



# Harm Reduction Innovative Solutions

## Virtual Conference

### November 24 & 25, 2020

#### Monday November 23, 2020

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	<b>Pre-Conference Event</b> Screening of Nature of Things Documentary <b>Wasted: My Struggle with Addiction</b> Followed by a facilitated discussion
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#### Tuesday November 24, 2020

10:00 am- 10:15 am	Opening Remarks Logistics Virtual Training Etiquette Housekeeping
10:15 am – 11:00 am	<b>The Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use: The rise of drug poisoning deaths involving fentanyl and the value of early warning</b> <i>Doris Payer and Matthew Young</i> <i>Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA)</i>
11:00 am – 11:15 am	Break
11:15 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Mother's Voices: Compassion and Politics in The Time of Drug Poisonings in Canada</b> <i>Sheila Jennings- Moms Stop the Harm</i>
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Concurrent Workshops
	<b>Tenant Rights, Home Takeovers and Housing Health Hazards</b> <i>Abby Mackie- TBHDU</i> <i>Crystal Simeoni- TBDSAB</i> <i>Sally Colquhoun</i> <i>Kinna Aweya Legal Clinic</i>
	<b>Safer Supply</b> <i>Dr. Nanki Rai, Physician and Toronto Overdose Prevention Society</i> <i>Emmet O'Reilly, South Riverdale Community Health Centre</i>
2:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Evaluation and Wrap up Day 1

#### Wednesday November 25, 2020

10:00 am- 10:15 am	Check in, Welcome
10:15 am – 11:45am	Concurrent Workshops
<b>Decriminalization for Simple Possession of Illicit Drugs: Exploring Impacts on Public Safety &amp; Policing</b> <i>Chief Mike Serr</i> <i>Co-chair of the CACP's Special Purpose Committee on the Decriminalization of Illicit Drugs</i>	<b>Pre and Post Natal Care for Families Using Substances</b> <i>Jenni Huntley- NorWest Community Health Centres &amp; Lisa Bishop, Dilico Anishinabek Family Care</i>
	<b>Supporting Individuals with a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – What You Need to Know</b> <i>Maureen Parkes &amp; Dr. Ella Goodman</i> <i>NorWest Community Health Centres</i>
11:45 am – 12:45 pm	Lunch
12:45 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Building A Drug User Movement During a Pandemic</b> <i>Garth Mullens, Crackdown Podcast</i>
1:30 pm – 1:45 pm	Break
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	<b>Innovations in Services During COVID 19 Pandemic</b>
2:45 pm – 3:00 pm	Closing Remarks, Evaluation

***Please note all times listed on agenda are in EST***

# Harm Reduction: Innovative Solutions

## Session Summaries and Presenter Biographies

Monday November 23, 2020

### Wasted: My Struggle with Addiction

*Pre-Conference documentary screening and facilitated discussion*

Filmmaker Maureen Palmer set out to make a documentary following her partner Mike Pond — a psychotherapist and an alcoholic five years sober — as he searched for the best new evidence-based addiction treatments. The intent was to help others battling substance use disorders

But to the couple's shock and dismay, shortly after filming began, Mike drank again. In Wasted, Mike and Maureen's attitudes and assumptions about addiction are tested in real time as the couple search for a treatment that will work for Mike. A theoretical journey becomes very real and deeply personal.

In their documentary, Wasted, Mike and Maureen discover a revolution in addiction research and treatment. They reveal tantalizing clues to what causes addiction and focus on compassionate evidence-based treatments that pick up where AA leaves off.

Tuesday November 24, 2020

### **Opening Plenary Session- 10:15 am – 11:00 am**

#### The Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use: The rise of drug poisoning deaths involving fentanyl and the value of early warning

The Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (CCENDU) is a nation-wide network of community partners that informs Canadians about emerging drug use trends and associated issues. By coordinating community partners and assembling the information they report, CCSA helps CCENDU by communicating topics of immediate concern and by informing communities on lessons learned in response to local drug issues. This talk will review the history of the CCENDU network and discuss the value of early warning.

**Matthew Young** is a Senior Research and Policy Analyst at the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) and an adjunct research professor of psychology at Carleton University in Ottawa. He has been working in the field of substance use and addiction for over 20 years and leads CCSA's substance use epidemiology research activities, which includes co-chairing the scientific committee tasked with estimating the economic burden of substance use in Canada ([www.csuch.ca](http://www.csuch.ca)). He was also at the helm of the Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use when CCSA identified and issued one of the first public health alerts on the presence of fentanyl in the unregulated illegal drug supply (June 2013). Matthew also co-chairs the scientific committee tasked with developing the first lower-risk gambling guidelines and sits as a member of Health Canada's Drugs and Evidence Working Group and the Public Health Agency of Canada's Opioid Overdose Surveillance Task Group.

**Doris Payer** is a Knowledge Broker at the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA). She received her PhD in addiction neuroscience from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and was a Clinical Research Scientist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto, until 2015 when she left academic research to pursue her passion for knowledge mobilization. This journey took her to the UK, first as a Neuroscience Advisor at the Beckley Foundation (Oxford, UK), and later as the coordinator of the Mental Health Innovation Network, a knowledge exchange platform jointly led by the Centre for Global Mental Health (London, UK) and the World Health Organisation's Department for Mental Health and Substance Abuse. Now that she is back in Canada, Doris leads the Brain Builders Lab – CCSA's initiative focused on the role of adverse childhood

experiences in shaping brain development and substance use outcomes. She also coordinates the Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (CCENDU) – CCSA’s sentinel network on drug trends and harms – and the Drug Checking Working Group, which fosters knowledge exchange among service providers, researchers, and government.

## **Keynote Address- 11:15 am – 12:00 pm**

### **Mother's Voices: Compassion and Politics in The Time of Drug Poisonings in Canada**

**Sheila Jennings** teaches in the Legal Studies Program at Ontario Tech University and is a no-longer-practicing lawyer. She is the proud mother of three young adults one whom has survived numerous overdoses in different provinces. Sheila advocates provincially and nationally with and is on the board of Moms Stop The Harm (MSTH). MSTH is a national network of families impacted by substance use related harms and deaths. MSTH advocates to change failed drug policies, provides peer support to grieving families and also provide support to those with loved ones who use or who have used substances.

## **Concurrent Workshops- Tuesday November 24, 2020 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm**

### **Tenant Rights, Home Takeovers and Housing Health Hazards**

Health hazards that tenants may encounter and the landlord’s responsibility for mitigation

**Abby Mackie** is the Senior Public Health Inspector with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Abby has a Bachelor of Applied Science Degree from Ryerson University and is Certified with the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors. He has been working primarily in the areas of water quality, food safety, infection control and health hazard investigations for the past 26 years.

**Sally Colquhoun** is the Coordinator of Legal Services for the Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic in Thunder Bay. A lawyer, she was called to the bar in 1984. She has devoted her career to increasing social justice for low income people and First Nations communities in Ontario’s Northwest. Her commitment to access to justice is evidenced by her 33 years of practice with the Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic, where she and her colleagues help clients obtain critical basic social assistance benefits, income and housing. They also advocate for law reform, making frequent submissions to government agencies to support legislative and policy changes that will assist those who are most vulnerable.

Sally will speak to the following during her presentation:

- how the pandemic has exacerbated the lack of affordable housing,
- how the stress associated with the pandemic has caused an increase in mental health issues and substance use which can impact people’s housing,
- the eviction process and changes and problems at the Landlord and Tenant Board, including new rules around payment schedules.

**Crystal Simeoni** is the Manager, Housing Programs within the Integrated Social Services Division of The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board.

Crystal’s background in Social Work set the path for her career in human services. Prior to her role as Manager, Housing Programs, which she has held for the past eight years, Crystal was a Property Management Officer for ten years with TBDSSAB; a position which provided her with firsthand experience working with tenants and families in our community and district. Crystal participates within the restorative neighbourhood practises and sits on the Harm Reduction

Working Group of Thunder Bay. Crystal has a passion for the Special Needs community and has been an On-Call Supervisor with Ave II for over nineteen years.

Crystal's presentation will focus on:

An increase in unit takeovers of vulnerable tenants has been identified within our community, also affecting properties owned and managed by The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB). The TBDSSAB Housing Programs team are working towards building plans to mitigate these risks, and leaning on community partners to protect tenants and tenant communities.

## **Safer Supply**

This session will cover the context of the overdose crisis (including colonialism, racism, stigma and criminalization), the rationale and evidence base of the service and policy and practice related to service delivery and program design. Also reviewed will be the underlying tenets of Harm Reduction in this context.

**Emmet O'Reilly** is a Nurse Practitioner working out of South Riverdale Community Health Centre with over a decade of experience serving the marginalized, racialized and criminalized people of Toronto's east end. Emmet is currently leading the Safer Opioid Supply program at South Riverdale Community Health centre as part of the Downtown East Collaborative Safer Opioid Supply program. The other core collaborative members are Regent park Community Health Centre and Street Health.

**Nancy Rai** is a migrant settler from Kashmir who is formally trained in public health and practices as a primary care physician in Toronto, on the traditional Indigenous territory of the Wendat, the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit. In her clinical practice, she works closely with people who use drugs, those living with HIV and Hepatitis C, 2SLGBTQIA+ and undocumented communities and with people experiencing homelessness. She has been active in grassroots movements for health justice for the past 10 years and is a member of the Toronto Overdose Prevention Society which set up unsanctioned Overdose Prevention Sites in Toronto as a response to the devastating overdose crisis. In addition to being the recipient of University of Toronto's 2017 Robert Sheppard Award for Health Equity and Social Justice, she also received the College of Family Physicians of Canada Award of Excellence in 2018.

## **Seeking Mino-Bimaadiziwin**

**Ryan McMahon**

In this workshop, McMahon will connect ongoing colonialism to the current fabric of our communities as it relates to the over representation of Indigenous Peoples inside of our crumbling and failing systems to address challenges in communities. Areas of focus here will be Indigenous models of harm reduction, reconciliation and health and wellness in Indian Country.

**Wednesday November 25, 2020**

**Concurrent Workshops- 10:15 am – 11:45 am**

## **Decriminalization for Simple Possession of Illicit Drugs: Exploring Impacts on Public Safety & Policing**

In this session, Chief Serr will provide an overview of the position statement put out by the CACP and the reasoning behind putting out the position statement. Chief Serr will also discuss how the CACP envision implementing decriminalization as well as what, at the individual community level, could local police forces/municipalities do to move the dial on decriminalization.

**Chief Constable Mike Serr** has been serving as a police officer for 30 years. He became the Chief Constable for the Abbotsford Police Department (AbbyPD) in September 2018.

Chief Serr joined AbbyPD in November 2015 as Deputy Chief Constable. Prior to his appointment, Mike served as a 26 year member of the Vancouver Police Department where he worked in a variety of challenging positions.

The majority of Mike's operational experience is in gang and drug suppression. He has worked for the British Columbia Organized Crime Agency, Integrated Gang Task Force, and British Columbia Municipal Undercover Program. Prior to moving to AbbyPD Mike was the officer in charge of the Vancouver Police Department's Organized Crime Section.

Mike is active locally and nationally in committee work and is currently the Chairperson of the Drug Advisory Committee for the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, Co-chair of the British Columbia Drug Overdose Task Groups and Chairperson of the Abbotsford Opioid Working Group. Mike is also on the Advisory Council for Drug Free Kids Canada, member of Character Abbotsford, and the Abbotsford Community Development Council.

### **Pre and Post Natal Care for Families Using Substances**

Midwives from Thunder Bay community agencies (Dilico Family Health Team and NorWest CHCs) will share their experiences of providing prenatal and postpartum care with a Harm Reduction lens to populations who are using substances in their pregnancies or have a recent history of substance use.

**Jenni Huntly** (She/her) is a Registered Midwife with NorWest Community Health Centres in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Jenni has worked as a midwife in Quebec and Texas, as well as in Ontario and in Haiti. Passionate about culturally congruent care for all birthing people, including those in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, Jenni has presented at various North American conferences, primarily on queer health issues and reproductive health access, and has trained hospital staff as well as midwifery students and doulas in various settings. She has been published as a contributing author of sexual health curriculum (Center for Sex Education, 2020) and on various Clinical Practice Guidelines published by the Association of Ontario Midwives (2012 – 2016). She has the amazing support of her queer blended family for her midwifery and advocacy work.

**Lisa Bishop** is Anishinbe from Wikwemikong Unceded Territory on Manitoulin Island. She completed a Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Health Sciences in Midwifery at Laurentian University and Masters of Public Health at Lakehead University. She has practiced as a Registered Midwife since 2007, working in Peterborough with Kawartha Community Midwives and Thunder Bay with the Maternity Care Midwives. Her current practice is at Dilico Anishinabek Family Care where she does outreach midwifery to families with complex social backgrounds and/or substance misuse.

### **Supporting Individuals with a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) – What You Need to Know**

FASD must be better understood in order to provide successful interventions and support. This session will provide a brief overview of the impacts of prenatal alcohol exposure and how it affects all aspects of daily function.

**Maureen Parkes**, the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Coordinator, works at the NorWest Community Health Centres (CHCs) in Thunder Bay, Ontario. Since the programs inception in 2002 Maureen has gained extensive and comprehensive training and experience in working with and providing programming for individuals with FASD.

#### **Dr. Ella Goodman**

Ella Goodman is a family physician practicing at NorWest Community Health Centres. She was a graduate of the charter class of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and completed a Master of Public Health at Lakehead University.

She has a passion for social determinants in health and treating clients in a holistic manner focusing on harm reduction utilizing a biopsychosocial model.

**Keynote Address- 12:45 pm – 1:30 pm**

### **Building A Drug User Movement During a Pandemic**

**Garth Mullins** is the host and executive producer of CRACKDOWN, an award-winning documentarian and longtime community organizer. Garth has been an opioid user for years, injecting heroin daily all the way through the last overdose crisis and is now on methadone. CRACKDOWN is a monthly podcast about drugs, drug policy and the drug war led by drug user activists and supported by research. Each episode tells the story of a community fighting for their lives. It's also about solutions, justice for those we have lost, and saving lives.

**Closing Plenary Session 1:45 pm – 2:45 pm**

### **COVID Innovations in Services**

The COVID-19 pandemic required a unique response in order to continue mental health and addiction services which are essential. In the North Region of the province, resilience and ingenuity are an everyday requirement as the region represents the majority of the province's land mass and a much smaller population dispersed across it. This session will offer some examples of the ways in which mental health and addiction service providers in Northern Ontario have redesigned their services and formed new partnerships to adapt to the shifting landscape of COVID-19.

