

Red Deer Fact Sheet - Opioids

Prevention, Harm Reduction & Treatment

Alberta Health Services (AHS) - Central Zone

Call Addiction Helpline toll-free at 1-866-332-2322 or Health Link at 811

It's a public health crisis: two people die every day in Alberta due to opioid overdose. Red Deer has the highest rate per capita in the province of deaths related to fentanyl (a very strong type of opioid). AHS and its partners offer a range of strategies to treat or reduce the harm of opioid-use disorder based on an individual's unique situation, and whether they want help:

PREVENTION

Safe prescribing

There is ongoing work with Alberta's Primary Care Networks and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta to address the opioid issue in a number of ways, including work on safe opioid prescribing to reduce the potential for substance use disorders.

Public awareness – www.drugsafe.ca

Alberta Health and AHS have implemented campaigns to alert individuals with opioid-use disorders – and their loved ones – to know more about the risks and the help available.

HARM REDUCTION

Harm reduction supplies – Turning Point 403-346-8858 | 4611 50 Ave. Red Deer, AB

Turning Point is a community-based harm reduction agency that distributes a number of supplies to prevent the transmission of HIV, Hepatitis C and blood borne pathogens. Needles are among the supplies handed out to those who need and want them. Turning Point also uses Naloxone and distributes kits to reverse opioid overdoses among clients.

Naloxone – www.drugsafe.ca

Naloxone is a drug that can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose, so long as it is given right away and followed up by emergency medical care.

Naloxone kits are available free of charge to anyone around those who use street drugs or at risk themselves of opioid overdose (i.e. current or previous users of opioids). If you get a kit at a community walk-in clinic or pharmacy you do not need ID or a prescription.

Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) – Operated by Turning Point 403-346-8858 | Located at Safe Harbour Society 5246 53 Ave. www.drugsafe.ca or www.ahs.ca

Overdose Prevention Sites (OPS) are temporary health services designated for the purposes of observing people while they are using previously obtained drugs and monitoring for adverse events, primarily overdose. These are typically thought of as low-barrier Supervised Consumption Services (SCS), which can be implemented in a timely manner.

In Red Deer, an OPS is being established at Safe Harbour Society (5246 53 Ave.) and operated by Turning Point as a temporary site while partners continue to work toward permanent SCS.

Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) – www.drugsafe.ca or www.ahs.ca

Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) are permanent, medically-supervised, hygienic spaces designated primarily for the purposes of monitoring consumption of previously obtained drugs and responding in the case of an adverse events, such as an overdose. These services also provide access to additional health and social supports for those who use substances.

AHS, Alberta Health, The City of Red Deer and Turning Point are working together to find a suitable site for supervised consumption services in the community.

OPS vs. SCS

In Alberta, the Health Minister has been given federal authority to quickly designate an Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) as opposed to the more robust federal process required for approving Supervised Consumption Services (SCS). OPS is meant to be a temporary solution with limited services and supports. An SCS site is long-term with medical supervision and wrap-around supports.

TREATMENT

Medically supported detox – Safe Harbour Society 403-347-0181

Alberta Health funds 20 medically-supported detox beds at Safe Harbour Society in Red Deer. Once discharged, clients with opioid use disorder can continue with medication-assisted treatment such as the program below.

Rural Opioid Dependency Program (RODP) – 1-844-383-7688

The Central Zone launched its Rural Opioid Dependency Program in March 2017 and by the spring of 2018 had already served approximately 340 people.

Clients take regular medication to replace the opioids under the guidance of a physician. The replacement medication treats withdrawal symptoms and cravings, and allows them to continue to work safely and lead normal lives. They participate in regular videoconferencing visits with a doctor and in other local counselling visits at local AHS addiction and mental health sites with other members of the health team.

Detox without opioid replacement medication leads to a very high rate of relapse, and higher overdose and overdose death rates. Many people will taper and transition off of the medications over a period of time. Medical evidence supports treatment for at least one year.

Community Addiction & Mental Health centre – 403-340-5466 | 4733 49 Street

Adult and youth treatment in Red Deer includes group counselling, recovery management and education. Often clients are then referred to their next step in treatment and recovery.

Physicians & Red Deer Primary Care Network – 403-314-9100

In addition to AHS resources, there are also community-based addiction services available from other health providers, such as the Primary Care Network and family physicians, some of whom function as mental health providers.

Concurrent and Integrated Treatment

Mental health and substance use treatments are offered together so both concerns can be treated at the same time (by referral from a physician or addiction counsellor).

- Centennial Centre in Ponoka offers 25 beds for concurrent disorders that include both mental health and addictions disorders.

Residential treatment – Discuss options via Addiction Helpline 1-866-332-2322 or health professional

Offers 24/7 treatment and a place for clients to live while in the program for several days or weeks. Services may include counselling, education and life skills training.

- Thorpe Recovery Centre near Lloydminster: AHS contracts some of their beds for detox and treatment. (by physician referral)
- Grace House in Drumheller: AHS contracts some of their beds for patients to participate in a long-term intensive treatment program that may include Indigenous programming, workshops and career planning. (by physician, counsellor or self-referral)
- Several in Calgary and Edmonton. (by physician, counsellor or self-referral)
- There are a number of private options to be found across the Central Zone. (by physician, counsellor or self-referral)

The Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Program (PChAD) 1-866-332-2322

This program allows parents and/or guardians to mandate a child to attend a period of detoxification and stabilization if their child's use of alcohol and/or drugs is causing significant psychological or physical harm to themselves or others. AHS is building a new facility in Red Deer to increase the number of youth being treated each year in the existing space from 100 to 170 annually. It is expected to be complete in the fall of 2019.