

MAYOR'S OVERDOSE EMERGENCY TASK FORCE

Council Update | July 23 2019

Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

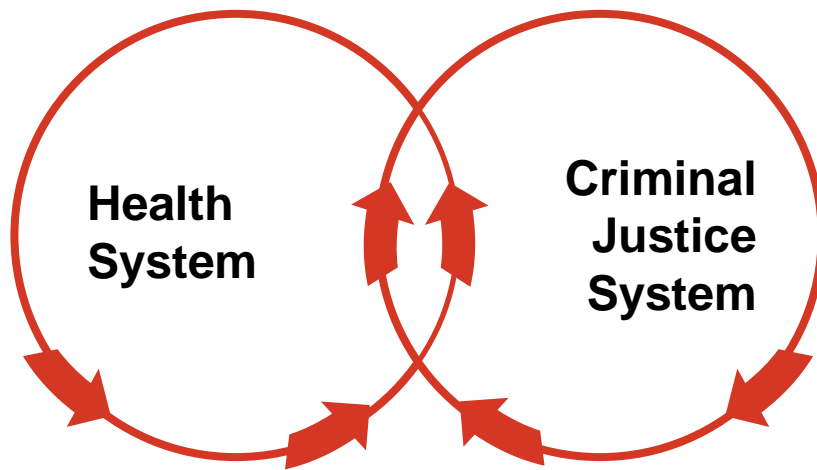
Mary Clare Zak, Managing Director, Social Policy & Projects

Dianna Hurford, Senior Planner, Social Policy & Projects



1. Strategic Context
2. Partnership Roles
3. Current state
4. Recommendations
5. Innovation Highlight





Disconnected, limited opportunity, stigma persists



Comprehensive Plan

Prevention

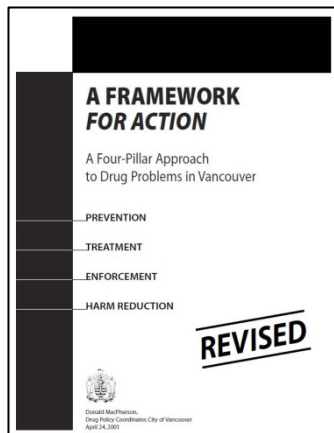
Treatment

Harm Reduction

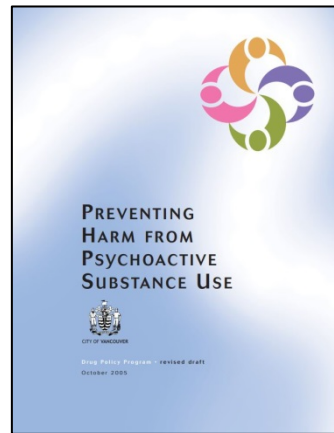
Safety and Inclusion

City's Drug Policy Context

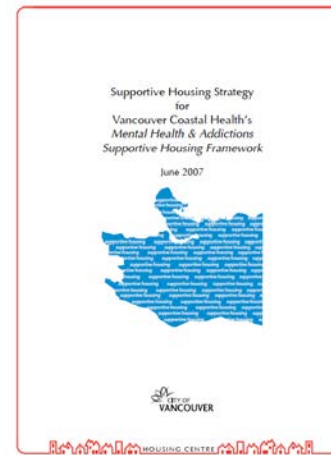
2001



2005



2007



2010



Current Overdose Crisis

Crisis Overview 2016 - 2019

April 2016
BC declares
crisis a public
health
emergency

**November and
December 2016**
Over 150%
increase in
overdose deaths
in Vancouver

Spring 2017
Overdose deaths
remain at
unprecedented
levels

Dec 2017-18
Overdose deaths
continue to
remain high
across
Vancouver

July 2019
Overdose deaths
are lower than
this time in
2017/18 – calls
remain high

December 2016
City institutes
0.5% property
tax to mitigate
crisis impacts

**February to
July 2017**
City invests
\$3.5M for first
responders and
community

Spring 2018
Initiated
Vancouver's
**Community
Action Team** Co-
Chaired by City
and VCH

Winter 2018
**Mayor's
Emergency
Overdose Task
Force** formed &
approves 31
actions

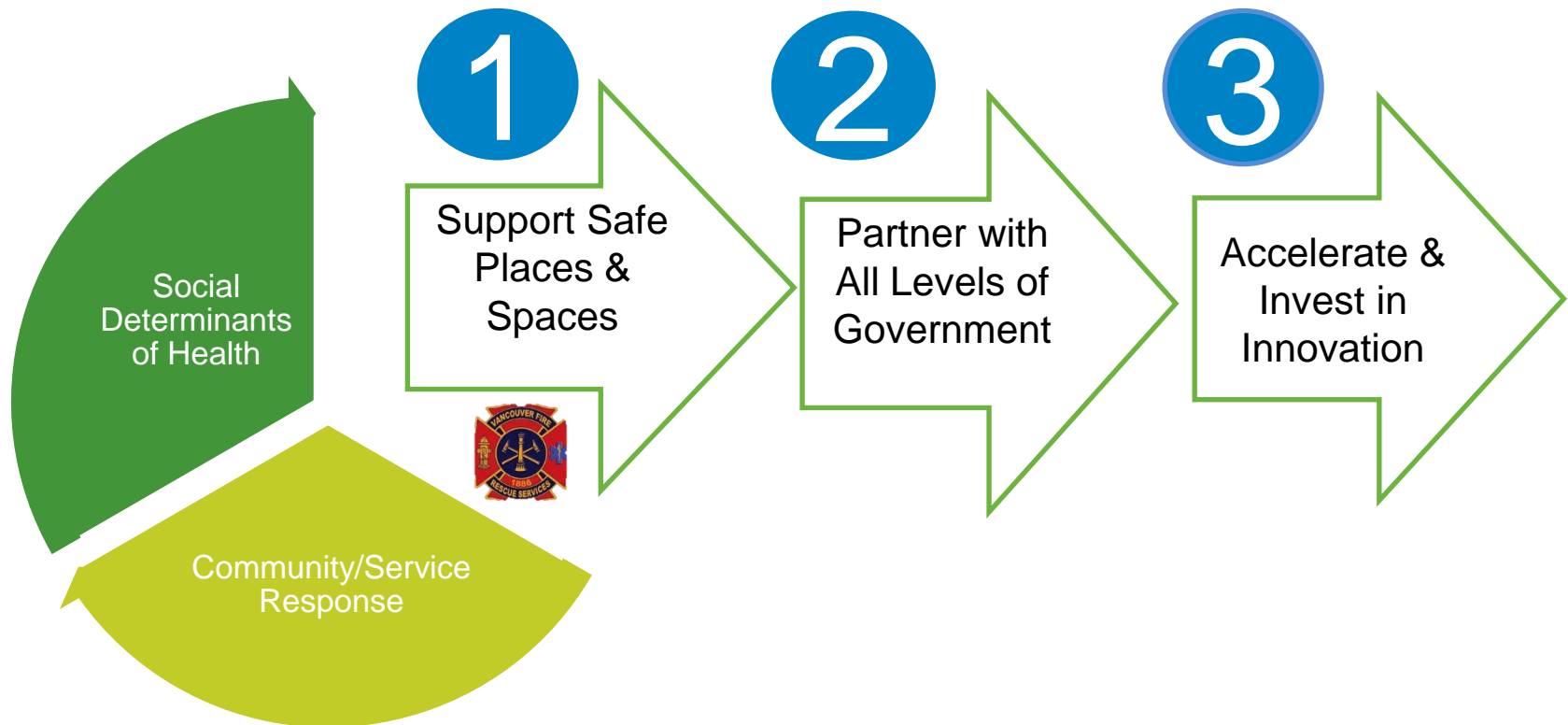
City Actions 2016- 2019

Partnership Roles in Overdose Crisis



- Federal commitments for overdose response between 2017 and 2019 exceed **\$400M**
- 2017 - Province commits **\$322M over 3-years**, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions initiated **Overdose Emergency Response Centre (OERC)**.
- 2018 - **OERC releases \$1.5M for Community Actions Teams (CATs)** in 18 high priority communities. Vancouver receives \$100,000.
- **Vancouver CAT aims to develop multi-sectoral response** to the overdose crisis, strengthening partnerships between VCH, CoV, VPD, VFRS, FNHA and Indigenous leaders, community agencies and people with lived experience.

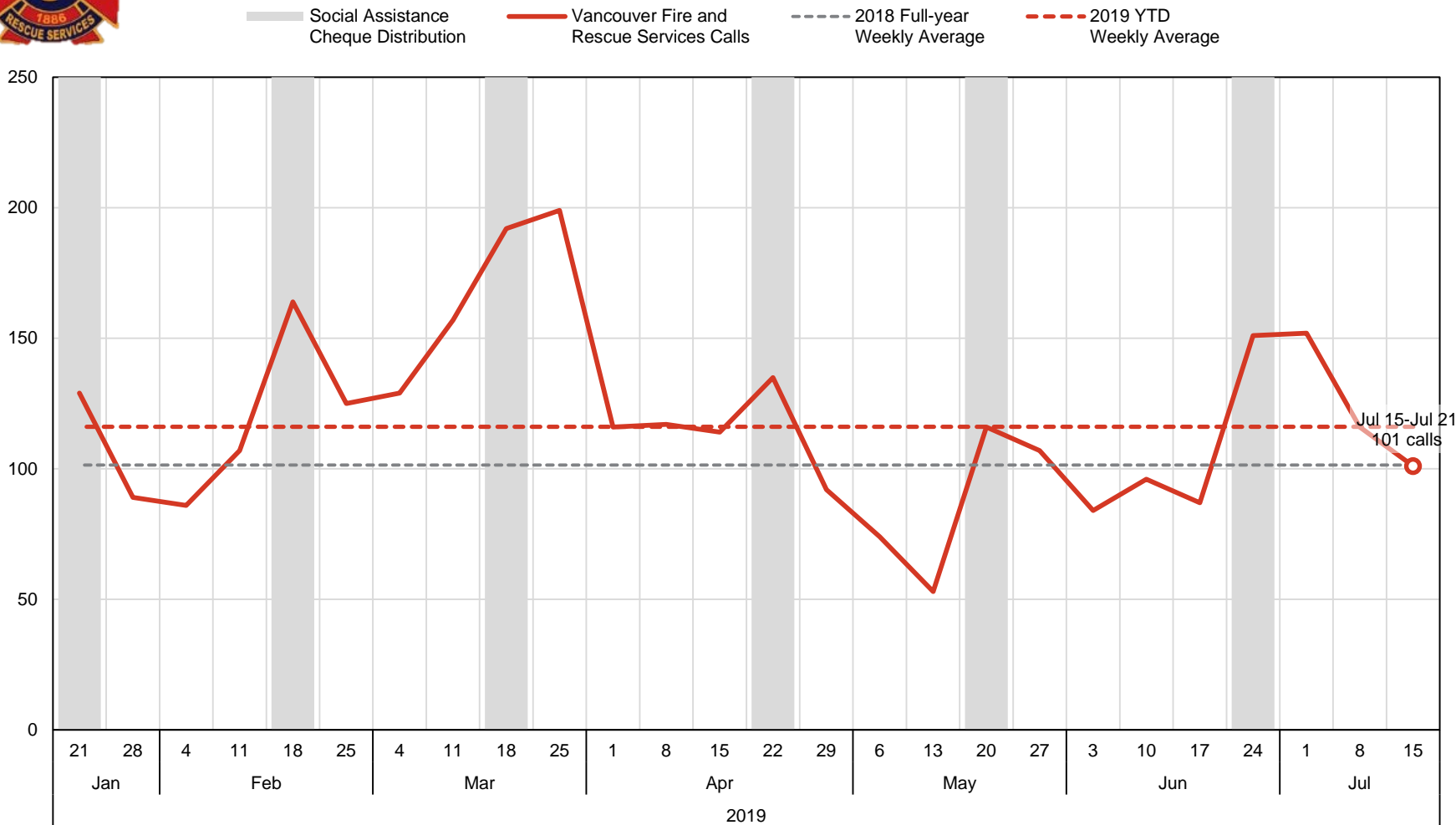
City's Role in Overdose Crisis



Vancouver Fire and Rescue – Overdose Calls



Weekly Fire-Attended Overdose Calls for Service



Data Source: Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services



Mayor's Overdose Emergency Task Force – Action Status Update

A. Receive for information an update on the Mayor's Overdose Task Force recommendations approved in December 2018 (Appendix A).

Of the 31 recommendations in the Mayors Overdose Emergency Task Force Report:

16 are in progress

14 complete and;

1 delayed until Fall 2019.



Recommendation B



Indigenous Healing and Wellness: Equity and Decolonization



B. Council Approve amendment to one-time grant of \$106,000 to the DTES Collaborative Society for the Tenant Overdose Response Organizers (TORO) to create cultural and wellness spaces for DTES community, including pop-up wellness spaces in SROs.

Recommendations C & D



Drug Policy Reform: Safe Supply

C. Approve the safe supply statement created in collaboration with the Vancouver Community Action Team

D. Approve FCM Motion on Safe Supply (Appendix C)

Vancouver is in a state of emergency. People are dying every day from an unregulated, contaminated drug supply - these are preventable deaths. People have been dying for many years as a result of the toxic drug supply, and following a drastic spike in deaths in April 2016, a provincial public health emergency was finally declared. Since that time thousands of people have lost their lives to a drug supply poisoned with Fentanyl; a cheap and synthetic opioid detected in the majority of overdose deaths. To date, drug testing has indicated further contaminants such as Carfentanil and benzodiazepines, making it more difficult and complex to reverse overdoses.

We often hear this crisis referred to as an overdose crisis, but really, we are in a drug poisoning crisis. One of the primary causes of overdose is the contamination of the illicit drug supply, and we believe that future deaths could be prevented if people could access a regulated safe supply.

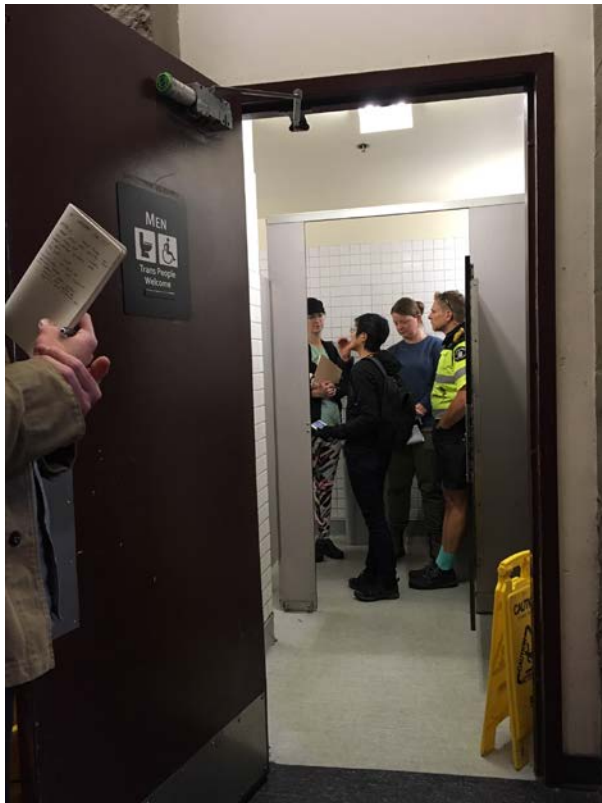
Drug poisoning is affecting many different people who use different substances for different reasons. It is affecting people who use opioids, people who use stimulants, people who use regularly, and people who use occasionally. People from all walks of life are affected; we are all in this together.

Urgent action is required on multiple levels to prevent further deaths from drug poisoning. This includes advocating for a safe supply as well as supporting people in their chosen paths to wellness. We call upon health professionals, all levels of governments, and the public to join us in advocating for a safe supply of drugs, to protect and prevent further loss of our family members, friends, neighbours and loved ones.

Recommendations E, F, G



Safe Community Spaces and Places: Overdose Prevention



E. Council approve \$103,500 for upgrades to City-owned and/or operated washrooms

F. Council request Federal government contribute \$2M to harm reduction initiatives

G. Council request Federal government contribute \$80,000 in annual funding to the Portland Hotel Society.

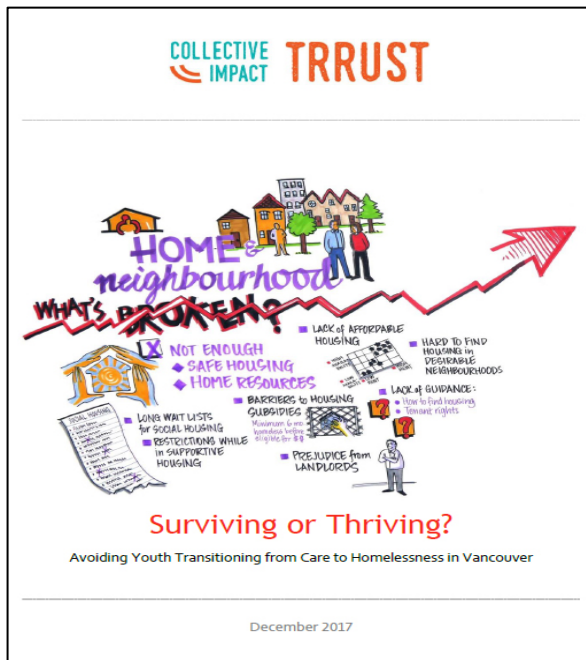


Early Intervention: Youth Overdose Prevention

Council request Federal funding for:

H. Continuation of the Supporting and Connecting Youth (SACY) and Resilience Program (LRP) to VSB (\$1.3M); and

I. Prevention initiatives for youth aging out of care (\$150,000) to McCreary Centre Society for the TRRUST Collective Impact project.



City has taken ongoing leadership role in ending the criminalization of drug users and the overdose crisis.

Working with drug users and the Community Action Team has been essential to develop and implement meaningful actions that address the multi-faceted impacts on peoples' lives, including quality of life and wellbeing.

A safe, regulated supply is urgently needed.

THANK YOU to the Community Action Team and all drug users for your time, insight and ongoing dedication to this important work.

City of Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services & Vancouver Coastal Health

Crisis Response Partnership Innovation

Health & Treatment Services, Housing, and Income

Combined Overdose Response

