Objectives

1. Briefly present what actions are taken by OPH to address the opioid crisis
2. Describe some ethical challenges faced on a regular basis by OPH staff
3. Explain the ethical framework used by OPH to help guide its approach when ethical situations arise
Ottawa Public Health’s Role

- Partnerships
- Surveillance
- Health promotion
- Education
- Prevention
- Harm reduction
OPH Response to the Opioid Crisis

- Working in Partnership: **Overdose Prevention and Response Task Force**
- Development of a public education campaign: [www.StopOverdoseOttawa.ca](http://www.StopOverdoseOttawa.ca) and outreach in schools
- Enhanced surveillance
Enhanced Surveillance

Figure 2: Suspected drug related emergency department visits in Ottawa

ED visit count by week
OPH Response to the Opioid Crisis

Enhancing Naloxone distribution across Ottawa
OPH Harm Reduction Program

- Site Needle and Syringe Program
  - Site office (fixed)
  - Site van (mobile)
- Supervised consumption services
- Take-home naloxone program
- Harm reduction dispensing units
- City lead for Needle & Syringe Programming and naloxone distribution
Multidisciplinary Team

- Registered Nurses
- Outreach Workers
- Social Worker
- Peers
- Project Officers
- Program Assistant
Clinical and Health Services Offered

- Harm reduction supplies
- Condoms (male/female)
- Anonymous, nominal and rapid HIV testing
- STI testing
- Hepatitis B/C testing
- Hepatitis A/B vaccines
- Flu vaccines
- ECP

- Pregnancy testing
- Health information
- Counselling
- Referrals
- First aid & wound care
- Naloxone training
- Supervised consumption
- Outreach
- A safe place to talk...
Common Ethical Challenges

- **Injecting into high risk sites**
  - Jugular vein, groin, vascular access device (PICC)

- **High risk populations**
  - Currently intoxicated
  - Pregnant clients
  - Opioid Agonist Therapy
  - Youth
  - First time injector

- **Restricted access**
  - Managing intention to serve clients who have violated Program policies
Ethics Framework Goal

- Develop a culture of ethical reflection
- Applies to public health, organizational and research ethics
- Support ethical practice
- Consistent approach
Key Champions Leading the Ethics Program

- OPH Executive Team
- Employees, volunteers and learners
- Quality and Safety Council
- Research Ethics Board
- Public Health Ontario
OPH Ethics Components

Decisions and Actions

Systems and Processes

Outcomes
- Demonstration of values in behaviours, decisions, actions and communications

Supporting Structures
- Policies, procedures
- Research Ethics Board
- Ethical Decision-Making Tool

Public Health Foundation
- Laws & Regulations
- Ontario standards (OPHS, OPHOS)
- Accountability Agreements
- Vision, Mission
- Values, Principles
- Professional Codes of Ethics

Culture, Environment, Professional responsibilities

Decision-Making Tool
Consultation Process
Education
Case Reviews

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Ethics Framework Tools

- Ethics Training
- Ethical Decision Making Process
- Weekly Team Debriefs
- Internal Program Ethics Committee
Ethical Decision Making Process

**Step 1** Identify issue and get the facts
Collect information & identify problem
Consider ethical issues

**Step 2** Identify options and evaluate
Explore options
Select best option

**Step 3** Make a decision and test it
Develop a plan and implement

**Step 4** Evaluate and make changes
Evaluate the outcomes and make changes as necessary

**Step 5** Report, as appropriate
Report to SMT, Quality & Safety Council
Case Study: High Risk Population

A Site client visits our fixed location to access supervised consumption services, and falls into one of the following categories which puts them at higher risk for adverse events including overdose:

- Currently intoxicated
- Pregnant clients
- Opioid Agonist Therapy
- Youth
- First time injector
Step 1

Recognize and analyse the ethical issue

1.1 Collect information and identify the problem

- What are the related public health goals?
- What are the risks and harms or concern?
Step 1 (cont’d)

1.2 Consider ethical issues

- Are laws, regulations, policies or professional standards providing guidance?
- Who are they stakeholders?
- Is the source or scope of legal authority in question?
- Is there relevant evidence of effective practice or best practice available?
- Are precedent cases or contextual features relevant?
- Do professional codes of ethics provide guidance?
Step 2

Identify options and evaluate their respective ethical dimensions

- Consistent with laws and policies
- Consistent with strategic direction
- Relevant values and principles
- Benefits and strengths
- Harms and limitations
Step 3

Make a decision, justify and test it

3.1 Assess options using 5 criteria:

1. Effectiveness
2. Proportionality
3. Lest infringement
4. Necessity
5. Public justification
Step 3

3.2 Develop a plan and implement

- What are the plan’s components (programming strategies, education, communications to affected stakeholders, systems change, evaluation outcomes’ effectiveness)?

- What is the best strategy to communicate the selected option and implementation plan to stakeholders?
Step 4

Evaluate the outcomes and make adjustments

• Are the outcomes relevant to public health goals?
• Is there a need to make changes to the plan?
• Are participants empowered to implement the plan?
Step 5

Report to Executive Team or Quality and Safety Council

• Are there recommendation or follow-up actions (employee education, new department wide policy) required?
Questions?

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Thank you!