

# Safeworks Supervised Consumption Services at Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre

## Why provide supervised consumption services?

Supervised consumption services provide a safe environment for people who use drugs. The services also reduce overdose deaths, the transmission of diseases and infections and reduce public substance use and discarded needles. Supervised consumption services are a compassionate, comprehensive, and collaborative form of evidence-based care and provide options when clients are ready for change.

## What happens at a supervised consumption site?

Supervised consumption services provide a place where people can use drugs in a monitored, hygienic environment to reduce harm from substance use while offering additional services such as counselling, social work, and opioid-dependency treatment.

## What is the rationale behind this service?

- To prevent overdose-related injury/death
- To provide education on safer practices for people who use drugs (e.g. not sharing needles, ensuring needles are only single-use)
- To provide clean supplies – reduce transmission of STBBI's (sexually transmitted & blood-borne infections)
- To provide referrals to treatment, detox, counselling, housing, income support and other supports

## Doesn't providing this service enable people who use drugs?

Addiction is a severe mental illness. Studies show that people who use drugs will keep using unless the root cause of their disease is addressed, which is the journey of working through trauma and mental health issues.

## Does the supervised consumption service supply drugs to people who use the site?

No. Clients must bring their own drugs to use under supervision at the site. The site supplies clean needles.

## Shouldn't we develop more rehabilitation and detox facilities to get people off drugs instead of giving them a place to use them?

When people are suffering from trauma and mental illness, they may experience difficulty in making a decision on when they are ready to seek treatment. The supervised consumption service allows staff to meet people where they are and to provide care, compassion, connection and acceptance. This facilitates the process for individuals to seek change in their lives.

## What are you doing to address community concerns around social disorder in the area?

Alberta Health Services and its partner agencies including the City of Calgary, Calgary Police Service and others continue to address community concerns regarding social disorder. This is an ongoing effort and additional resources, including the Safeworks Connect outreach team, are in the community to help address concerns.



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