

Progress on Regina Opioid Stewardship Program Initiatives

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About the Program

The Opioid Stewardship Program (OSP) is a three year pilot program that began in January of 2019, is funded by the Substance Use and Addictions Program (Health Canada), and operates within the Stewardship and Clinical Appropriateness Department of the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA).

The primary objectives of the OSP are:

- 1) Raise awareness surrounding the opioid crisis and the role of prescribers in this landscape.
- 2) Engage with providers on the frontlines of opioid prescribing and pain management.
- 3) Develop and implement interventions which promote appropriate use of opioids, treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD), and management of chronic pain.

The Need for Opioid Stewardship

Leading up to 2019, the number of opioid-related drug overdose deaths was increasing annually. This was further compounded with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

- As of July 2021, the number of overdoses is similar to 2018 and 2019, with 6 months still remaining in 2021.
- Little evidence exists for Saskatchewan, but in Ontario, >1/3 of opioid-related deaths involved an opioid originating from a prescription¹.
- Chronic pain patients can benefit from appropriate treatment where opioids are not the first line of treatment.

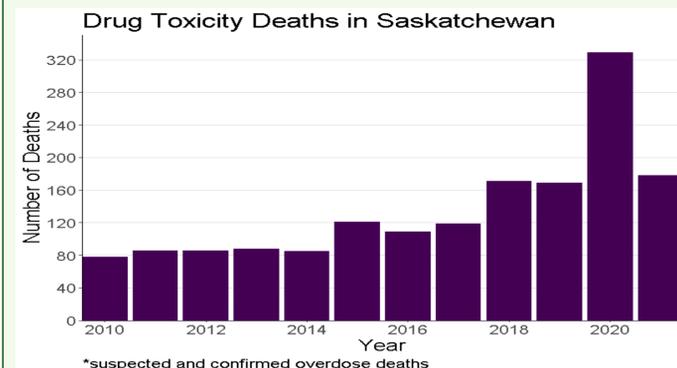


Figure 1. Number of drug toxicity deaths in Saskatchewan.

1. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario); Office of the Chief Coroner; Ontario Forensic Pathology Service; Ontario Drug Policy Research Network. Opioid mortality surveillance report: analysis of opioid-related deaths in Ontario July 2017-June 2018. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2019.

Academic Detailing

Academic detailing provides physicians with evidence-based information on opioid prescribing and pain management. Information regarding Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT), with a focus on Buprenorphine/Naloxone and Methadone may also be provided.



Participants report greater knowledge and confidence in these areas following academic detailing with the OSP (Fig. 2).

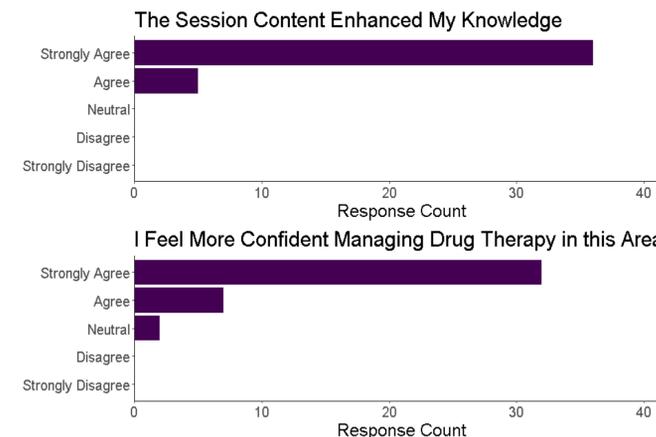


Figure 2. Survey responses from physicians who completed an academic detailing session.

Chronic Pain Pathway

- Designed as a resource to assist primary care clinicians in managing patients with chronic pain and to connect clinicians and patients to other local resources and treatment options.
- Initial pathway focuses on Regina area resources. Future versions will branch out to other areas of Saskatchewan.
- Development has included three phases of feedback from a diverse group of clinicians and patient stakeholders (Fig. 3).

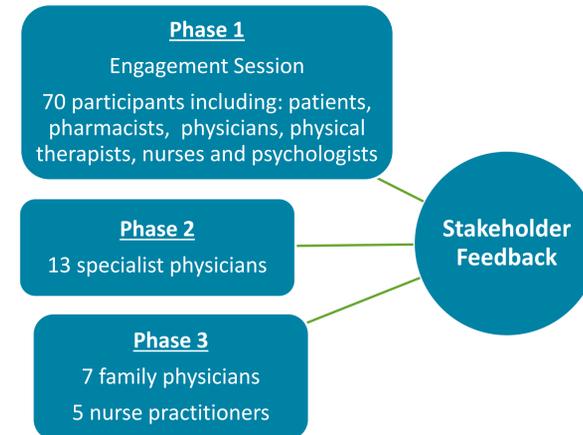


Figure 3. Participants in the three phases of stakeholder feedback for the chronic pain pathway content and design.

Non-Pharmacological Prescription Pad

- Non-pharmacological methods (Fig. 4) of pain management are suggested as a first line of therapy.
- The Non-Pharmacological Prescription Pad has been developed to assist physicians in discussing and recommending these methods to their patients.
- Download at cadth.ca/non-drug-ways-manage-chronic-pain or scan the QR code provided.

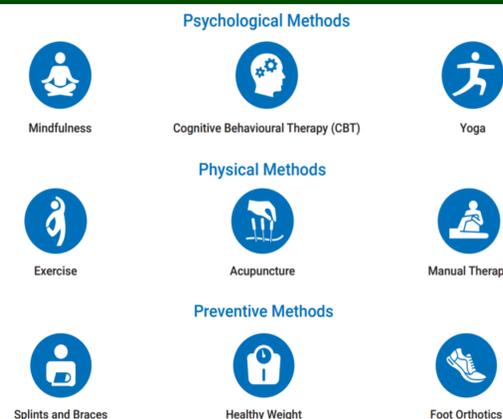


Figure 4. Non-pharmacological methods for pain management.



Future Directions

Academic Detailing

The OSP will continue offering virtual and in-person, small group academic detailing sessions. For more information, or to book a session, please email:

opioid.stewardship@saskhealthauthority.ca.

Chronic Pain Pathway Implementation

Pathway will be ready for use in the Fall of 2021.

To encourage uptake, we are considering the following methods:

- 1) Add pathway document to electronic health records
- 2) Education sessions
- 3) Tutorial video

If you have input on useful strategies for pathway uptake, please email:

opioid.stewardship@saskhealthauthority.ca



Provincial Complex Chronic Pain Service

The OSP has begun supporting the SHA's new Provincial Complex Chronic Pain Service, including the:

- Acute Pain Service: A multidisciplinary team that will ensure timely access to appropriate care by providing comprehensive care plans for patients in acute pain.
- Provincial Satellite Clinic: A mobile clinic that will enhance access to care by traveling to various locations across Saskatchewan to provide highly specialized interventional pain procedures closer to the patients' home health services.

Acknowledgments

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