

 <p>Regional HIV/AIDS Connection</p>	<p>Title: SAFE SUPPLY POSITION STATEMENT</p>	<p>Policy Number: AD Prin - 1017 Page 1 of 2</p>
	<p>Category: Administrative Position Statements</p>	<p>Original: November 2020 Revised: Replace:</p>
	<p>Approved by: Board of Directors</p>	

Regional HIV/AIDS Connection (RHAC) is an evidence-informed agency committed to harm reduction practices that positively impact those living with, at risk for, or affected by HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C. It is with this mission we strongly support the advancement of safe supply programs across London and all communities.

“In 2018 there were 67,367 drug overdose deaths in the United States, and since 2016, there have been more than 14,700 overdose deaths in Canada, with most related to fentanyl”.¹ These deaths could have been prevented through the reduction of the toxic drug supply flooding our community.

London continues to be a leader in addressing the opioid pandemic with successful trials of the Safer Supply program at London Intercommunity Health Centre. Review of their internal data from 2016-2019 showed, “there were no fatal overdoses in the group, and participants have made gains in health and social functioning”.²

Continuing the development of opioid distribution programs like safe supply along with other harm reduction measures such as *Carepoint*- London’s supervised consumption facility, naloxone distribution, and needle exchange programs can reduce risk. These programs are vitally important for people who inject drugs, who are increasingly living with, at risk for and affected by HIV/AIDS and Hep C.³

The Canadian Association for People who Use Drugs defines safe supply as “a legal and regulated supply of drugs with mind/body altering properties that traditionally have been accessible only through the illicit drug market.”⁴ It is not a substitution agonist therapy such as methadone and buprenorphine/suboxone.

¹ Ivsins, Andrew et al. “Tackling the overdose crisis: The role of safe supply.” *The International journal on drug policy* vol. 80 (2020): 102769. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7252037/. Accessed 2 October 2020.

² Rapid Response Service. “Possible benefits of providing safe supply of substances to people who use drugs during public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic.” Toronto, ON: *Ontario HIV Treatment Network* (April 2020). www.ohtn.on.ca/rapid-response-possible-benefits-of-providing-safe-supply-of-substances-to-people-who-use-drugs-during-public-health-emergencies-such-as-the-covid-19-pandemic/. Accessed 1 October 2020.

³ “HIV outbreak among PWID, Opioid prescribing.” *Middlesex London Health Unit* (16 June 2016). www.healthunit.com/blog/hiv-outbreak-among-pwid-opioid-prescribing. Accessed 5 October 2020.

⁴ “Safe Supply Concept Document.” Canadian Association of People who Use Drugs (February 2019, pg. 4). www.capud.ca/sites/default/files/2019-03/CAPUD%20safe%20supply%20English%20March%203%202019.pdf. Accessed 1 October 2020.

