



HAMILTON URBAN CORE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Strong Core, Healthier Lives.

MEDIA RELEASE – For Immediate Release

August 29, 2022

HAMILTON URBAN CORE CHC PRESENTS Overdose Awareness Day

Hamilton, ON – **International Overdose Awareness Day** is being marked in Hamilton this Wednesday August 31st. The focus of this year's event is to provide direct tools, education, training, and information to everyone in the community across the city. At St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, at 70 James St S from 11am-3pm, Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre is hosting a flagship event that includes:

- **Opening remarks and visits from leaders in healthcare, government,** and community services, including Ward 03 Cllr. Narinder Nann and leadership members of the Greater Hamilton Health Network.
- **Guest Speaker [Chris Cull](#):** a two-time cross Canada Cyclist, Filmmaker, Motivational Speaker, Founder of Inspire By Example and recovering opioid user.
- **Naloxone demonstrations** and harm reduction training
- **20+ Hamilton community agencies** with health promotion booths for people to learn about overdose, addiction and mental health, community supports for persons who use drugs and their families/friends.
- **Community Truth Hearing:** a live platform for the voices of persons who use drugs to share their experiences and stories of loss as related to the overdose and toxic drug supply crisis. Community Leaders and Decision makers will listen to the people speaking during the Hearing and be called to act.
- **Refreshments and live music**

Overdose Awareness Day is the world's largest annual campaign to end overdose, remember without stigma those who have died and acknowledge the grief of the family and friends left behind. The campaign raises awareness of overdose, which is one of the world's worst public health crises and stimulates action and discussion about evidence-based overdose prevention and drug policy. The campaign acknowledges the profound grief felt by families and friends whose loved ones have died or suffered permanent injury from a drug overdose.

Overdoses and Hamilton Statistics:

Deaths:

2021: 166 Hamilton deaths are probable or confirmed to be opioid related.

2020: 127 Hamilton deaths are probable or confirmed to be opioid related.

2019: 106 Hamilton deaths are probable or confirmed to be opioid related.

In 2018:

- 125 confirmed opioid-related deaths in the City of Hamilton.
- The confirmed deaths represent a 40% increase over the same period last year (88 deaths).

Between 2016 (52) and 2017 (88) , there was a 66% increase in the opioid-related death rates.

- **Construction workers made up 1 in 13 opioid-related deaths between 2017-2020 in Ontario**

Overdoses Responses to by Paramedics

From January 1 to August 21, 2022, Hamilton Paramedic Services responded to 489 incidents related to suspected opioid overdoses.

- In 2021, Hamilton Paramedic Services responded to more incidents related to suspected opioid overdoses, 914 incidents (approximately 76 per month), compared to 2020.
- In 2020, Hamilton Paramedic Services responded to fewer incidents related to suspected opioid overdoses, 565 incidents (approximately 47 per month), compared to 2019.
- In 2019, approximately 596 people called 911 for a suspected opioid overdose, which was about 50 per month and 1.3 times higher than 2018.
- In 2018, approximately 450 people called 911 for a suspected opioid overdose, which was about 38 per month.

Note to media:

Media are invited to the event on Wednesday, August 31st from 11:00am – 3:00pm at 70 James Street S, Hamilton. (Jackson Street lawn)

Contact information: Nhlaloenhle 'Nala' Ndawana, Executive Director

Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre

Admin: 181 Main Street West, Hamilton, ON L8P 4S1

CTS: 70 James Street S, Hamilton, ON L8P 2Y8

PH: 905-522-3233