

Manitoba-Wide Peer Consultation: Supplies and Safer Consumption

In the summer of 2019 Peer Advisory Councils at five Manitoba Harm Reduction Network Sites completed a brief consultation on the supply and safer consumption needs of people who use drugs (PWUD).

The Manitoba Harm Reduction Network (MHRN) is a provincial network working towards ensuring harm reduction is universally practiced, by individuals, organizations and systems, to address STBBI and substance use. The mission of the MHRN is to coordinate efforts and support harm reduction within and across jurisdictions. MHRN strives to provide services in a way that is **kind** and **respectful**, while reflecting the **passion** people have for their communities.

The MHRN is comprised of nine network sites; sites are in rural, remote, and Northern Manitoba. Each of these sites are comprised of over 30 members from local health authorities, service organizations, community members and people who use drugs. Each site has a Peer Advisory Council of PWUD that informs and guides the work of each network site.

The Peer Advisory Council sites that participated in the supply and safer consumption consultation were Winnipeg, Selkirk, Pine Falls, Flin Flon and Swan River. The consultation used simple guiding questions and a brief outline for facilitators (Appendix A).

The questions were:

A) Supply Distribution

1. What supplies do you currently use?
2. Where do you get them?
3. What are the challenges around getting supplies?

B) Safer Consumption Sites

1. Where do you currently use drugs?
2. What would make those places safer?

Results of the consultation were compiled by site staff (Appendix B).

Results Summary

The supplies PWUD use across all sites included all materials currently being distributed by harm reduction services in their respective regions. Of note were the supplies that PWUD are finding independently such as meth pipes and improvised snorting equipment. PWUD obtained supplies mainly from harm reduction sites in their regions and social connections. One community noted that people would drive to Winnipeg to get supplies, which are resold in the rural community.

Challenges in obtaining supplies included cost, availability, limited hours of harm reduction services, confidentiality, stigma, transportation and some rural towns not having any supply distribution available. The challenges in obtaining supplies were fairly consistent across all five Peer Advisory Councils, despite some areas being more heavily resourced.

PWUD consume in a variety of places according to consultation results, but prefer to use drugs at home or in a friend's private residence. PWUD generated many ideas for making those consumption sites safer including sharps containers, naloxone, new equipment, people who know First Aid, educated helpers, drug checking equipment, monitoring, phone access, operating as an informal safe injection site and others.

Ultimately it is the goal of the MHRN to integrate the feedback from this consultation into ongoing work and goals including the provision and

management of a provincial supply distribution program, the advocacy and development of peer managed safe consumption sites and all MHRN projects.

Appendix A

Facilitated Discussion for all MHRN Peer Groups

To be completed by August 2019 during a regular meeting

All MHRN Peer Advisory Council will be completing a network activity to advise the development of a provincial supply distribution program and discuss the safer consumption site common practices they use to stay safe. This activity and discussion guide encompasses two main areas accordingly.

- A) Supply Distribution
- B) Safer Consumption Sites

This information is being gathered to advise MHRN recommendations and ensure a complete provincial picture is considered. Mainly, to support the necessity of a provincial supply distribution program to better serve rural and remote Manitoba.

How:

Both discussion/activities must be completed by August 2019 by each Peer Advisory Council. They can be completed at one meeting or divided into two meetings. Feedback to the questions may be gathered through group discussion and note taking, or by brainstorming on flipcharts.

Please input feedback into the group google doc developed for this purpose:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W2w0Kb65hJsG9s9AMbVEqnhSFAX-ISb_yor0gKrsox0/edit?usp=sharing

A) Supply Distribution

4. What supplies do you currently use?
5. Where do you get them?
6. What are the challenges around getting supplies?

B) Safer Consumption Sites

3. Where do you currently use drugs?
4. What would make those places safer?

Appendix B

Supply Distribution

What supplies do you currently use?

Winnipeg	Information, needles, crack pipes, condoms, naloxone kits Wish we had: snorters, test kits
Selkirk	Needles including short tips (8mm), cookers, waters, saline, dental cotton filters, micron filters, butterfly cannula, tourniquets, bandaids, alcohol swabs, vitamin C, crack stems with screens and brillo, meth pipes, lighters, sharps containers
Swan River	Needles, kits made by nurse, alcohol swabs, cookers, water, tourniquets, condoms(make into tourniquet), cans,
Flin Flon	Needles, filters, spoons, filters from cigarettes, bottle caps, sterile water packets, any water source you can find (puddle, garden hose) cookers,spoons, crushers(rocks, eye liner, mascara bottles) pop cans, meth pipes, crack pipes, making crack pipes into meth pipes, empty pens, bills, alcohol swabs,
Pine Falls	Needles, sterile water, condoms, tourniquets, bandaids Barely used: alcohol swabs, cookers

Where do you get them?

Winnipeg	Bell hotel, health centers, street connections, Van, friends, store, doctor, bars, Aquarius
Selkirk	Selkirk public health office; Shoppers, Safeway and other pharmacies, Bargains Galore, ordering online, from friends, going to Winnipeg
Swan River	Buddy, store, street, cops, dr's, friends, family
Flin Flon	Primary Health, reuse from people you know, hospital (only recently), Friendship Centre, pharماسave sells needles (expensive)
Pine Falls	Nation's First Pharmacy, in Sagkeeng Nurses will drop them off at home visits, and friends will bring for friends

What are the challenges around getting supplies?

Winnipeg	Cost, location (too far), HOURS (closed evenings and weekends), chase the van, no anonymity
Selkirk	Confidentiality, hours/timing, too public, judgement, visibility, availability of certain supplies, transportation to Winnipeg or distribution locations, cost of purchasing supplies, no mobile supply delivery
Swan River	Hours of availability, no challenge, too shy, running out at night/weekends, walking into the hospital and everyone watching, don't want to be judged,
Flin Flon	Transportation, hours of operation, no mobile supply, lack of availability, lack of child care, lack of money, limited weekend/evening supply. Creighton and Denare have no distribution.
Pine Falls	Location and transportation, after business hours, didn't know until today there were other places that gave out supplies

Safer Consumption Sites

Where do you currently use drugs?

Winnipeg	Mostly home or other peoples homes, the bell, parking lots, bus shelters, parks, near the river, public bathrooms
Selkirk	At home, other people's homes, parking lot, public washrooms, alleys, woods, stairwells, under the bridge, at the waterfront, "out of sight"
Swan River	Friends place, public buildings, washrooms, outside, garage, hospital, home, restaurant, back alley,
Flin Flon	Home, shacks, walkways, back alleys, friends home, peoples porches, anywhere that is out of sight, On the rocks, underneath decks, in the bush, trails, on main street, public bathrooms, hospital bathroom (blue lights), walkway between friendship center and hospital
Pine Falls	At home in the bathroom for privacy, with a few friends, hide from family

What would make those places safer?

Winnipeg	Sharps container, someone knowing i'm there, good lighting, educated helpers and doctors, naloxone, informal safe injections sites, drug checking equipment, emergency or help switch, monitoring
Selkirk	Security, someone to keep it safe; nurse on site; assistance with injection; not having to hide or rush; not having to worry about cops; sharps containers; supplies; testing; reagent kits for drug checking; a safe drug supply
Swan River	Kept clean, always have new supplies, disposable containers
Flin Flon	Needle disposal (sharps containers), naloxone kits, supervised/ safe consumption sites, clean supplies on site, not having to hide/rush, drug testing, check in by phone for people using alone,
Pine Falls	Privacy is an issue, some live with other family members, or just use at the local business bathroom - sharps containers in there.