



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The HKLN Drug Strategy Announces Updates to Address Harm Reduction Efforts

Community surveys, partnership collaborations and a needs assessment are underway.

(April 23, 2024) – The [Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes Northumberland \(HKLN\) Drug Strategy](#) has re-established to address the growing trends in the toxic supply of drugs and drug poisonings resulting in overdoses and deaths and what's being done to address harm reduction efforts in the City of Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland County and Haliburton County.

The HKLN Drug Strategy is a partnership of over 35 organizations, departments, and individuals across the three counties working directly or indirectly in social services, healthcare, or in harm reduction. Working collaboratively, the HKLN Drug Strategy strives to foster supportive and safe environments that promote the health and resiliency of individuals, families, and communities, and works to reduce the harms and stigma associated with substance use.

The HKLN Drug Strategy Steering Committee meets monthly to coordinate efforts to provide harm reduction supports and respond to growing trends in the toxic supply of drugs and drug poisonings. Current work being undertaken by the HKLN Drug Strategy Steering Committee includes:

- **Community Survey 'Listening to Voices of Experience':** The HKLN Drug Strategy Steering Committee is analyzing information collected through a survey with people with lived/living experience (PWLE) of substance use to better understand drug use practices and what they feel would be helpful in preventing overdose and drug poisonings. [Read more.](#)
- **Collaboration, Communication and Partnerships:** The HKLN Drug Strategy continues to collaborate and share information about what's happening in local communities by supporting conversations to address the drug poisoning crisis.
- **Community Situational Assessment:** The HKLN Drug Strategy is compiling population health and community data that can be used to explore harm reduction and drug poisoning prevention strategies.

"We are incredibly grateful to partners in harm reduction including the John Howard Society, the HKPR District Health Unit, PARN and Green Wood Coalition, who lead the recruitment of survey participants and implementation of the survey through Peer Support Workers," said Dane Record, Chair of the HKLN Drug Strategy. "It is critically important, now more than ever, that we continue to engage in ongoing dialogue between decision-makers and people with lived experiences related to the complex issues surrounding drug poisoning to better understand and plan harm reduction supports."

OUR VISION

The HKLN Drug Strategy strives for supportive and safe environments that promote the health and resiliency of individuals, families and communities, and reduce the harms and stigma associated with substance use.



Other current priorities for the group are drafting a situational assessment of the 4-pillar approach to address the drug poisoning crisis in Haliburton County, City of Kawartha Lakes, and Northumberland County, continuing community discussions to tackle the drug poisoning crisis, providing community learning events to address stigma and answer questions about harm reduction and the landscape of drug poisoning, and advocating for policy solutions through the [Drug Strategy Network of Ontario Framework](#).

"We are all impacted by the increase in drug poisonings in our communities. Knowing the signs of a drug poisoning and how to help can save lives." said Kate Hall, Co-chair of the HKLN Drug Strategy Steering Committee. "Members of the public can sign up to receive drug poisoning alerts and can also use the [online submission form](#) to anonymously report overdoses and drug-related information to assist in a more effective response to these incidents."

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit produces a weekly [Opioid Overdose Report](#) providing up-to-date information on opioid poisonings/overdoses and deaths in the County of Haliburton, the City of Kawartha Lakes, and Northumberland County.

For More Information

- Visit the [HKLN Drug Strategy](#) website to learn more about current harm reduction efforts.
- Read the [Drug Strategy Network of Ontario's Solutions to End the Drug Poisoning Crisis in Ontario: Choosing a New Direction](#) to be informed of harm reduction policy.
- View the weekly [Opioid Overdose Report](#) produced by the HKPR District Health Unit

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