

Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Safer Supply in Context of COVID-19: Annotated Resource List

This document shares summaries of resources related to COVID-19 and safer supply/substance use disorder treatment including policies and guides from the federal, provincial and territorial governments, as well as professional and international organizations, and resource collections. Guidance documents are also provided regarding the provision of safer supply services more generally in Canada.

Document	Source/ Author and Type of Document	Target Audience	Purpose	Summary	Other
Prescribing Guidance					
COVID-19 Pandemic Prescribing Guidance					
Risk Mitigation in the Context of Dual Public Health Emergencies (March 2020)	BC Centre on Substance Use (BCCSU) Guidance Document	Canadian healthcare professionals	<p>This resource provides clinical guidance to health care providers to support patients to mitigate risks and balance competing priorities during the simultaneous opioid crisis and COVID-19 pandemic by offering prescribed or regulated alternatives to legal and illegal substances.</p> <p>These guidelines are not intended for treatment of substance use disorders, but rather to support individuals with substance use disorders to self-isolate or social distance and avoid risk to themselves or others.</p>	<p>This guidance document provides clinical options and guidance for prescribers and pharmacists of patients who may be at increased risk of overdose, withdrawal, cravings and other harms related to their substance use. The document discusses both legal and illegal substances, as well as their co-use, and recommends, “replacing illicit and licit products with prescribed or regulated substances.” It outlines the eligibility criteria, assessment process, risk-reduction protocols and treatment options as well as specific guidance on services, such as overdose prevention, delivery support and outreach support.</p> <p>Supplemental materials are provided within the BCCSU resource, including morphine milligram and benzodiazepine equivalence tables, an example prescription and links to numerous</p>	<p>The BCCSU has also released COVID-19: Information for Opioid Agonist Treatment Prescribers and Pharmacists (March 2020) which outlines guidance and planning recommendations for prescribers and pharmacists regarding patients on Opioid Agonist Therapy.</p> <p>This document offers similar guidance to Vancouver Coastal Health’s Prescriber Guidelines for Risk Mitigation in the Context of Dual Public Health Emergencies (March 2020), which outlines the options legally available to prescribers to support this</p>

				relevant resources, such as the Rapid Access to Consultative Expertise (RACE) for Addictions, which provides consultation and support, and Rapid Access Addiction Clinics (RAACs), which provide consultation for prescribers and patient assessment.	vulnerable community, prevent the spread of COVID-19 and save lives.
Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) Guidance During the COVID-19 Pandemic (March 31, 2020)	The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador Guidance Document	Canadian OAT prescribers	This resource provides clinical guidance to ensure the uninterrupted access to OAT medications for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.	This document provides an interim guideline for the management of OAT. It addresses office visits, remote visits, carry doses and the frequency of urine drug testing during the COVID-19 pandemic in the light of the need for social distancing, self-isolation and quarantining.	
Safer Supply Prescribing Guidance					
National Injectable Opioid Agonist Treatment Guideline (2019)	Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) National Guideline and Operational Guidance	Injectable opioid agonist treatment prescribers, pharmacists, and nurses Injectable opioid agonist treatment care teams Organizations that provide substance use disorder and addictions treatment and care	The clinical guideline was developed to provide key clinical recommendations, as well as clinical guidance on the provision of iOAT. The documents provide an evidence-based path for practitioners to expand their medication offerings for clients with opioid use disorder beyond methadone and buprenorphine/naloxone, if appropriate for their clients. Documents can be used as templates for protocols and policies for safer supply programs, including those where oral hydromorphone is prescribed.	These resources provide national clinical guidelines and operational guidance for the provision of injectable opioid agonist treatment. Supplemental materials are provided and include: sample program expectations, sample patient bill of rights, sample client safety care plan, and sample treatment plan. To note, although some current guidance from British Columbia in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic has recommended the prescribing of oral hydromorphone, injectable hydromorphone remains a treatment option federally for substance use disorder across Canada.	For further guidance on iOAT prescribing, interested parties could review Guidance for Injectable Opioid Agonist Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder (2017) , released by the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use. This document was created to provide an overview of the evidence on iOAT, potential models of care, recommendations for clinical practice, and operational requirements.

<p><u>Toolkit for Substance Use and Addictions Program Applicants (2019)</u></p>	<p>Implementation Task Team Toolkit</p>	<p>Document was originally created to support applications for funding through the Substance Use and Addictions Program to establish safer supply pilot projects. This document could be used now to inform any individual or group looking to offer safer supply services.</p>	<p>This document brings together research and best practices, as well as regulatory and public health considerations, to create a set of reference materials that represent current evidence and service models in the safer supply field. The Toolkit was created by experts in the field including public health practitioners, researchers, people with lived and living experiences, pharmacists, and people who work in harm reduction and community health organizations from across the country.</p>	<p>The Toolkit package includes: a review of clinical evidence for safe supply projects; clear protocols for a range of service delivery settings; considerations for evaluation; and, tools to help providers to navigate relevant federal regulatory pathways to access pharmaceutical-grade medications. Finally, it includes a list of additional resources that interested individuals/groups may wish to reference.</p>	<p>These documents are available upon request by emailing hc.SUAP-PUDS.sc@canada.ca with the words "Safe Supply Tools" in the subject line.</p>
<p><u>Safer Opioid Supply Programs (SOS): A Harm Reduction Informed Guiding Document for Primary Care Teams (2020)</u></p>	<p>Guiding document by Jessica Hales NP, Gillian Kolla MPH, Thomas Man MD, Emmet O'Reilly NP, Nanky Rai MD, Andrea Sereda MD</p>	<p>Primary care teams</p>	<p>This document provides a description of a harm reduction driven, public health approach to providing a safer, pharmaceutical drug supply to adults who use illegal drugs in Ontario and are at high risk of overdose. Their guiding document is informed by the findings of lower-barrier safer supply care providers in Canada. Their experiences could provide context for providers that are interested in offering similar services.</p>	<p>The guiding document focuses on safer supply services administered by a network of primary care clinicians and delivered out of community health centres and primary care clinics. To provide resources for potential care providers, the document includes sample inclusion criteria, contraindications, risk reduction strategies (including risks related to diversion), and initiation and titration protocols. They also provide sample clinical template, opioid use tracking forms, consent forms, draft letters for hospitalists and pharmacies, and many other reference documents.</p>	

COVID-19 General Substance Use Treatment Guidance					
<p>EMCDDA update on the implications of COVID-19 for people who use drugs (PWUD) and drug service providers (March 2020)</p>	<p>European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction Informational Update</p>	<p>Service Providers to people who use drugs</p>	<p>This resource highlights emerging risks linked to the COVID-19 pandemic for people who use drugs and those providing services for them from a European perspective, and encourages the planning, review and adaption of frontline and specialist drug interventions.</p>	<p>The document outlines the risks for people who use drugs during the COVID-19 pandemic, including stigmatization and the high prevalence of concurrent medical conditions. It also highlights additional concerns relevant to many people who use drugs, such as potential increased risk of overdose, equipment sharing, crowded environments and disruption to access of drug services, clean drug-using equipment and vital medication. It recommends implementing prevention measures against transmission of COVID-19 in settings used by people who use drugs, such as discouraging drug or equipment sharing and the use of personal protective equipment. It also emphasizes the importance of continuity of care during the pandemic, which requires sufficient resources for services, including drug treatment services, staff protective measures and service planning, including for staff and medication shortages.</p>	<p>This update outlines similar considerations from an international perspective as the UNODC’s Suggestions about Treatment Care and Rehabilitation of People with Drug Use Disorder in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic (March 2020).</p>
<p>Recommendations on Chronic Pain Practice During the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020)</p>	<p>The American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine (ASRA) and the European Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Therapy (ESRA)</p>	<p>Chronic pain practitioners and patients</p>	<p>This resource provides information and recommendations to chronic pain practitioners and patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	<p>This resource for chronic pain patients and practitioners provides information, including on elevated risks and the potential implications of COVID-19 on certain medications. It also outlines general recommendations, such as suspending elective procedures and the use of telemedicine, as well as specific guidance for pain medications, including opioids and steroids, such as providing naloxone for high-risk patients and prescription continuation to avoid</p>	<p>For additional information, the Pain Society of Alberta has released the Suboxone Home Induction Protocol for Chronic Pain that was designed to help with the initiation of buprenorphine/naloxone (Suboxone).</p>

	Information and Guidance			withdrawal. It begins with a concise infographic, followed by more in-depth information on the above topics.	
COVID-19 General Substance Use Resource Compilation					
COVID-19 Harm Reduction Resources (2020)	Canadian Drug Policy Coalition Webpage with links to many resources	PWUD, healthcare and other service providers	This webpage contains a regularly updated list of COVID-19 harm reduction resources for people who use drugs (PWUD) and healthcare providers.	The webpage provides COVID-19 harm reduction resources from diverse organizations with information relevant to PWUD. It includes guidance for prescribers, pharmacists, clinicians, and homelessness and housing service providers. Resource topics include opioid agonist therapy, HIV, harm reduction, shelter bed placement, and hygiene. It also links to resources for anyone working with vulnerable populations or responding to overdoses. Additionally, it provides practical information for PWUD as well as sex workers and their clients to reduce risks.	This webpage offers similar resources to the more internationally focused Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Resources and Information by the International Drug Policy Consortium (available in English, French and Spanish). Topics include PWUD, harm reduction and health services, human rights, prison settings, homelessness, shelters and people living with HIV. The Government of Quebec has also released COVID-19: Advice and Preventative Measures for Drug Users and the Homeless (French).
Impacts of COVID-19 on Substance Use (2020)	Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction Webpage with links to many resources	People who use drugs (PWUD), policy makers, public, researchers and service providers	This webpage contains a regularly updated list of resources regarding COVID-19 and substance use for a broad audience, from PWUD to service providers and policy makers	This webpage provides resources relating to COVID-19 and substance use from diverse organizations. Users can search by types of resources, audience or specific topics. It includes academic publications, policies and guides, and resource collections. Resource topics include harm reduction, opioids, marginalized populations and treatment services and recovery. It lists both English and French resources.	This webpage offers similar resources to Substance Use and COVID-19 by the BC Centre on Substance Use.