

### WGDS CBA Objectives:

1. A community free from the harms of substance use for all residents.
2. Collaboration through both partnership and participation. The meaningful engagement of our members and our community is integral to our success.
3. Work with a client-centred focus. We value the voices of individuals with lived experience, recognizing how essential their input is in our work.
4. Open communication, trust and transparency are essential to each of our processes.
5. We value a knowledge-base in all of our work, whereby best-practices, applied research and evaluation will contribute to the effectiveness of our projects and overall strategy.
6. We will continually demonstrate our accountability, showing both to our funders and to the community that we are committed to the development of a healthier Guelph and Wellington County.

### WGDS Vision and Mission Statements:

Vision: We envision communities in Guelph/Wellington free from harm related to substance use.

Mission: We take action to prevent and respond to local substance use and addiction issues.

### Introduction to 2018 Year-end Report

The WGDS has four pathways that it uses to create change, and through which it accomplishes its Mission and Vision. These pathways are:

- Program Development,
- Research and Knowledge Mobilization,
- Education and
- Advocacy.

This report presents the work accomplished by the WGDS in 2018 via the pathway structure. Each WGDS project, or shared work process, is described under its respective pathway.

## **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY**

In 2018, the WGDS was engaged in several Program Design projects. Two were primary: the Supportive Recovery Room (SRR) and the Overdose Prevention Site (OPS).

Another program that the WGDS has championed for many years, Strengthening Families for the Future, received \$20,000 permanent annualized Targeted Prevention Funding from MCYS in May of 2018. This program will now have the means to provide ongoing support to families in the City of Guelph and Wellington County.

The program development processes that the WGDS actively led or supported are described below, including information about project deliverables and outcomes.

### **Supportive Recovery Room (SRR)**

- This project was the culmination of work that the WGDS, Poverty Task Force (PTF) and Towards Common Ground (TCG) undertook in 2017 to raise awareness about the need for addiction, mental health and concurrent disorder Crisis Stabilization Services in Guelph.
- From January 8 – May 6, 2018, the WW LHIN provided \$175,000 in funds to a host a pilot Crisis Stabilization program for local residents who needed to sleep to recover from substance use. This project was called the Supportive Recovery Room (SRR) project. Partner organizations in this pilot were the GCHC (admin lead), Guelph Wellington EMS and Stonehenge Therapeutic Community (staffing) and Wyndham House (location).
- 2 SRR beds were provided at Wyndham House Youth Shelter to local residents who needed to recover from substance use.
- SRR clients could utilize a bed for up to 72 hours.
- SRR staff, an addiction outreach worker and a paramedic, assisted clients to access needed health and social services during their stay at the SRR.
- While the SRR pilot project was underway, the WGDS, TCG and the PTF explored potential long-term funding options to sustain this service.
- A potential long-term funding partnership was explored with the City of Guelph, the United Way and the WWLHIN. In this partnership, the City of Guelph would provide a building to house a long-term SRR service, the United Way would host a campaign to cover the cost of upgrading the building to meet necessary codes, and the WWLHIN would provide operational costs for the service.

Deliverables and Outcomes-to-date:

- In the 119 days of the SRR pilot, 62 clients were served, and a total of 107 client encounters occurred.
- The average SRR length of client stay was 28 hours.
- Clients aged 17-27 were the most frequent SRR service users, but clients from 16 to 64 years old utilized the service.

- The average SRR client identified with an average of 4 priority population criteria, namely: addiction issues, homelessness or at risk of homelessness, low income and mental health issues.
- An extensive summary of the SRR pilot was conducted and it provided detailed operational and client-related data which can be used to inform long-term planning.
- The SRR pilot fully demonstrated the need for non-hospital based crisis services in Guelph by demonstrating the value that they provide in meeting both client and community needs (i.e. right time, right place services for individuals clients, and the diversion of clients with addiction challenges from ER services at the hospital).
- Partners involved in operating and designing the SRR met in April and developed a plan for its sustainability. An expanded model of service was developed and a budget was drawn up.
- The process of exploring long-term funding options was disrupted in April/May when the Ontario election required the WW LHIN to enter caretaking mode – thereby stopping the ability of funds for new funding initiatives to be explored. Prior to this, the WW LHIN had anticipated providing secured operational funding to this project.
- June – December, the WGDS and other partners continued to pursue opportunities to relaunch the SRR process in its redesigned iteration. This included incorporating service improvements identified by the evaluation conducted during the pilot, and working to reduce the per client costs of service provision. Specifically, the changes in the SRR model include:
  - Expanded number of client beds (5+)
  - Expanded service model to incorporate needs of clients experience mental health/addiction crisis who are awake and active
  - 24/7 operational schedule year round
  - A staff model of an RN or RPN, and an Addictions/Mental Health counsellor. Peer workers may also be incorporated into this model.
- In December 2018, in his inaugural address to City Council, Mayor Guthrie identified his intention to create a Task Force to address homelessness, mental health/addiction and community safety. He spoke of taking action to meet community needs that have already been identified by the Poverty Elimination Task Force and the WGDS. The WGDS will continue to champion the SRR service into 2019 in every effort to bring these types of crisis services back to the community.
- Both staff and management from the WGDS and PTF met with City Staff throughout December to assist with planning the Task Force process.
- It is anticipated that the SRR will be brought forward to the Mayor’s Task Force in January of 2019 as one of several key projects that require permanent funding.

### Overdose Prevention Site

The GCHC, the GFHT and ARCH Guelph applied for an Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) in the winter of 2017/18, and received funds for a 6-month pilot site, which opened in May, 2018. These organizations are all partner organizations of the WGDS. Although the WGDS has not had a direct role in developing or operating the OPS, it has had a key public relations role in supporting the OPS. This role has included:

- speaking at events related to the OPS,
- assisting in media relations with regards to the OPS,
- advocating for the key role of harm reduction services to mitigate the risks associated with the opioid crisis (including writing letters to the Minister of Health and the Premier) and
- delegating to City Council to request support regarding the application to the Ministry of Health for ongoing funding for this service.

Deliverables and Outcome-to-date:

- At the July WGDS Committee meeting, the organizations responsible for launching and operating the OPS presented information about the site, and provided up-to-date data on its services
- The WGDS Committee endorsed the Guelph CHC, ARCH and the GFHT to continue to offer OPS services, and to seek permanent funding for them, at its July meeting
- In August/September, the WGDS participated in a number of letter writing and petitioning campaigns, and wrote original letters addressed to the Minister of Health, Christine Elliott, and the Premier of Ontario, Doug Ford, advocating for the province to continue providing funds for safe consumption sites.
- Since the Province made a decision in October to support ongoing Consumption and Treatment Sites (CTS), the WGDS has actively supported the organizations that provide the OPS to complete the application required for newly rebranded CTS model. This included delegating to City Council in December to request its endorsement for the application. The WGDS was one of 5 delegations. City Council provided a unanimous support for the CTS application being sent forward to the Ministry of Health.

### Strengthening Families for the Future (SFF)

SFF programming is a family-based, group-delivered service that helps families build resiliency skills in order to reduce the risk of youth engagement in substance use. A group of WGDS partner organizations (CMHA WW, the County of Wellington, the Guelph Community Health Centre, Family and Children's Services, Women in Crisis, the Mount Forest Family Health Team) have provided this service with in-kind support over the last 7 years. The WGDS has led and facilitated the Steering Group for SFF throughout this time.

In May, 2018, the value of this program was recognized by MCYS. \$20,000 annualized Targeted Prevention Funds are being flowed through CMHA WW to provide ongoing SFF services to Guelph and Wellington County.

Deliverables and Outcome-to-date:

- MCYS funding will support ongoing SFF service delivery, with CMHA WW taking a lead role in supporting administrative and logistical tasks

- Conditions of the MCYS funding include a focus on delivering service to families residing in the County, and the continuation of collaborative community programming, overseen by a Steering Committee
- The WGDS worked with current and future SFF community partners throughout the Fall of 2018 to establish a new Steering Committee process for this program.
- By the end of December, 2018, the new SFF Steering Committee was in place and functioning. The Committee is Chaired by CMHA’s Manager of Youth Services, and has representation from the County of Wellington, Women in Crisis, CADS, Family and Children’s Services, and both WCDSB and UGDSB. CMHA has a dedicated Program Coordinator working with the program to ensure its future success.
- As a result, the WGDS has withdrawn from an active role with this prevention-focused program. The WGDS will continue to promote and support SFF as needed.

## **RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION PATHWAY**

In 2018 the WGDS actively led or participated in several activities under the Research and Knowledge Translation pathway, namely:

- the Last Call Campaign,
- the Safe Consumption Practices Needs Assessment,
- the Youth Cannabis Project,
- a presentation at the AMHO Conference,
- and the Year of the Peer Project.

### **Last Call Campaign**

- The WGDS has partnered with WDGPH regarding an Alcohol Harm Reduction Working Group since 2015, with WDGPH staff chairing this working group.
- In 2017/18, this working group created the Last Call Campaign, a series of videos to raise awareness about the local harms/costs of alcohol misuse. These videos feature local professionals (physicians, police, paramedics, counsellors, etc.) and community members in recovery from alcohol addiction.
- Because alcohol remains the substance that is most likely to cause the greatest harm to the largest number of people in Guelph/Wellington, although its use is normalized and these harms/costs don’t capture headlines, this campaign is necessary and timely.

Deliverables and Outcomes-to-date:

- By March, 2018, using a combination of social media and Cineplex platforms, the videos had received over 300,000 views, with Cineplex views alone accounting for 163,000 of them
- The top viewership was by 25-34 year olds, which was a key target age group for this campaign
- The WDGPH website, Alcohol Stories, which hosts the videos had received over 3,000 visits

- The Last Call Campaign has been very successful in reaching a broad demographic within Guelph/Wellington
- The Last Call Campaign website will remain active on the WGDPH platform for the foreseeable future.

### Safe Consumption Practices Needs Assessment

- In January, 2018, the WGDS partnered with WDGPH, ARCH Guelph, Sanguen Health Centre, and Toward Common Ground to design and deliver a Safe Consumption Practices Needs Assessment in the Spring of 2017
- The goal of this needs assessment was:
  - (1) to learn about the service needs of active substance users
  - (2) to gain an understanding of their current drug use processes and patterns, and
  - (3) to learn about and identify the service gaps experienced by active substance users.
- During February/March, partner organizations worked together to design a user-friendly questionnaire/interview protocol for active substance users. This process used peer researchers both to help with the design and to conduct the interviews.
- In March and April, 2018, a team including staff from WDGPH, peer workers from ARCH and Sanguen, and interns from the WGDS and Toward Common Ground completed interviews with 108 residents in downtown Guelph who use illicit drugs

### Deliverables and Outcomes

- The survey results were compiled by WDGPH staff over the early summer and were presented to WGDS Committee members in July, 2018
- Key findings from the survey include:
  - 108 active substance users participated in the survey process, with interviews typically taking a half hour to complete. The age range of participants was from 17 – 62, with a mean age of 37. Twice as many males as females participated in the survey. Surveys were conducted in downtown Guelph.
  - The services most used by active substance users include the needle exchange program and the Community Health Van.
  - Crystal meth and opioids were the most commonly used substances.
  - Over half of the respondents had experienced losing consciousness or fearing their lives were at risk as a result of their substance use, primarily as the result of using opioids
  - Respondents' main concerns were:
    - (1) that they, or their friends, are at constant risk of dying from overdose and
    - (2) the lack of safety (violence, theft, untreated illnesses) they experience
  - The most desired, but unprovided, service that respondents identified was access to a nurse
  - The biggest day-to-day unmet need that respondents identified was access to shelter and/or housing.

- The information gathered via this survey is helping to guide the work of the WGDS Opioid Program Design Working Group, and to influence and impact other service design processes within the community.

### Youth Cannabis Project

- Starting in January, 2018, the WGDS led a process to meet with groups of youth (ages 16-24, from a wide diversity of backgrounds) to:
  - (1) explore their current knowledge regarding cannabis use
  - (2) identify key messages for local youth to help them make informed choice regarding their personal use of cannabis
  - (3) determine the means by which these key messages are best distributed to local youth
- The key partners on this project have been the City and County Youth Service Provider Networks (which represent a wide range of youth services, including youth probation and parole, employment agencies, residential services, the school boards, etc.), and WDGPH
- January-April, 2018, the WGDS designed , tested and delivered a focus-group process to meet the 3 goals of this project
- In April, 2018, WDGPH applied for and received \$15,000 in funds from GREO to create youth-designed videos which will disseminate the key messages gathered through the focus group process to local youth via social media
- Through July and August, assisted by a consultation group which included the WGDS, WDGPH worked with youth who had participated in the earlier focus groups to develop, design and create 4 short videos (30 seconds) encouraging youth to make informed choices about their cannabis consumption.
- These videos were ready for use just in time for October's legalization of cannabis, and they were distributed widely through social media, youth-serving organizations, WGDS partners and other networks (including the Municipal Drug Strategies Coordinators Network of Ontario).

#### Deliverables and Outcomes-to-date:

- 7 focus groups were conducted with local youth
- The focus groups were conducted with diverse youth groups, including the Guelph Youth Council, students attending a local high school, youth attending a post-secondary school employment skills development program, youth residing at Wyndham House's residential program, etc.
- Key messages to assist youth to make informed choices were determined, and GREO grant funding permitted these messages to be captured in 4 short, youth-designed, youth-oriented videos
- These videos were distributed through social media and in the following ways: the WGDPH website: [talkingaboutweed.ca](http://talkingaboutweed.ca), the WDGPH blog: *Stay Well WDG*, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Cineplex movie theatres in Guelph & Orangeville, Wellington County Library screens, community partners such as the WGDS, who then shared through their networks

- At the time of writing this report, WGDS has **approximate** numbers regarding where the videos have been viewed, approximately 25,000 views through YouTube and 25,000 views through Facebook; Impressions were about 91,300 on YouTube and 191,640 through Facebook. The WDGPH Weed and Young People web page received 567 pageviews from 490 unique individuals. Average time on page was 2:24, which is high and shows people were engaging with the content.

### Year of the Peer Project

- In January of 2018, the WGDS launched a project called “Year of the Peer” which had 2 primary goals:
  - (1) To support WGDS partner organizations who offer addiction services to utilize information about best practices about integrating peer support workers into their service and employment models
  - (2) To provide local Peer Support Workers with opportunities to enhance their skills, knowledge and capacity
- January –April, 2018, the WGDS worked with a team of 3 students at the University of Guelph’s Research Shop to conduct a literature review of both academic and grey literature on peer worker best practices
- May-Aug, 2018, the University of Guelph provided funding to the WGDS to hire an intern to conduct primary research with organizations and peers to support the goals of this project
- May –November, 2018 the WGDS convened a Year of the Peer Working Group with both peer and professional membership from GCHC, Stonehenge, CMHA, OATC, The County of Wellington, ARCH, CADS, Sanguen Health Centre to design a one-day conference on peer work in November, 2018.
- The Power of Peer Support conference was held on November 8, with all 120 registration spots filled.
- In December, the WGDS partnered with Waterloo Region Independent Drug Strategies (WRIDS) and CMHA’s Centre of Peer Excellence, to submit a proposal to the WW LHIN requesting funds to establish a Community of Practice across the WW LHIN to support front-line workers and peers who work with active substance users.

#### Deliverables and Outcomes-to-Date:

- The Research Shop literature review on was completed in April, 2018
- A Public Health Masters’ student was hired to conduct primary research for this project. Over 30 interviews were conducted with peer support workers, and 8 interviews with organizations who hire Peer Workers were completed

- These two sources of information (a literature review and primary research with peers and employers) formed the basis of identifying the key content to be addressed at the Power of Peer Support conference
- The conference addressed two different knowledge areas. One stream was focused on the needs of employers and covered the business case for employing peer workers, best practice information on hiring and supervising peer workers and fostering a peer positive work culture. 70 people registered for this stream.
- The other stream was directed at the needs of peer workers themselves. Sessions in this stream covered self-care, managing compassion fatigue and burnout, and opportunities to work as a peer worker. 50 people registered for this stream
- The conference was very successful, and many attendees have asked that it be repeated in the future. Attendees came from Guelph/Wellington, the Region of Waterloo, Halton Region, Grey-Bruce and further afield.

### Addiction and Mental Health Ontario Conference 2018 (AMHO 2018) Presentation

- On May 29<sup>th</sup>, the WGDS, Stonehenge Therapeutic Community, the Guelph Community Health Centre and Sanguen Health Centre presented a workshop called “It Takes A Village: Integrating Cross-Sector Services to Create New Shared Service Models” to over 40 attendees at AMHO 2018
- This presentation highlighted the innovative cross-sectorial working relationships that have been developed in Guelph/Wellington, and the role of the WGDS is supporting these partnerships.
- The Rapid Access Addiction Clinic (RAAC) and the SRR process were used as examples of new, cross-sector partnerships have been developed to meet the needs of local residents who experience complex addiction and mental health issues.
- This session also focused on the value of building cross-sector relationships between primary care, addiction and mental health services, and specialized health services.

### **EDUCATION PATHWAY**

In 2018, the WGDS has hosted and co-hosted a diverse range of events which fall under this pathway, including:

- providing educational session for local prescribers and pharmacists to increase their knowledge regarding Opioid Use Disorder,
- community training on naloxone,
- sessions on crystal meth treatment , and
- sessions for both local school boards to increase their awareness of substance use issues and addiction.

Deliverables and Outcomes-to-date:

Date/Host	Topic/Speaker(s)	Outcome
<b>Crystal Meth Trainings</b>		
<p>January 19, 2018</p> <p>3 hour training</p> <p>Co-sponsors:            -CMHA WW            -Regional HSJCC            -Traverse Independence -ABI Services            -WRIDS</p>	<p>“Crystal Meth and the Brain”, presented by Dr. Judith Lemsky, and Keri Whitelaw</p>	<p>400 attendees (from Guelph/Wellington and the Region of Waterloo) provided extremely positive feedback on this event</p> <p>The presentations were video-taped, and are available on the Core Collaborative Learning website, and/or via the WGDS or the WRIDS to ensure widespread availability of this training</p>
<p>February, 2018</p> <p>2 hour training</p> <p>Co-sponsors:            -CMHA WW            -Regional HSJCC            -Traverse Independence -ABI Services            -WRIDS</p>	<p>“Acute Care Responses for Patients Who Use Methamphetamine” – presented by Dr. Alex Cauderella, St. Michael’s Hospital Addiction Services Team</p>	<p>This training was fully subscribed on Eventbrite with 100 registrants.</p> <p>Dr. Cadueralla shared best practice treatment processes from managing clients who experience psychosis as a result of using crystal meth with local acute care and primary care health care providers.</p>
<b>Opioid Use Disorder Trainings</b>		
<p>March/April 2018</p> <p>8 hours of CME training for physicians</p> <p>Hosted by GGH and Homewood EMHAS</p>	<p>“Optimal Management of Inpatients with Substance Use Disorders” – CME at GGH (hosted by Dr. Marcel Dore and Craig Robinson)</p>	<p>Over 70 attendees, including 50 registered clinicians, attended this training which was held at GGH</p> <p>The WGDS, and partner organizations, presented at this training, and the WGDS helped to market the training.</p>
<p>March 6, 2018</p>	<p>“The Endogenous Cannabinoid System” –</p>	<p>40 attendees</p>

1 hour presentation  Co-sponsor: Guelph Wellington Pharmacy Association	Dr. Michael Beasley	
May 3, 2018  1 hour presentation	“Safe Opioid Prescribing for Acute Care and Chronic Pain” – Dr. Sol Stern	30 attendees (live and OTN)
June 21 and 22, 2018  1 hour presentation  Co-sponsor: -GCHC -OATC -WDGPH	“Pregnancy, Breastfeeding and Substance Use” – Dr. Lisa Graves	34 attendees representing over 17 organizations.
Nov 21 and Dec 5, 2018  2-hour presentation from Stonehenge’s RAAC Staff  WGDS supported the training administratively	“Addiction Medicine for Primary and Acute Care” – Dr. Yelena Chorny	70 attendees in total
<b>Trainings provided to UGDSB and WCDSB</b>		
March 2, 2018  3 hour training	“Substance Use Training – Brain & Behaviour”	All UGDSB Health and Physical Education Teachers attended this half day session
May 8, 2018  1-hour presentation Half day wellness booth process	A workshop on “Substance Use and Recovery” was provided as part of St. John Bosco Catholic School Wellness Day	Students and staff from St. John Bosco attended this workshop.
May 30, 2018	An assembly called “Get Informed: Drug Myths and Realities” was presented to	Over 600 secondary school students attended these

<p>1-hour assembly offered twice</p> <p>Co-sponsors:          -ARCH Guelph          -CADS          -GCHC          -GPS          -Sanguen Health Centre          -Stonehenge TC</p>	<p>both the junior and senior students at Bishop MacDonnell Catholic Secondary School.</p>	<p>assemblies, along with staff from Bishop MacDonnell Catholic Secondary School.</p>
<p><b>Community Naloxone Trainings (Designed and Delivered by the Opioid Program Design Working Group)</b></p>		
<p>January 27, 2018</p> <p>Co-sponsor:          -Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition</p>	<p>The WGDS Harm Reduction Group provided a session on “Harm Reduction and Substance Use” at the Guelph Equity Conference</p>	<p>30 attendees</p>
<p>April 17, 2018</p> <p>1 hour presentation          1 hour naloxone training</p>	<p>A workshop called “Overdose Prevention and First Aid Training” was offered to WGDS partner organizations and member of the Downtown Business Improvement Association</p>	<p>Registration reached capacity at 40 attendees, representing both local social service and healthcare providers, and members of the downtown business community</p>
<p>October 10, 2018</p> <p>Co-sponsor:          North Wellington Safe Communities Committee</p> <p>1-hour panel presentation/discussion re. opioid benefits and risks</p> <p>30-min naloxone</p>	<p>“A Kitchen Table Talk: Opioids 101, Myths and Realities”</p>	<p>The session was held at the Mt. Forest Legion; over 50 community members attended the session.</p> <p>Local service providers from CMHA, CADS, Mt. Forest Family Health Team, Crime Stoppers, OPP and Portage brought information about their services to this presentation.</p>

training		
<p>November 19, 2018</p> <p>Co-sponsors:</p> <p>Guelph Public Library</p> <p>Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS)</p>	<p>In conjunction with SOLS, the WGDS and WDGPH planned a 5-hour workshop called “Responding to the Opioid Crisis” for library staff working throughout Southern Ontario.</p> <p>Since libraries have become a de facto shelter system for many people who are experiencing homelessness, and since with the onset of the opioid crisis, they also need to be responsive to the needs of active substance users, this workshop was designed to provide library staff with a forum to learn about harm reduction process and their application within libraries. A naloxone training was included as part of the programming.</p>	<p>Over 50 library staff, with at least 12 from the Guelph Public Library, attended this workshop. They were very satisfied with the content provided. There was also opportunity for staff to consider innovative approaches that they can take to support the community service role that libraries are now playing more and more.</p>

**ADVOCACY PATHWAY**

The WGDS works consistently to raise the profile of local substance use and addiction issues. It does this directly, by hosting events such as the Stop the Stigma Rally, and indirectly, by advocating for substance-related issues at a variety of community tables. In addition, the WGDS, along with its partner organizations, uses local media, social media, and other means to bring information, and to share its work, with the broader community

Stop the Stigma, 2019

The WGDS Harm Reduction Committee hosted its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Stop the Stigma rally on September 28 at Guelph City Hall. The length of the rally was expanded to 2 hours this year in order to give attendees time to meet with service provides and to network. Attendance at this event has grown year by year, and it is estimated that over 150 people attended this year.

The rally was opened by the Mayor of Guelph, the Deputy Medical Officer of Health and the Executive Director from the GCHC. 10 lived experience speakers talked about how stigma regarding substance use has impacted their lives, and they offered suggestions about how to move beyond this perspective to understanding substance use and addiction as a health condition. 12 organizations set up information booths at the rally, and reported many visitors to their booths throughout the rally.

Deliverables and Outcomes-to-Date:

- Ongoing advocacy to reduce the stigma that is associated with substance use and addiction

- This public action normalizes an understanding of addiction as a health issue which requires health-related interventions
- Media coverage (social and mainstream media) brings this advocacy work to the attention of the larger community
- The speakers at this event are supported in sharing their private stories of substance use, and recovery, in a public venue, helping to reduce the shame that is often associated with addiction and problematic substance use.

### Community Alert Process regarding Tainted Street Drugs

Over the summer of 2018, it became clear that the data that was being compiled provincially by public health units across the province about the rate of overdoses in each of their respective regions was based on tallying EMS overdose transports, and ER admitting data. This data did not include overdoses that were happening at community agency sites, or on the street.

The WGDS organized a series of meetings that brought key “street-focused” organizations (GCHC, The Drop In, Wyndham House, ARCH, and Hope House), GPS and WDGPH together to discuss this missing data, and also the absence of a local alert system to inform the substance using community of spikes in overdoses related to fentanyl in street-purchased drugs.

Deliverables and Outcomes-to-Date:

- With support from all the organizations participating in the process, WDGPH pioneered the developed an additional data based that now tracks overdoses that occur in the community. Other public health units across the province are now expressing interest in this data base.
- A process to create local alerts to inform active substance users about high levels of overdose in the community has been developed, piloted and instituted. This process saw the group of organizations who helped to develop the community overdose data system determine the criteria for creating and sending an alert. The alert process has been utilized several times in the Fall of 2018. The alert is sent out through social media, and mainstream media as well as through the WGDS Distribution List and other organizational distribution networks.

### Community Safety and Sleeping Rough Meetings (Fall/Winter 2018)

In the Fall of 2018, after hearing concerns about community members camping out and sleeping rough, and also hearing of concerns from other groups about used needles being found in the vicinity of these camps, the WGDS invited several key organizations to meet to:

- (1) gain a greater understanding of this problem and
- (2) look at ways to better meet the needs of the people who are camping and sleeping outdoors and to address community safety so that discarded needles are not left in publicly accessed spaces.

Deliverable and Outcomes-to-Date:

- Word of this meeting spread quickly, and many parties invited themselves to attend. The following people/organizations were in attendance:
  - Members of the Harm Reduction Community (ARCH Guelph Executive Director, ARCH Stay Sharp employees, ARCH Overdose Prevention Coordinator, SOS outreach workers)
  - Representatives of the shelter and housing system, and charities working with people who are homeless (Wellington County Public Housing staff, Drop In Executive Director, Wyndham House Program Director, Director of Hope House)
  - Members of the Treatment/Recovery community (STC Director of Community Services, GCHC Client Services Manager)
  - Representatives from City of Guelph Services (Manager of By-law, Parks Department staff, Guelph Police Services members)
  - Political and coalition members (City Councillor, MPP, representation from the Poverty Elimination Task Force)
- The diversity of attendees led to rich discussion regarding homelessness, addiction and community safety
- At the first meeting, outreach services and by-law staff determined that by working together they could better support local residents who are homeless. A shared protocol has been developed between these teams so that both services now work in a co-ordinated fashion when working with people who are sleeping rough or camping out. Meetings to ensure that this protocol is road- tested and improved have been established.
- Information about creative short-term and mid-term housing solutions were circulated and discussed
- After this group had held 3 meetings, the Mayor of Guelph announced that he will establish a Task Force in early 2019 to review issues of homelessness, mental health and addiction and community safety. This led to a suspension of meetings until such time as this Task Force concludes its work, at which time it will be evident whether or not the group needs to reconvene and if so, for what purpose. Representatives from this meeting have been invited to attend the Task Force, and the ideas that have been brought forward at these meetings will be shared with the Task Force organizers.

### WGDS Community Participation, 2018

In June, 2018, the WGDS was honoured to receive an Award of Merit from Family and Children’s Services of Guelph and Wellington County in recognition of its collaborative leadership in addressing substance use issues in Guelph and Wellington County.

Currently, the WGDS sits on the following community committees, helping to raise the local profile of substance use and addiction service needs:

Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee (HSJCC)  
 Municipal Drug Strategy Coordinators Committee of Ontario (MDSCNO)  
 Poverty Task Force  
 Rural Mental Health and Addictions Group  
 Safe Communities Wellington

### WGDS Media and Social Media Contacts, 2018

The WGDS social media contacts are:

[www.wgdrugstrategy.ca](http://www.wgdrugstrategy.ca)

<https://www.facebook.com/wellingtonguelphdrugstrategy/>

[@WGDrugStrategy](#)

### **WGDS ADMINISTRATION PROCESSES**

The WGDS Committee meets quarterly (January, April, July and October) for the following purposes:

- (1) current, local substance-related issues are identified
- (2) community priorities are developed
- (3) working group action plans are reviewed
- (4) feedback/evaluation of WGDS projects occurs
- (5) discussion, education, advocacy, program development and knowledge transfer takes place amongst WGDS partner organizations.

A list of WGDS Committee community partners is listed on the next page.

The WGDS Management Group meets every 6 weeks to provide the following:

- Guidance regarding the strategic direction of the WGDS Working Groups and approval of the annual WGDS workplan
- Feedback and support to the WGDS Manager
- Ensuring the operation of the WGDS is in accordance to terms outlined in the Community Benefit Agreements between the City of Guelph and the County of Wellington, and in accordance to the terms of the Host Agency Agreement between the WGDS and the Guelph Community Health Centre (GCHC)
- The WGDS Management group has representation at a Senior/Strategic level from: Funders (City of Guelph and County of Wellington), GCHC host agency, each of the Four Pillars of the Drug Strategy and the WGDS Chair. Members may have dual roles, so the maximum size of the Management Group is 8, and the minimum size is 4.

During 2018, the WGDS had 4 student interns working as interns under the supervision of its Manager. Typically a student placement is 4 months in length. These students represented the University of Guelph MPH program, U of W's undergraduate public health program, and WLU's MSW program

## Partners:

ARCH Guelph
Canadian Mental Health Association WWD
City of Guelph
Community Network of Specialized Care
Community Resource Centre of North and Centre Wellington
County of Wellington
Drop In Centre
Dunara Homes for Recovery
Family and Children’s Services of Guelph and Wellington County
Family Counselling and Support Services
Guelph CHC
Guelph General Hospital
Guelph Family Health Team
Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition
Guelph Pharmacy Association
Guelph Police Services
Guelph and Wellington Task Force for the Elimination of Poverty
Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis
Homewood Health Centre
Mount Forest Family Health Team
Ontario Probation and Parole
Parent Action on Drugs (PAD)
Portage Ontario
Royal City Church
Safe Communities Wellington
Sanguen Health Centre
Stonehenge Therapeutic Community
T.A. Patterson Associates
Toward Common Ground
University of Guelph
Upper Grand District School Board
Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council
Waterloo Wellington John Howard Society
Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network (WWLHIN)
Wellington County OPP
Wellington Catholic District School Board
Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health Unit
Wellington and Guelph Housing Services
Wyndham House
YM/YWCA of Guelph

**APPENDIX A: WGDS Press/Media Contacts, 2018**

Media Source	Date 2018	Title	Link
1. Guelph Today	Feb 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Illicit drug users being surveyed by Public Health about possible safe injection site for Guelph	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/illicit-drug-users-being-surveyed-by-public-health-about-possible-safe-injection-site-for-guelph-849130">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/illicit-drug-users-being-surveyed-by-public-health-about-possible-safe-injection-site-for-guelph-849130</a>
2. Guelph Today	March 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Overdose protection site to open in Downtown Guelph next month	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/overdose-protection-site-to-open-in-downtown-guelph-next-month-859401">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/overdose-protection-site-to-open-in-downtown-guelph-next-month-859401</a>
3. Guelph Tribune	March 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Overdose prevention site to open in downtown Guelph	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8328554-overdose-prevention-site-to-open-in-downtown-guelph/">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8328554-overdose-prevention-site-to-open-in-downtown-guelph/</a>
4. Guelph Today	June 2, 2018	Catholic school board apologizes for 'offensive' printed materials provided to some Bishop Macdonell students	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/catholic-school-board-apologizes-for-offensive-printed-materials-provided-to-some-bishop-macdonell-students-940392">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/catholic-school-board-apologizes-for-offensive-printed-materials-provided-to-some-bishop-macdonell-students-940392</a>
5. Guelph Tribune	July 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	3 overdose deaths in Guelph caused by purple fentanyl, police	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8734330-3-overdose-deaths-in-guelph-caused-by-purple-fentanyl-police-suspect/">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8734330-3-overdose-deaths-in-guelph-caused-by-purple-fentanyl-police-suspect/</a>

		suspect	
6. Guelph Today	July 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	'Just one bad dose, then everything goes wrong from there'	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/just-one-bad-dose-then-everything-goes-wrong-from-there-5-photos-980858">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/just-one-bad-dose-then-everything-goes-wrong-from-there-5-photos-980858</a>
7. Guelph Today	July 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Guelph's overdose prevention site could close in November as province conducts review of their merit	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/guelphs-overdose-prevention-site-could-close-in-november-as-province-conducts-review-of-their-merit-996414">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/guelphs-overdose-prevention-site-could-close-in-november-as-province-conducts-review-of-their-merit-996414</a>
8. Guelph Tribune	Aug 6th	Alert from Public Health over 2 overdoses in Guelph	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8802653-alert-from-public-health-over-2-overdoses-in-guelph/">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8802653-alert-from-public-health-over-2-overdoses-in-guelph/</a>
9. Guelph Today	Aug 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Mayor, local advocates hopeful overdose prevention site can remain open	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/mayor-local-advocates-hopeful-overdose-prevention-site-can-remain-open-1014137">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/mayor-local-advocates-hopeful-overdose-prevention-site-can-remain-open-1014137</a>
10. Guelph Tribune	Aug 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Overdose Awareness Day event highlights dangers of street drugs in Guelph	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8871397-overdose-awareness-day-event-highlights-dangers-of-street-drugs-in-guelph/">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8871397-overdose-awareness-day-event-highlights-dangers-of-street-drugs-in-guelph/</a>
11. Guelph Today	Sept 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	OPINION: Lessons from Guelph's Overdose Prevention Site	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/opinion-lessons-from-guelphs-overdose-prevention-site-1044192">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/opinion-lessons-from-guelphs-overdose-prevention-site-1044192</a>
12. Guelph Tribune	Sept 11 <sup>th</sup> ,	Overdose prevention site	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/opinion-story/8894417-overdose-prevention-site-the-">https://www.guelphmercury.com/opinion-story/8894417-overdose-prevention-site-the-</a>

	2018	the difference between life and death	<a href="#">difference-between-life-and-death/</a>
13. Guelph Today	Sept 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Partner agencies will do everything in their power to keep Overdose Prevention Site going if province decides to close them	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/partner-agencies-will-do-everything-in-their-power-to-keep-overdose-prevention-site-going-if-province-decides-to-close-them-1066316">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/partner-agencies-will-do-everything-in-their-power-to-keep-overdose-prevention-site-going-if-province-decides-to-close-them-1066316</a>
14. Guelph Tribune	Oct 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Health providers seek to make Guelph injection site permanent	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8948444-health-providers-seek-to-make-guelph-injection-site-permanent/">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/8948444-health-providers-seek-to-make-guelph-injection-site-permanent/</a>
15. South Western Ontario	Oct 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Naloxone training and frank discussion of opioids draws full house at Mount Forest Legion	<a href="https://www.southwesternontario.ca/community-story/8964144-naloxone-training-and-frank-discussion-of-opioids-draws-full-house-at-mount-forest-legion/">https://www.southwesternontario.ca/community-story/8964144-naloxone-training-and-frank-discussion-of-opioids-draws-full-house-at-mount-forest-legion/</a>
16. Guelph Today	Oct 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Overdose reversals and blue/purple fentanyl spark public health alert	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/overdose-reversals-and-bluepurple-fentanyl-spark-public-health-alert-1088431">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/overdose-reversals-and-bluepurple-fentanyl-spark-public-health-alert-1088431</a>
17. Guelph Today	Oct 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Community Health Van celebrates one year in operation	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/community-health-van-celebrates-one-year-in-operation-5-photos-1100402">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/community-health-van-celebrates-one-year-in-operation-5-photos-1100402</a>
18. Guelph Tribune	Nov 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	Opt in or opt out — Guelph to make decision on legal cannabis	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/9028403-opt-in-or-opt-out-guelph-to-make">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/9028403-opt-in-or-opt-out-guelph-to-make</a>

		stores next month	decision-on-legal-cannabis-stores-next-month/
19. Guelph Today	Nov 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	No naloxone kits in area schools, but students allowed to carry it	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/no-naloxone-kits-in-area-schools-but-students-allowed-to-carry-it-1141897">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/no-naloxone-kits-in-area-schools-but-students-allowed-to-carry-it-1141897</a>
20. Guelph Tribune	Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2018	Guelph mayor, council sworn in for new term	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/9065077-guelph-mayor-council-sworn-in-for-new-term/">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/9065077-guelph-mayor-council-sworn-in-for-new-term/</a>
21. Guelph Today	Dec 5th, 2018	Mayor says emergency task force is a 'getting things done moment'	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/mayor-says-emergency-task-force-is-a-getting-things-done-moment-1147493">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/mayor-says-emergency-task-force-is-a-getting-things-done-moment-1147493</a>
22. Guelph Tribune	Dec 10th	'People need help, not stigma': Guelph council unanimously supports safe injection site	<a href="https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/9076644--people-need-help-not-stigma-guelph-council-unanimously-supports-safe-injection-site/">https://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/9076644--people-need-help-not-stigma-guelph-council-unanimously-supports-safe-injection-site/</a>
23. Guelph Today	Dec 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	City throws full support behind permanent safe consumption site	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/city-throws-full-support-behind-permanent-safe-consumption-site-1154946">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/city-throws-full-support-behind-permanent-safe-consumption-site-1154946</a>
24. Guelph Today		Link no longer active	<a href="https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/local-drug-strategy-pens-letter-to-province-in-support-of-overdose-prevention-sites-1031777">https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/local-drug-strategy-pens-letter-to-province-in-support-of-overdose-prevention-sites-1031777</a>