

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Consumption and Treatment Services Site (CTS) Gains Federal Exemption

Fundraising Effort to Renovate Site Gears Up in Anticipation of Opening

PETERBOROUGH, ON - Community organizations seeking to operate a Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) site are one step closer to gaining approval. Peterborough's application for a federal exemption to allow the use of illegal drugs at 220 Simcoe Street, the proposed site of the CTS, has been conditionally approved. Health Canada's approval is conditional on a site visit and proof of funding. Now, the group is fundraising to renovate the site in the former Greyhound bus station in anticipation of provincial approval of funding to operate.

The CTS initiative is being led by Fourcast, in collaboration with PARN-Your Community AIDS Resource Network and the Peterborough 360 Degree Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic. The partners have opted to renovate the site so they can be operational as soon as possible after approval of provincial CTS funding. They are collaborating with the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough (CFGP) to help facilitate donations from the public. The partners are encouraged that they have already raised \$25,000 of their \$160,000 goal to prepare the site to host a CTS.

"We are renovating now so the CTS can start saving lives as quickly as possible," says Fourcast's Executive Director, Donna Rogers. "With the exemption in hand, we're confident our application meets all the provincial requirements to get ongoing operational funding. With our community's financial help, we can be better prepared for opening within a shorter timeline." Members of the community wanting to donate can do so through the CFGP at <https://cfgp.ca/project/cts-fund/>.

"Peterborough Public Health welcomes this announcement and the life-saving impact that a CTS will have in our community," said Dr. Rosana Salvaterra, Medical Officer of Health. "Amidst the mounting harms of the opioid crisis, there is an urgent and critical need for the compassionate, evidence-based health and social supports that this facility will provide. I'm pleased to see the CTS gain momentum and the growing awareness that a public health approach to substance use is essential to building a safer community for everyone."

In November 2018, the Ontario government committed to fund 23 sites. So far, just 16 have been funded. There are just three other sites in Ontario that are [seeking an exemption](#). Canada's [Controlled Drugs and Substances Act](#) (CDSA) prohibits activities related to controlled substances and precursor chemicals. To operate a CTS, an exemption under section 56.1 of the CDSA is necessary.

"Health Canada's review for an exemption is very rigorous" says Suzanne Galloway, Executive Director of the Peterborough 360 Degree Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic, a co-applicant on the CTS. "This conditional approval shows that we've met the high standards required to operate a CTS in terms of safety, client service and community partnership."



As a frontline agency and collaborating partner in this initiative, PARN-Your Community AIDS Resource Network welcomes the broad support of partner agencies and local leaders and is encouraged by the momentum that this development represents.

“We see every day the devastation that the opioid crisis has brought to Peterborough,” says Dane Record, Interim Executive Director at PARN. “There are already 20 people who are suspected to have lost their lives this year alone, and 20 families who will never see their loved one again. Consumption Treatment Services sites have proven to prevent overdoses and save lives in communities where they operate. It’s clear that we need to get Peterborough’s site up and running as soon as possible.”

QUOTES

“The people working on the frontlines of the opioid crisis in our community are true heroes. These caring, compassionate experts are committed to literally saving lives. That is why our government is working to ensure they have the support and resources needed to win this public health crisis. To date, the Government of Canada has approved more than 3 dozen supervised consumption sites which have been visited more than 2.2 million times, reversed over 17,000 overdoses, and made over 85,000 referrals to health and social services. As we see the COVID-19 outbreak worsening the situation for Canadians struggling with substance use disorders, it is more important than ever to ensure support is available. The evidence is clear - these sites save lives”.

**Hon. Maryam Monsef, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development
M.P., Peterborough-Kawartha**

“During a year where we have seen more people struggle with addiction and many opioid deaths, providing supports and treatments services is vitally important. We would be remiss if we didn’t acknowledge County Councillor Sherry Senis, Deputy Mayor for Selwyn Township who initiated the motion that brought this need to the forefront for the County. With the support of the Federal and Provincial governments, Fourcast will be positioned to serve those most in need in our community.”

**J. Murray Jones, Warden
County of Peterborough**

“I would like to congratulate Fourcast on successfully achieving Federal approval for a safe Consumption and Treatment Services site and moving another step closer to opening. CTS sites provide critical wrap-around services that connect people who use drugs to primary care, treatment, and other health and social services. Research shows that safe consumption sites help prevent the transmission of infectious disease, encourage marginalized people to access health care services, including primary care and addiction treatment, and bring stability to communities by improving public order and reducing the number of injections taking place on the street.”

**Diane Therrien, Mayor
City of Peterborough**



“The public consultation and survey here in Peterborough that was led by PDS have demonstrated widespread support for this initiative. This is highlighted by the results that 74% of more than 1600 people surveyed believe that a CTS will benefit our community. Leveraging the support shown by our community can help move this to the next step in the process and bring this important life-saving service to Peterborough.”

**Jessica Penner, Coordinator
Peterborough Drug Strategy**

“The Peterborough Police Service is happy that our community partners are now closer than ever to making a CTS in Peterborough a reality. This will be an important addition to existing services providing much needed service and paths to treatment for those with substance use disorder. We will continue to support our partners in this project going forward and hope they can achieve all of their fundraising goals.”

**Scott Gilbert, Chief of Police
Peterborough Police Service**

“We’re committed to doing everything we can to contribute to the collaborative response necessary to confront one of the biggest public health threats facing Canada. To give it context, the number of overdose incidents we responded to in May alone was double the average of the previous four months. As opioid deaths continue to mount in our community, there is a clear need for strategies that ensure paramedics can support individuals in crisis.”

**Craig Jones, Commander, Emergency Management & Operational Support
Peterborough County/City Paramedics**

“As a partner of the Peterborough Drug Strategy, Peterborough Regional Health Centre is pleased that plans for a consumption and treatment service site in our community continue to move forward. PRHC sees some of the highest rates of emergency department visits related to opioid use in Ontario – more than double the provincial average. Research has shown that consumption and treatment sites can be more welcoming environments for people struggling with substance use, providing access to key education, treatment, supports and resources that help to reduce harm, which in turn reduces the need for emergency healthcare. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners in the community as this important project continues to take shape in the months ahead.

**Brenda Weir, Executive Vice President and Chief Nursing Executive
PRHC**

For More Information:

Dylan DeMarsh
Community Resource Coordinator
PARN
dylan@parn.ca
705-749-9110 ext. 208

Cameron Taylor
Communications
Fourcast
ctaylor@fourcast.ca

