (carratoon@ccsa.ca). ◀

Spotlight on Youth and Cannabis Use in Upcoming Release for CCSA’s Substance Abuse in Canada Series

Canadian youth are the top users of cannabis in the developed world, according to a 2013 UNICEF Office of Research report. Despite a decrease in cannabis use among youth in recent years, cannabis remains the most commonly used illegal drug among Canadian youth 15 to 24 years of age. Approximately 25% of Canadian youth reported using cannabis in 2013, and up to 10% of grade 12 students reported smoking cannabis almost every day, which is concerning given the detrimental effects that cannabis might have on the brain, especially while undergoing extensive development in the youth and young adult years.

It is for these reasons that the focus of CCSA’s next Substance Abuse in Canada report will address the effects of cannabis use on the developing brain.

The report covers:

- The behavioural effects of cannabis use;
- The relations between mental illness and cannabis use;
- The question of whether cannabis can be addictive; and
- Prevention and treatment options for cannabis use disorders. ▼



Contributors include Dr. Joanna Henderson, a clinical scientist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH); Dr. Tony George, chief of the CAMH schizophrenia program; Dr. Andra Smith, a professor at Ottawa University; Dr. Bernard LeFoll, a professor of pharmacology and toxicology at the University of Toronto; Dr. Aimee McRae-Clark and Dr. Kevin Gray from the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina; and Dr. Harold Kalant, Professor Emeritus of Pharmacology and Toxicology at the University of Toronto.

The report will identify what we conclusively know, what we still do not know and what evidence is emerging

in relation to the neurodevelopmental effects of youth cannabis use. The findings will help inform evidence-based prevention and intervention efforts, improving the capacity of all those who interact with youth to address cannabis use and abuse within this vulnerable group. Ultimately, the information will dispel some common myths about this illicit drug, help youth make educated decisions about cannabis use, and contribute to reducing the harms associated with cannabis.

Watch for more information from CCSA about this upcoming release. <

Registration Opens for Issues of Substance 2015 Conference

Interested in learning about the latest developments in substance abuse and addiction prevention, treatment, policy and best practice? Looking to expand your networks and learn from national and international experts? Join us in Montreal, November 16–18, for Issues of Substance 2015, hosted by CCSA in partnership with Mise sur toi. The theme for 2015 is “Addiction matters.”

Areas of focus include:

- The complexity of concurrent disorders (e.g., mental health and substance use, gambling and substance use)
- Responsible and problem gambling
- Drugs of evolving legal status (e.g., marijuana, novel psychoactive substances, e-cigarettes)

- Gaps in care and integrated and coordinated approaches to address them
- Health promotion, substance abuse prevention and early identification
- Recovery, health and well-being
- Indigenous approaches to addiction and healing

Visit the CCSA website for information on keynote speakers.

[Sponsorship and exhibit](#) opportunities are available. Information on continuing education credits will be available soon. <

Save \$100 when you register by September 14, 2015; Early Bird special is \$695.

[Register now](#)



Early-Warning Drug Surveillance Network Filling Knowledge Gaps in Canada

Illicit — and deadly — [fentanyl](#) has been making the headlines recently, with CCSA and partners playing an important role in warning the public of its existence and inherent dangers.

The Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (CCENDU) is a national early-warning surveillance network coordinated by CCSA that rapidly collects and shares information on new drug patterns and trends across Canada with the intent of fostering knowledge sharing and reducing alcohol- and drug-related harms. Since 2012, CCENDU has released nine official bulletins and alerts, available on the [CCSA website](#). CCENDU first warned of the dangers of illicit fentanyl in June 2013 and is currently collecting information on fentanyl-related deaths from across Canada.

CCENDU has also been a catalyst for policy advancement and inter-sectoral collaboration. For example, in September 2014, CCENDU released a bulletin that outlined drug-related deaths and illnesses occurring at Canadian music festivals over the summer,

complete with a call to action to assemble a group of experts to identify lessons learned that could protect attendees and minimize harm at future festivals. This bulletin led to a collaborative meeting in January 2015, where various stakeholders gathered to discuss recommendations and best practices for preventing, preparing for and responding to drug-related overdoses at large music festivals. This meeting was the first of its kind and the only meeting to date to bring together professionals from policing and security, event design and management, public health, research, and emergency response.

A summary of meeting outcomes, including priority action areas, next steps and how to get involved will be released in the coming months.

- Anyone interested in learning more about CCENDU is encouraged to visit www.ccendu.ca.
- To keep advised of the latest drug patterns and trends in Canada, please [subscribe to CCENDU Alerts and Bulletins](#). <

Prevention Hub Canada Launches Website to Support Collaboration and Resource Sharing in Its Network



Join Prevention Hub Canada to benefit from a full range of information and options:

- Add your organization to the Who's Who section (map and database)
- Share your work and research
- Tell us about your effective practice
- Promote your event
- Discuss issues and resources on our forums
- Comment on articles
- Receive a regular Prevention Update email <

CCSA and Mentor International are pleased to introduce a [new website to support Prevention Hub Canada](#), a network of individuals and organizations working in youth substance abuse prevention and health promotion in Canada. The website represents the Canadian section of the global Prevention Hub, and is a focal point for sharing research, policy and best practice, and connecting Canadians to promote effective substance use prevention. The Prevention Hub Canada network also uses [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

Do you work in the field of youth substance abuse prevention?

If so, we are the network for you!

Email PrevHubCan@ccsa.ca to ask about joining, and to learn more about the benefits.

New Online Forum for Addictions and Mental Health Treatment Providers

 [Français](#)[Alerts](#)[Dialogs](#)

EENet Connect / Groups / Treatment Space

Treatment Space

[Join This Group](#)

CCSA has partnered with the Evidence Exchange Network (EENet) to launch an online treatment space where health professionals can discuss treatment topics including emerging issues, evidence-informed practices, lessons learned and opportunities for collaboration. Located at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, EENet is a knowledge exchange network that aims to make Ontario's mental health and addictions system more evidence-informed.

"We're really delighted to be able to support this new online space," says Nandini Saxena, Manager of EENet. "It's a great opportunity to share evidence and resources on issues related to treatment, supports and services, and the system in general."

Funded by a grant from the Government of Ontario, this online treatment group welcomes new members. Visit and contribute to the conversation at www.eenetconnect.ca/g/treatment. <

Congratulations!

CCSA Knowledge Broker, Zachary Patterson, Ph.D., was awarded a Governor General Gold Medal for his past research in neuroscience.



RECENT RELEASES

Alcohol and Chronic Illness Infographic
Cannabis, Driving and Implications for Youth (topic summary)
Clearing the Smoke: Maternal Cannabis Use (update)
Competencies for Canada's Substance Abuse Workforce:
Technical Competencies Guide to Working with First Nations Clients
Competencies for Canada's Substance Abuse Workforce
(report in short)
Impaired Driving in Canada (topic summary)
Inventory of Guidelines on the Treatment of Harms Resulting from
Prescription Drug Use
Stimulants, Driving and Implications for Youth (topic summary)
Opioids, Driving and Implications for Youth (topic summary)
Preview of upcoming SAIC report

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The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) changes lives by bringing people and knowledge together to reduce the harm of alcohol and other drugs on society. We partner with public, private and non-governmental organizations to improve the health and safety of Canadians.

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The views of CCSA do not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Canada.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Grounding Trauma 2015

May 6–7, 2015, Alliston, Ontario

Le CRAFT : comment aider les proches à améliorer leurs interactions avec un toxicomane qui ne veut pas changer

May 8, 2015, Université de Sherbrooke
Campus de Longueuil, Longueuil, Québec

Event: Workplace Wellness and Mental Health

June 2–3, 2015, InterContinental Toronto Centre
Toronto, Ontario

2015 International Conference on Health Promoting Universities & Colleges

June 22–26, 2015, University of British Columbia - Okanagan campus, 3333 University Way, Kelowna, British Columbia

Issues of Substance Conference 2015: "Addiction Matters" (CCSA)

November 16–18, 2015, 900 Rue de la Gauchetière Ouest, Montréal, Québec



Canadian Centre
on **Substance Abuse**

Partnership. Knowledge. Change.

Substance Abuse Prevention Tools and Resources for Healthcare Providers and Policy Makers

Alcohol

- Alcohol Price Policy Series: Reducing Harm to Canadians
- Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines
- Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral Tool

Cannabis

- Cannabis Use and Risky Behaviours and Harms: A Comparison of Urban and Rural Populations in Canada
- Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis Series
- What Canadian Youth Think about Cannabis

Children and Youth

- Canadian Standards for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention
- Competencies for Youth Substance Use Prevention

Impaired Driving

- Impaired Driving Policy Briefs
- The Characteristics of Youth Passengers of Impaired Drivers
- The Problem of Youth Drugged Driving and Approaches to Prevention

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

- Collaboration for Addiction and Mental Health Care: Best Advice
- When Eating Disorders and Substance Abuse Problems Collide
- When Mental Health and Substance Abuse Problems Collide

Prescription Drug Misuse

- First Do No Harm: Responding to Canada's Prescription Drug Crisis
- Prescription Drop-off Initiative: Evaluation Toolkit

Substance Abuse in Canada Series

- Child and Adolescent Pathways to Substance Abuse Disorders
- Concurrent Disorders
- Current Challenges and Choices
- Focus on Youth
- Licit and Illicit Drug Use during Pregnancy

Treatment

- National Treatment Indicators Annual Reports
- Systems Approach Workbook