

Summary Report on the National Thematic Workshop on Enforcement

March 25-26, 2009



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Introduction

The National Thematic Workshop on Enforcement was held March 25-26, 2009, in the context of consultations for the *National Framework for Action to Reduce the Harms Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs and Substances in Canada* (called the *National Framework* hereafter). The thematic workshop was hosted by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP) and the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA), in collaboration with Public Safety Canada. Rita Notarandrea, Deputy CEO of CCSA, and Barry MacKnight, Chair of the CACCP Drug Abuse Committee, co-chaired the event.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

1. Build an understanding of the issues related to enforcement from several perspectives, including that of consumers (people who use illicit drugs)
2. Start to identify best practices in enforcement
3. Determine which issues an action plan should focus on, including further research as necessary

Representatives were present from police services (national, provincial and regional), consumers, treatment organizations, provincial and federal government departments, and the host organizations. The complete list of participants is in Appendix A.

Presentations on Perspectives

Ms. Notarandrea presented a brief history of the *National Framework*, its vision and the priorities, and explained how CCSA partners with other organizations—such as the CACCP—to bring together stakeholders to address each of the priorities, including Enforcement.

Mr. MacKnight described the CACCP's purpose and advocacy efforts and reinforced the point that sustainable solutions require input from all perspectives, all parties and all interests.

Taunya Goguen, Chief, Public Safety Canada, briefly described the national thematic workshop held by Public Safety in 2005 for police and policing partners, in which national law enforcement priorities, policies and programs were identified. The results of this workshop informed Canada's National Anti-Drug Strategy (NADS).

Doug Ellerker, Inspector, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), delivered a presentation entitled *Establishing National Action Against Synthetic Drug Production* that highlighted organized crime's efforts in producing and distributing synthetic drugs. He explained that the RCMP's Strategic Framework on Synthetic Drugs was developed in collaboration with partners and has three pillars: enforcement, deterrence and prevention. The RCMP Framework's focus is on strengthening partnerships, sharing information, enhancing communication and collaboration, and monitoring. Staff Sergeant Daniel Quirion spoke briefly about the role of the Drugs and Organized Crime Awareness Section (DOCAS) in prevention and communication.

Mr. MacKnight emphasized the importance of using experience at the local level to inform and develop national priorities because all crime is local, and all harm is local. Use of illicit substance is a connector from harm to crime.

Joe Enberg, a consumer in the past who was clean for 32 months at the time of the thematic workshop, described his experiences as what he termed an 'addict' and how he finally decided to change and stop using. Mr. Enberg indicated that the greatest error made in enforcement is treating all addicts the same, when they are all so different.

Max Rowsell, currently an active user of illicit drugs who works with the Youth Services Bureau in Ottawa, spoke of his experiences on the street and being incarcerated. He indicated that youth aged 13 to 24 tend to respond best to other youth, and that they fear prison and police. He emphasized that users are so afraid of being caught that they don't think about the long-term harm issues and, as a result, put themselves at greater risk. Mr. Rowsell stressed the need to make getting help safer for people who have not—or not yet—chosen to get help, and to make those individuals feel safer and have someone to talk to.

Scyndy Ross, a self-described consumer also working with the Youth Services Bureau in Ottawa, encouraged people in enforcement to talk to youth and learn from them. Ms. Ross indicated that those who don't want treatment should have options and not be seen as hopeless.

Jennifer Kilty, PhD, Department of Criminology and the Social Science of Health, University of Ottawa, addressed the need for a diversity lens to contextualize the lives of consumers. This contextualization allows for a more informed approach and ensures that individuals' needs and circumstances are better addressed. Dr. Kilty emphasized that each person is an individual, with a specific history that brought him/her to this interaction with police—and each individual has needs for specific services that, to be effective, must be delivered in a way that is appropriate to that individual. This applies regardless of the individual's cultural or ethnic background, thus it is important to break down stereotypes and see a person as an individual.

Discussion on Perspectives Presentations

The following points summarize key participant discussions:

- Front-line police need stronger guidelines, training, and additional tools, such as lists of places to which they can refer users who want help.
- It is critical to build trust and relationships, including treating a user as a human being, with respect, dignity and humanity.
- Enforcement needs to show a caring attitude, which could help motivate users to seek and accept help.
- Those who sell drugs to support their own drug use need to be treated differently than those who sell strictly to make money.
- When people are incarcerated, much of the good work done for them by support systems in the community is lost.
- Research and evidence, based on academic objectivity, are essential to countering misperceptions in discussions about drugs.
- A society deems what is illegal based on moral choice. Because there are no absolutes, moral discussions are needed.

Presentations on Experiences across Canada

Vancouver

Inspector Scott Thompson spoke extensively on the prevention and policing efforts of the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), as well as the role that the VPD has with regard to the Safe Injection Site (SIS). The VPD recognizes that drug use is primarily a health issue and its support of the SIS reflects the VPD's approach in balancing health initiatives with the need to police and provide service to the whole community. VPD Strategic Objectives state:

1. The police must balance the need to ensure open and ready access to the SIS by drug users while at the same time ensuring disorder, violent behaviours and unlawful activities on the street by SIS users are kept under control.
2. The police will support the public health objectives of the SIS by encouraging intravenous drug users encountered outside of the site to use the SIS.

Inspector Thompson indicated that the VPD wants to avoid criminalizing the chronic use population and increasing the crime rate; VPD wants this population to have access to services without having to commit a criminal offence.

The two key learnings of the VPD were to be cautious in becoming engaged in any debate regarding public health issues as VPD's expertise lays in policing, not health, and to be at the table regardless of whether or not the VPD supports a given health or other public policy initiative.

Other key learnings Inspector Thompson presented included the absolute need to link the work of substance abuse and mental health, as it represents the reality of what the police deal with on the street, and the importance of police committing to long-term investments in relationships with agencies to facilitate trust and program development. Inspector Thompson believes that police agencies and policing can play a unique and important role in driving effective and positive social change.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Kim Baldwin, Assistant Director, Mental Health and Addictions Program, Eastern Health, Newfoundland and Labrador, described the purpose and results of the Oxycontin Task Force, created as a result of extensive illicit use of oxycontin. The Task Force presented recommendations in 2004 that together formed a catalyst for new and increased services in youth education, community-based treatment, harm reduction, enforcement, and pharmacy and physician education.

Edmonton

Marliss Taylor, Director, Edmonton Streetworks, described the work of this organization in reaching out to people who use drugs and those involved in the sex industry to reduce harm, promote health and provide primary health care.

After Ms. Taylor spoke about some of the challenges Streetworks faces, she identified the elements that make this organization successful. In particular, she stressed:

- Having a senior member of the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) sit on the Streetworks Council (composed of nine Edmonton agencies)
- Locating and making use of champions within the EPS who understand the goals, advocate for the program, appreciate the need for community trust, and act as contacts in certain circumstances
- Facilitating community policing that is both proactive and focused on building relationships

Ms. Taylor's vision for the future is support for sustainable gains. This includes recognition that harm reduction aims for safer and healthier communities, that dealing with addiction in a health paradigm increases people's options for getting help and making longer-term change, and that homelessness puts people in a vulnerable position.

Darryl da Costa, Deputy Chief of the EPS, spoke briefly about the importance of understanding views and perspectives as a means to facilitate cooperation. The EPS recognizes that building relationships is the way to develop trust. Streetworks and the EPS are working together to increase understanding and build trust and relationships. As a result, they can more effectively work to meet the needs of the people of Edmonton, despite the fact that the EPS has a number of different constituents with varying expectations.

Regina

Gordon Braun, Director, Regina Drug Strategy, discussed how the Regina Drug Strategy's purpose has evolved over the last eight years from a focus on "the war on drugs" to dealing more with the conditions that continue to create drug abuse. He went on to describe how the Strategy has grown from a community-driven, non-funded program to an integrated, supported system linked to mental health, addiction treatment services, needle exchange programs, detox centres, outreach for youth, and drug courts. Mr. Braun emphasized the importance of outcomes orientation, impact measurement science, and research on related issues such as housing. Communities need evidence to shift their frames of reference from criminal models to alternative models that result in less criminalized populations.

Discussion on Experiences Presentations

Through discussion, participants identified the main challenges around enforcement in the context of a national framework aimed at reducing the harms associated with substance abuse. The key challenges identified included how to:

- Implement an integrated approach with all parties present at the table and engaged in a manner that goes beyond their respective mandates

- Ensure different partners understand each others' very different mandates and obligations—many of which are based in legislation—and how to achieve a level of mutual understanding that fosters creative thinking while respecting the limits of each party's obligations (for example, how can police, while working within the law, better understand harm reduction to integrate their efforts better with those of other players?)
- Build a framework that is sufficiently flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of different communities
- Include in societal dialogue a discussion about whether a “war on drugs” is the right approach, and how to factor into the debate both the wide range of reasons people use drugs and all victims' voices
- Determine where to focus enforcement efforts—e.g., on the person who buys to use, on the person who sells so he can buy, and/or on the person who sells to make money
- Reconcile the multiple roles each person plays (for example, a police officer is also a citizen and can be a parent or sibling of someone who uses, etc., a user is a “law breaker” but is also a citizen and can be a victim, and a person in need of care)
- Build trust between front-line police, users and community organizations
- Deal with confidentiality and privacy requirements that place restrictions on sharing information that could be helpful
- Ensure Aboriginals and Inuit persons have access to programs that go beyond the bare minimum
- Address shrinking resources and the lack of funding for programs, and how to obtain funding for the bridge-building and coordination work necessary to achieve integrated approaches
- Channel police willingness to engage and to get kids access to services earlier
- Address the differences of rural and small remote communities
- Have a holistic approach when working within strict agendas and when funding is not distributed in a way that respects the holistic vision and approach
- Look at what is not being done well, and how to stop doing those things and focus resources on what works

Five areas for action planning emerged:

1. Developing **community capacity** for police to provide **screening, brief intervention and diversion**
2. Exchanging **knowledge**, building awareness, educating and training
3. Building a model for an **integrated approach** at the local level
4. Articulating and agreeing on an **approach to policing** that clarifies the expectations of those on the front line, with commitment from police leadership to implement the approach and engage in culture change
5. Addressing the issue of **legislation**

Action Planning

The group divided into teams to address the areas listed above. Each team determined desirable long-term results, short-term objectives that would achieve the results, and some activities key to achieving the objectives.

1. Developing community capacity for police to provide screening, brief intervention and diversion

Desired Long-term Results	Short-term Objectives	Key Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More options for police and better diversion for users, particularly at the pre-charge level • Better treatment and service provision to reduce harms for individuals, decrease crime, and lead to healthier communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make available the evidence-based instrument used in the RCMP initiative and implement it as a promising practice • Use the instrument to open dialogue with communities about what exists and what is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify diversion programs that already exist • Gather more information on the RCMP program and the \$30M funding available • Examine activities funded at local levels, where pilots occur • Determine how information from these pilots will be shared

2. Exchanging knowledge, sharing research, building awareness, educating and training

Desired Long-term Results	Short-term Objectives	Key Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased capacity for training and understanding among system providers (people using the system, police, front-line providers) Police and front-line people talking to the public at large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a structure and pilot group to oversee and guide these objectives Establish a national committee with representatives from each province Develop a communication strategy to engage the public, secure buy-in and raise awareness Establish a clearing house on the Internet Develop a database and knowledge exchange mechanism (e.g., the Managed Alcohol Program) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a lead and look for partnerships Identify stakeholders Identify terms of reference and priorities Develop a national plan and look for funding Find ways to develop partnerships with key players (e.g., CCSA, CACP, front-line groups, police associations, federal and provincial government departments, Salvation Army, Probation Service Association, Youth Service Bureau, health care service providers) Engage the police trainers' networks and the police colleges and academies

3. Building a model for an integrated approach at the local level (and perhaps at the provincial and federal levels as well)

Desired Long-term Results	Short-term Objectives	Key Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcement representatives in partnerships to develop and sustain a holistic integrated approach to addressing the drug issue, responsive to community needs and mandated so as to contribute to sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share resources, network, identify partners and stakeholders Share information and build relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize roundtables or some type of task force that involves representatives from different levels of government Examine the different existing models and build from there, starting with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a champion Obtain commitment from leaders Garner political support and funding

4. Articulating and agreeing on both an approach to policing that will clarify the expectations of those on the front line with commitment from police leadership to implement the approach and engage in culture change

Desired Long-term Results	Short-term Objectives	Key Activities
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity in roles and responsibility with a bottom-up flow of information • An overarching vision or policy statement on the purpose and goal of policing on drug issues—policing that directs resources and enforcement toward the greatest causes of harm should be considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design improved tools • Communicate more clearly • Engage leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that police at the ground level contribute to the vision and policy statement and influence decisions • Develop a communications strategy (make sure it engages leadership, will get public buy-in and is not overly prescriptive)
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5. Addressing the issue of legislation

Desired Long-term Results	Short-term Objectives	Key Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support at various levels for the statement “penalties need to fit the crime” • Establishment of ways to share information between organizations that support the efforts of both service providers and police officers while respecting the rights of individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct research to identify evidence to support changes • Investigate alternatives to the legislative process, recognizing that legislation takes a long time to change or create; look at some of the non-legislative actions that can be taken and drive these actions from the bottom up to create a critical mass over time to propel legislation • Build support from the communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify legislative barriers and gaps • Consult communities (towns and associations) to identify the issues • Establish a working group to support the above-mentioned activities

Moving Forward

Ms. Notarandrea indicated that CCSA is committed to helping to drive action, to mobilizing people and to locating champions. However, she emphasized that we all have shared accountability and responsibility in addressing this issue and that there will be little change without commitments and actions from all key players—whether it be funding or in-kind donations—to achieve the critical mass needed to move forward on this priority.

Chief MacKnight agreed and committed the CACP to continue as the lead partner.

During discussions on moving forward, these points were raised:

- The context for discussion must move from the criminal model to the health model.
- All players must be engaged—front-line respondents, physicians, First Nations and Inuit, drug courts, people who use, youth, parents and grandparents, and organizations represented at the workshop.
- Local innovation must be recognized and existing strategies in communities built upon.
- Prevention must be addressed.

- There is a need to:
 - Share information learned in this thematic workshop;
 - Establish a multi-disciplinary national steering or advisory committee;
 - Undertake a jurisdictional scan of programs in existence that address policing/enforcement and substance abuse issues;
 - Set up a knowledge exchange group or mechanism;
 - Research and document the different practices of policing people with addictions across the country; and
 - Map the entire enforcement/justice/correctional system to understand what occurs at the various levels, and share this information.

Final salient comments included:

- It is important that work on this priority not become watered down and incommunicable to police forces. It is essential to keep focused on enforcement because it is enforcement of the law that creates conflict between users and police forces.
- An integrated approach at the community level is critical.
- The issue of enforcement with respect to Aboriginal and Inuit populations was not sufficiently addressed at this workshop. More needs to be done in and for this special population, as there is a state of emergency in these small communities. The least amount of service that exists in any community in southern Canada is more than exists in almost all communities in northern Canada.
- Change will not come without courage.

Closing

Chief MacKnight thanked Public Safety Canada for its financial support, the RCMP and CCSA for their preparatory work for this workshop, Elva Keip (National Priority Advisory at CCSA) for her leadership, and Lise Pigeon for her facilitation. He also thanked all participants for their contributions to the discussions.

For more information on the Enforcement Priority,
contact CCSA at 613-235-4048 or info@ccsa.ca.

Appendix A: Participants

Baldwin, Kim	Assistant Director, Mental Health and Addictions Program, Eastern Health, Newfoundland and Labrador
Barnett, Cindy	Enforcement Branch, Canadian Border Services Agency
Borody, John	Representative of the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions (and director at Addiction Foundation of Manitoba)
Brault, Debbie	has consumer experience
Braun, Gordon	Director, Regina Drug Strategy
Burke, Myles	Chief, Cape Breton Police Service; Member of the Drug Abuse Committee (DAC) of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP)
Caverson, Reggie	Senior Health Promotion Consultant, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
Cincotta, Jim	Director, Addictions and Mental Wellness, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
Martin, Mike	Researcher and Policy Analyst, National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation
Da Costa, Darryl	Deputy Police Chief, Edmonton Police Service; Member of DAC
Daguindeau, Fiky	Sûreté du Québec
Ellerker, Doug	Inspector and Officer in Charge, Drug Branch, RCMP
Enberg, Joe	Support Worker, John Howard Society; has consumer experience
George, Keri	Policy Analyst, Public Safety Canada
Gibbons, John	Detective Constable, Ottawa Police Service
Goguen, Taunya	Chief, Public Safety Canada; Member of DAC, CACP
Grenon, Jacqueline	Area Manager, Ottawa Centre Probation and Parole for Ontario
Jesseman, Rebecca	Researcher and Policy Analyst, Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA)
Judd, Matt	Policy Advisor, Public Safety Canada
Kealey, Joel	Justice Canada
Keip, Elva	National Priority Advisor, CCSA
Kellner, Florence	Researcher and Policy Analyst, CCSA
Kilty, Dr. Jennifer	Department of Criminology and the Social Science of Health, University of Ottawa
Langlois, Carol	Manager, Office of Controlled Substances, Health Canada
Livingston, Ann	Acting Executive Program Director, Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users
Logue, Louise	Senior Advisor, Ottawa Police Services
Lubbers, Irene	Manager, Youth Justice, Yukon Territorial Government
MacKnight, Barry	Chair of DAC, CACP; Chief of Fredericton Police Service
Martin, Bryan	Inspector and Program Manager, Organized Crime Enforcement Bureau, Ontario Provincial Police
Martin, Rho	Director, Partnerships and Priorities, CCSA
Notarandrea, Rita	Deputy CEO, CCSA
Olfert, Rod	Knowledge Broker, CCSA
Palmer, Darlène	CACTUS (has consumer experience)
Phillips, Natasha	Policy Development Office, Department of Justice, Yukon
Quirion, Dan	Staff Sergeant, DOCAS, RCMP
Rowsell, Max	Youth Service Bureau; has consumer experience
Ross, Scynty	Youth Services Bureau; has consumer experience
Sims, Jessica	Communications Advisor, CCSA
Stamatakis, Tom	President, Canadian Police Association
Taylor, Brent	United Networkers of Drug Users Nationally; has consumer experience
Taylor, Marliss	Director, Edmonton Streetworks
Thompson, Jenny Mae	Research Manager, Addiction Research Centre, Correctional Service Canada
Thompson, Scott	Inspector, Vancouver Police Department
Thomson, Terry	Detective, Niagara Regional Police Services
Tuppenney, Thomas	Major, Salvation Army Headquarters
Woodill, Joanne	Probation Officer, Government of Ontario



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