

Workplace Wellness Project

The Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy recently received a grant from the City of Guelph to conduct a Workplace Wellness project with a focus on the impacts of the drug poisoning crisis on direct service workers within substance use organizations in Guelph. The project consists of a literature review, environmental scan, resource list, shared learning series, and a report with recommendations for advancing workplace wellness, with a focus on grief and loss, for staff working with people who use substances. We are currently gathering more information for our report and beginning the shared learning series. The project consists of two main parts:

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Part 1: Report



We are currently working on a final report which includes a literature review, resource list, and recommendations for organizations on how to improve staff wellness and best support staff facing grief and loss. The recommendations will be informed by our literature review, our participant evaluations of the project, as well as a survey and conversations with staff and management.

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Part 2: Shared Learning



Through these conversations, it was decided a shared learning opportunity focusing on grief and loss was desired by organizations serving people who use substances. We hired Juno Zavitz of (**Aporrai Consultancy & Counselling - Grief and Harm Reduction Consultancy**). to facilitate the trainings. Juno is a consultant & facilitator in Toronto, coming to the work with over a decade of frontline and management work in addictions, harm reduction, housing, and bereavement, as well as lived experience. They also founded the GLOW initiative in 2020.

The trainings have 3 parts to be carried out between now & February

1. A 1.5 hour **grief processing session** as a collective space of remembrance, non-denominational ritual and ceremony, and reflection that invite healing for active grief processes. They are typically offered prior to beginning skill-building workshops (see below) so that attendees are able to tend to their own grief before stepping into a support role.
2. **Grief Skill Building Series** (6 hours) which aims to enhance comfort providing grief care to those experiencing stigmatized, traumatic and non-normative grief. Topics covered include an overview and collective critique of grief and loss theory, harm reduction approaches to supporting traumatic loss, and practical non-clinical interventions for frontline workers and caregivers.
3. **Management Workshop**- a 2 hour online training specifically for managers and supervisors on how to support staff facing grief and loss.