

# Safer Opioid Supply: A Rapid Review of the Evidence

The Ontario Drug Policy Research Network

+

...



**GROUP 3**



By Grey Carson, Hiwot Andarge, Ruby Bruce, and Farida Abdoulaye



# Introduction

1. Who We Are
  2. The Safer Opioid Supply Report
  3. Our Goal
  4. Audience Engagement
- 
- 

+

+

# About the Program

What is it?

Who runs it?

How do they work?

Who can access it?

...

# Diversion/Compassionate Sharing

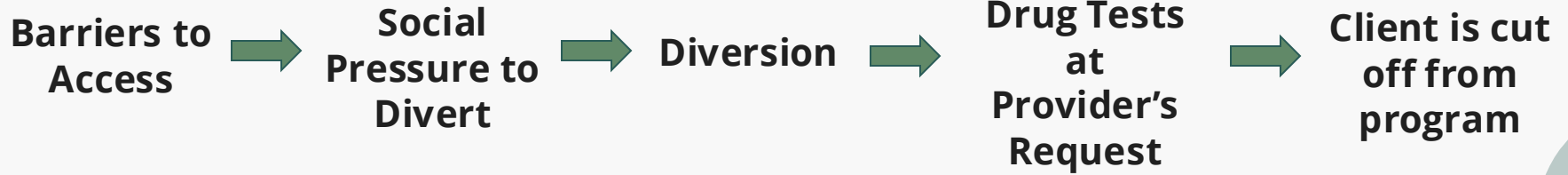
**Definition (in our context): The sharing or selling of SOS-provided substances by SOS clients with anyone that the substance was not originally prescribed to through the SOS program.**

**Why is it an issue?**

**Why is it happening?**

# Diversion - Conceptual Linkage

*Assessment of the Implementation of Safer Supply Pilot Projects* by Dale McMurchy and Robert W. H. Palmer



# Barriers To Access



## Inconvenient Access

Due to limited site hours and daily check in mandates, individuals have reported that this has created accessibility challenges.



## Lack of Training and Confidence

Many of the providers feel unprepared due to insufficient training on SOS prescription and harm reduction guidelines.



## Pharmacy Access Barriers

Critical barrier in accessing medication from pharmacies, especially pharmacies that are unfamiliar with SOS programs.

# Barriers To Access - Conceptual Linkage

The paper “(Re) Situating expertise in community-based overdose response: Insights from an ethnographic study of overdose prevention sites (OPS) in Vancouver, Canada” by Olding et al. (2023) aligns with the findings of this report.

**01**

Disconnect between medical and lived experiences leading to a gap in immediate needs.

**02**

Medical professionals lack empathetic and person-centered understanding.

**03**

Tension concerning steps to take in policy and administering overdose care.

# Temporal inequality:

## How Time is Restricted, Controlled, or Taken Away from Drug Users



### Securing drugs

Many clients reported spending the majority of their waking hours obtaining, using, and recovering from drug use.



### Withdrawal

Stability decreased cycles of withdrawal, cravings, and bingeing



### Criminalization and the Legal System

LIHC SOS:

current SOS clients-> 37% had a police contact in the past six months, 38% were involved in criminal activities to obtain drugs, and 20% engaged in sex work to obtain drugs. Individuals entering the SOS program-> the respective proportions were much higher at 73%, 86% and 50%."



+

+

# Time as a Privilege:

How SOS Allows Users to Regain or Reshape Their Time

Regaining Control Over  
Time

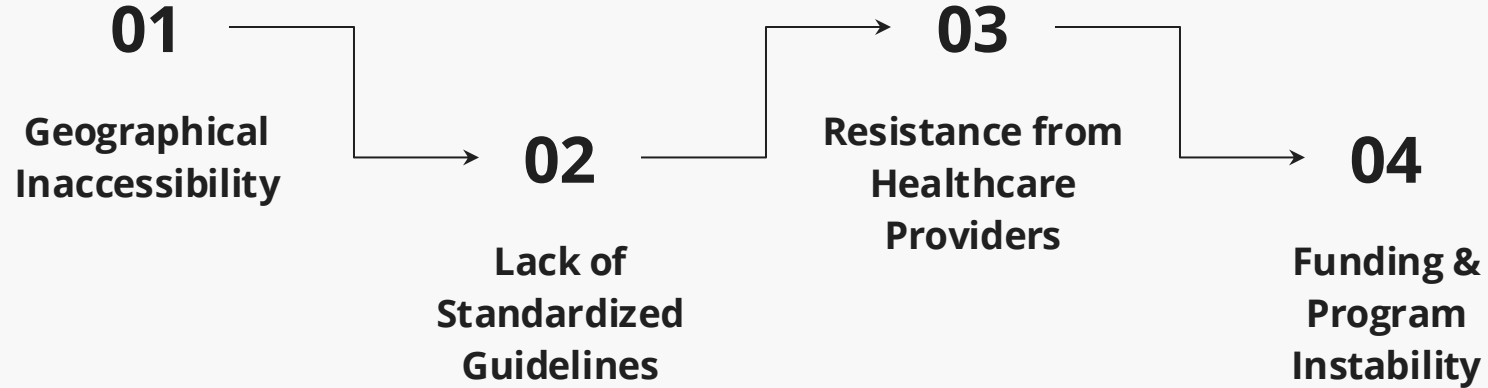
Reduction in Emergency Time  
Loss

Time for Relationships, Work, and  
Other Activities

Economic and Financial  
Relief

...

# Limitations of the Program



# Recommended Action Plan

01

Expanding Geographic Access to SOS Programs



02

Health Services Will Prioritize Hiring PWUD as Staff (Representing 10-15%)



03

Non-Punitive Responses to Diversion & Deeper understanding of PWUD community



04

Abundant, well-funded support and community programs





“Civil disobedience saves lives. When citizens break the law and act to save the lives of their neighbours and friends, they help save lives”

**—Ann Livingston**



# References

1. The Ontario Drug Policy Research Network. (2023). *Safer opioid supply: A rapid review of the evidence*. Ontario Drug Policy Research Network. <https://odprn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Safer-Opioid-Supply-Rapid-Review.pdf>
2. Olding, M., Boyd, J., Kerr, T., Fowler, A., & McNeil, R. (2023). (Re) Situating expertise in community-based overdose response: Insights from an ethnographic study of overdose prevention sites (OPS) in Vancouver, Canada. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, *111*, 103929.
3. McMurphy D., Palmer R W H. Assessment of the Implementation of Safer Supply Pilot Projects. Ottawa, Ontario. March 2022. [https://www.substanceusehealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/2022-03-safer\\_supply\\_preliminary\\_assessment\\_report\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://www.substanceusehealth.ca/sites/default/files/resources/2022-03-safer_supply_preliminary_assessment_report_en_0.pdf)
4. Ivsins, A., Boyd, J., Mayer, S., Collins, A., Sutherland, C., Kerr, T., & McNeil, R. (2020). “It’s Helped Me a Lot, Just Like to Stay Alive”: a Qualitative Analysis of Outcomes of a Novel Hydromorphone Tablet Distribution Program in Vancouver, Canada. *Journal of Urban Health*, *98*(1), 59–69. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-020-00489-9>