

# Simcoe Muskoka Drug Strategy-Expander Bar Updates

## Creating Momentum Toward Policy Change 2023/2024 Updates

### **December 2024 Update:**

This work group will be sunset at the end of 2024 and a Harm Reduction work group will be struck.

Bill 223 – Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act 2024 was passed in the legislature on December 2, 2024.

This bill contains many different components across a wide range of topics; Schedule 4: Community Care and Recovery Act, 2024 is most pertinent to the work of the drug strategy and reads:

The Act prohibits the establishment and operation of a supervised consumption site at a location that is less than 866 metres from certain types of schools? private schools? childcare centres? EarlyON child and family centres and such other premises as may be prescribed by the regulations;

The Act also provides that municipalities and local boards are precluded from applying for an exemption from the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (Canada) for the purpose of decriminalizing the personal possession of a controlled substance or precursor.

Finally, limits are imposed on the power of municipalities and local boards to make specified applications respecting supervised consumption sites and safer supply services. Municipalities and local boards may only make such applications or support such applications if they have obtained the approval of the provincial Minister of Health.

The Act allows for the closure of the previously identified CTS sites, and limits applications for new sites. It also limits other harm reduction efforts such as Safer Supply and Urgent Public Health Need Sites (UPHNS).

### **October 2024 Update:**

#### [Use of a Harm Reduction Lens to Address the Opioid/Drug Toxicity Crisis](#)

Focus of this work group will be shifting to one of raising awareness related to the role of **harm reduction** in a comprehensive approach to the opioid/drug toxicity crisis.

### **June 2024 Update:**

- A Harm Reduction Key Messages document was presented to the membership for review and feedback.
- A position statement related to decriminalization and harm reduction remain under development.

### **April 2024 Update:**

A drafted position statement related to decriminalization is under development.

Key messages related to harm reduction, including decriminalization will be finalized soon.

Dr. Kiernan Moore's 2023 Annual Report: [Balancing Act: An All of Society Approach to Substance Use and Harms](#), was recently released. The report speaks to the importance of a harm reduction approach to address the current drug/opioid toxicity crisis, that includes Consumption and Treatment Services Sites, Prescribed Safer Supply and Decriminalization.

### **February 2024 Update:**

Work continues on the development of harm reduction key messages, including those pertaining to decriminalization.

Some new resources have been released related to decriminalization:

- January 2024: Royall Society of Canada: [Urgent and Long Overdue: Legal Reform and Drug Decriminalization in Canada](#).
- January 2024: [KFL&A Community Consultation on Decriminalization](#).

### **November 2023 Update:**

Key messages about harm reduction, including decriminalization are being developed, including a focus on harm reduction with an Indigenous perspective.

### **September 2023 Update:**

The Canadian Drug Policy Coalition presented to the Community Partner Advisory Committee on the impact of drug policy on the current drug toxicity crisis.

Supporting materials were provided by the working group.

- [Background Document: Policy Shift - Decriminalization](#)
- [Environmental Scan of Literature capturing varying perspectives on current drug policy](#).
- [Health Equity Impact Assessment Summary – Canadian Drug Policy](#)
- [Detailed Summary of the history of Canadian Drug Policy](#).