

# Local and regional opioid crisis: Sounding the alarm

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An update to Greater Sudbury Council on the work of the City of Greater Sudbury Drug Strategy

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**Public Health**  
**Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS



Community  
**Drug Strategy**

# Greater Sudbury Community Drug Strategy

- Established in 2015
- Co-led by Public Health Sudbury & Districts and Greater Sudbury Police Services
- Active engagement of over 40+ partners (health care, education, Indigenous, community, addictions, mental health...)
- Four pillars:
  - health promotion
  - harm reduction
  - enforcement/justice
  - treatment



Centre de  
santé communautaire  
du Grand Sudbury



# Community Drug Strategy: Needed now more than ever

## Changing Circumstances Surrounding **Opioid-Related Deaths** in Ontario during the COVID-19 Pandemic



**Physical distancing measures** introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in reduced service levels for pharmacies, outpatient clinics, and harm reduction sites that provide care to people who use drugs. Consequently, despite the intention to reduce the impact of COVID-19, these measures also **increased risks of drug-related overdose and death**.

Note: This infographic compares circumstances of opioid-related deaths occurring **pre-pandemic** (March 16, 2019 – December 31, 2019) and **during the pandemic** (March 16, 2020 – December 31, 2020).

**2,426 opioid-related deaths occurred in 2020, a 60% rise from 1,517 deaths in 2019**

# Northeast disproportionately impacted

## Location of Opioid-Related Deaths in Ontario



Rates of opioid-related death rose significantly in **half** of Ontario's public health units during the pandemic.

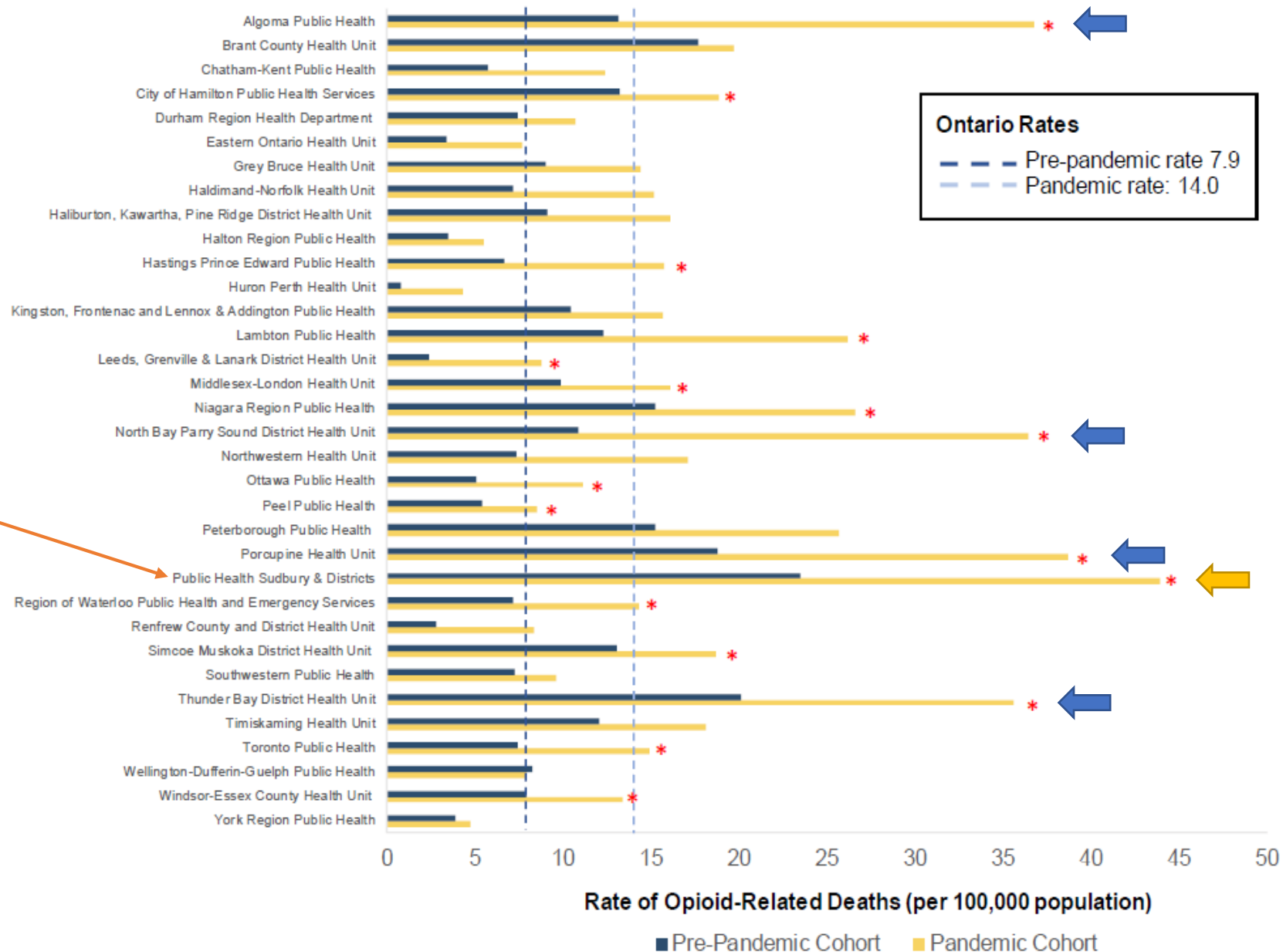
The highest rates of opioid-related death during the pandemic occurred in **Sudbury and Districts, Porcupine, and Algoma** public health units.

This may be due to **lower availability of services in rural and remote regions**, making it difficult to reach those at highest risk of overdose.

# Death rates by health unit

- Sudbury & Districts is (and was) highest
- The top five health units are all in the north; four in the northeast

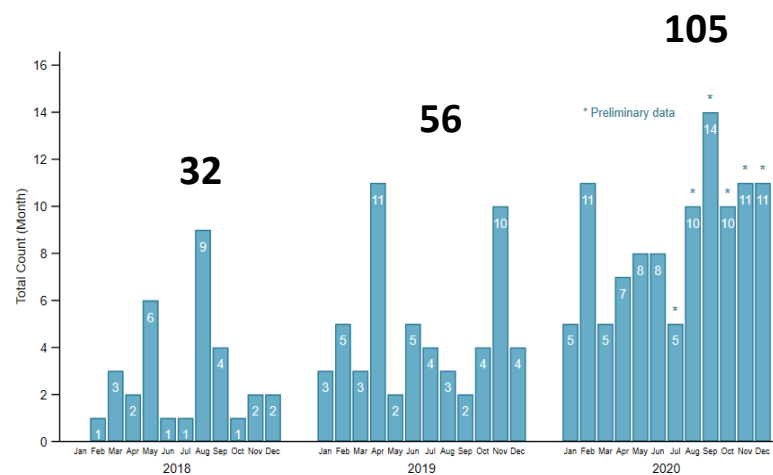
## Change in opioid-related deaths by public health unit



# Numbers and the lives behind them

## Deaths due to opioid overdoses

(by month, Sudbury and Manitoulin districts, 2018-2020)



# What can we do?

- We need everyone to do what they can – individually and collectively
- We also need immediate, medium and long-term strategies:

## Immediate

- Safe consumption (e.g. Urgent Public Health Needs Site, STOPS)
- Naloxone
- Sterile supplies (e.g. needle exchange)
- Outreach

## Medium-Term

- Supervised consumption and treatment services
- Safe supply

## Long-Term

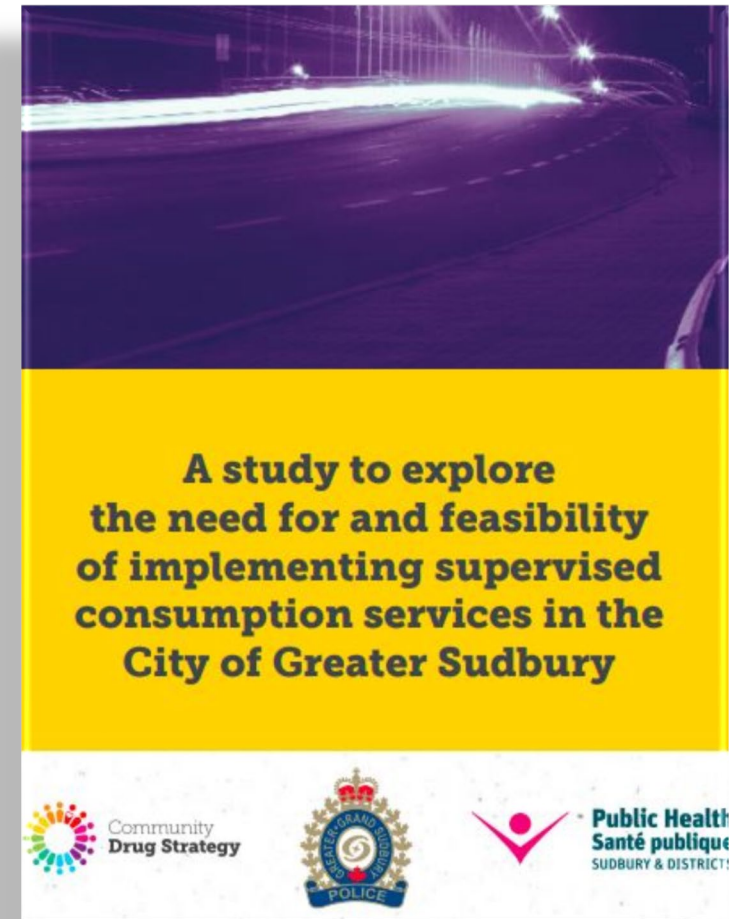
- Anti-stigma
- Prevention
- Housing
- Social determinants of crime and health


# Supervised consumption and treatment services

## **Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study** (June 2020)

- **190 surveys** with people who inject drugs
- **2251 respondents** to a community-based survey
- **13 focus group sessions** with stakeholders from community including businesses and friends and family of people who inject drugs
- **60 people who use substances** were asked specific questions regarding location and hours
- Secondary data from health and social service providers

***Key finding:* we urgently need a downtown location integrated with existing harm reduction, health and social services**



 Ontario

**APPLICATION FORM**  
**CONSUMPTION AND TREATMENT SERVICE (CTS) PROGRAM**

Before completing this application form, please review the Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) Application Guide which outlines the CTS program requirements and the application process. This application form must be fully completed and submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in order to be considered for funding.  
Please include your completed Health Canada Supervised Consumption Service (SCS) application, or verification you have a Health Canada exemption, along with this application form.

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**


Name of the applicant organization:

Brief description of the applicant organization, include:

- Mandate/mission
- Governance structure, including list of Board of Directors
- List of services currently provided to people who use drugs, including existing harm reduction services

**APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name:	Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:	Title:
Organization:	Organization:	Organization:
Phone:	Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:	Email:

 Health Canada    Santé Canada

Opioid Response Team  
Office of Controlled Substances  
November 2018

Application Form

Section 56.1 Exemption for Medical Purposes under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act for Activities at a Supervised Consumption Site

Office of Controlled Substances  
Controlled Substances Directorate  
Opioid Response Team  
Health Canada

Également disponible en français sous le titre:

Formulaire de demande d'exemption de l'application de la Loi réglementant certaines drogues et autres substances pour des raisons médicales en vertu de l'article 56.1 relativement à des activités dans un site de consommation supervisée

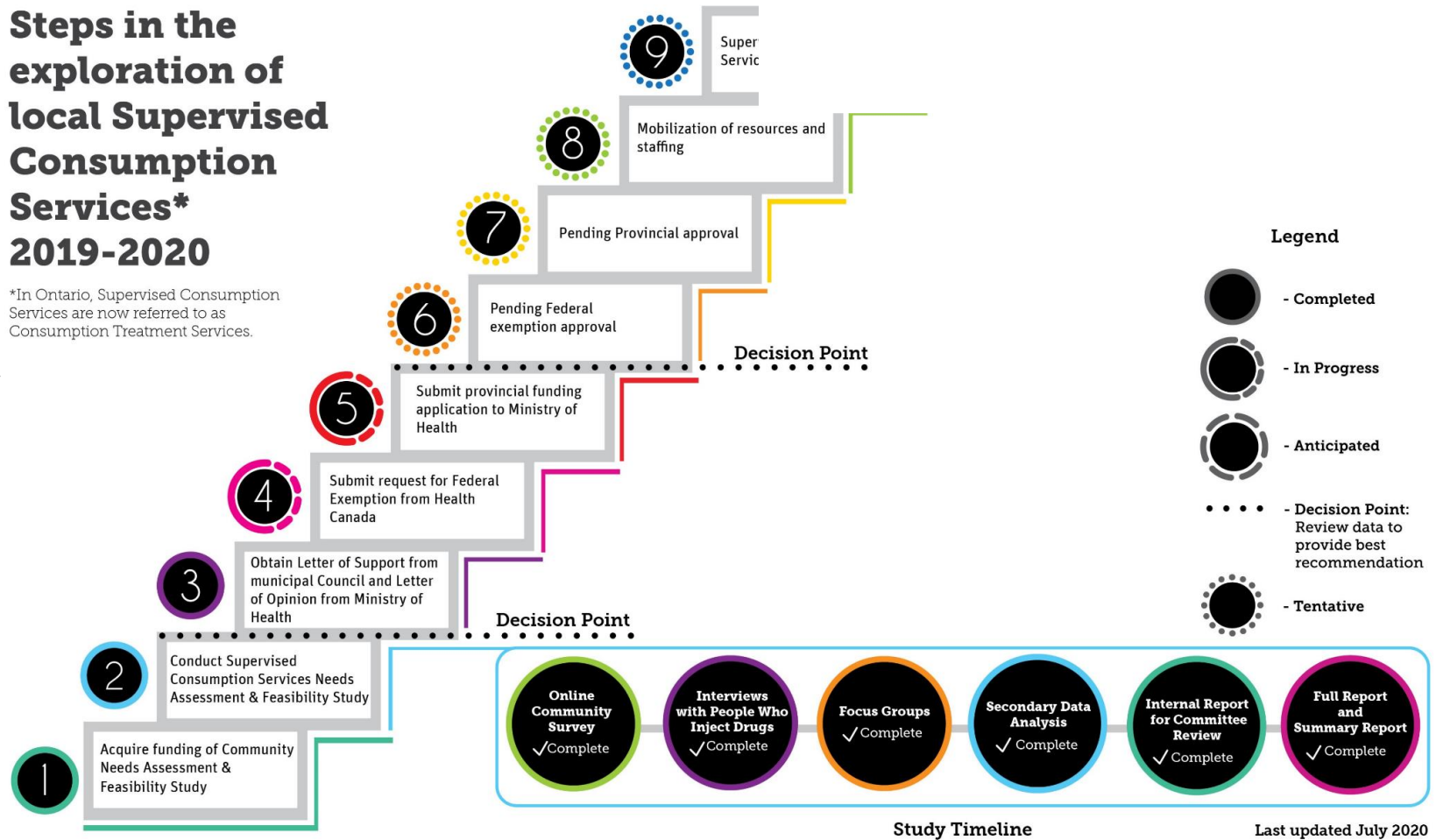
# Characteristics of successful applications

- Approximately 2,500 sq. ft.
- Zoning for office, medical (may still be considered if not)
- Not within 200 meters of a childcare centre, park or school is preferred
- Accessible washrooms for staff and clients
- Separate washrooms for staff and clients
- Three rooms (service intake, consumption, and post-consumption care)
- Consumption rooms ideally have the ability to add a hand and foot washing station
- Accessible to paramedics and first responders
- Support by neighbouring building owners and tenants desired
- **Mandatory wrap-around services either offered onsite or nearby (addictions treatment, mental health, primary care, and social services)**
- **Strategically located (i.e. walking distance from where open drug use is known to occur)**
- Compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Meet applicable municipal bylaws
- **Considerations for transit accessibility of the proposed site**

We are stuck  
at step #4...

## Steps in the exploration of local Supervised Consumption Services\* 2019-2020

\*In Ontario, Supervised Consumption Services are now referred to as Consumption Treatment Services.



# Learning from elsewhere

## Ontario Landscape

- 19 supervised consumption and treatments services (SCTS) in Ontario
- 8 cities including Ottawa, Toronto, and London
- One northern SCTS in Thunder Bay
- Existing SCTS operated by Community Health Centres, HIV/AIDS organizations, public health, and various partner agencies
- Various authorized services may take place at each SCTS

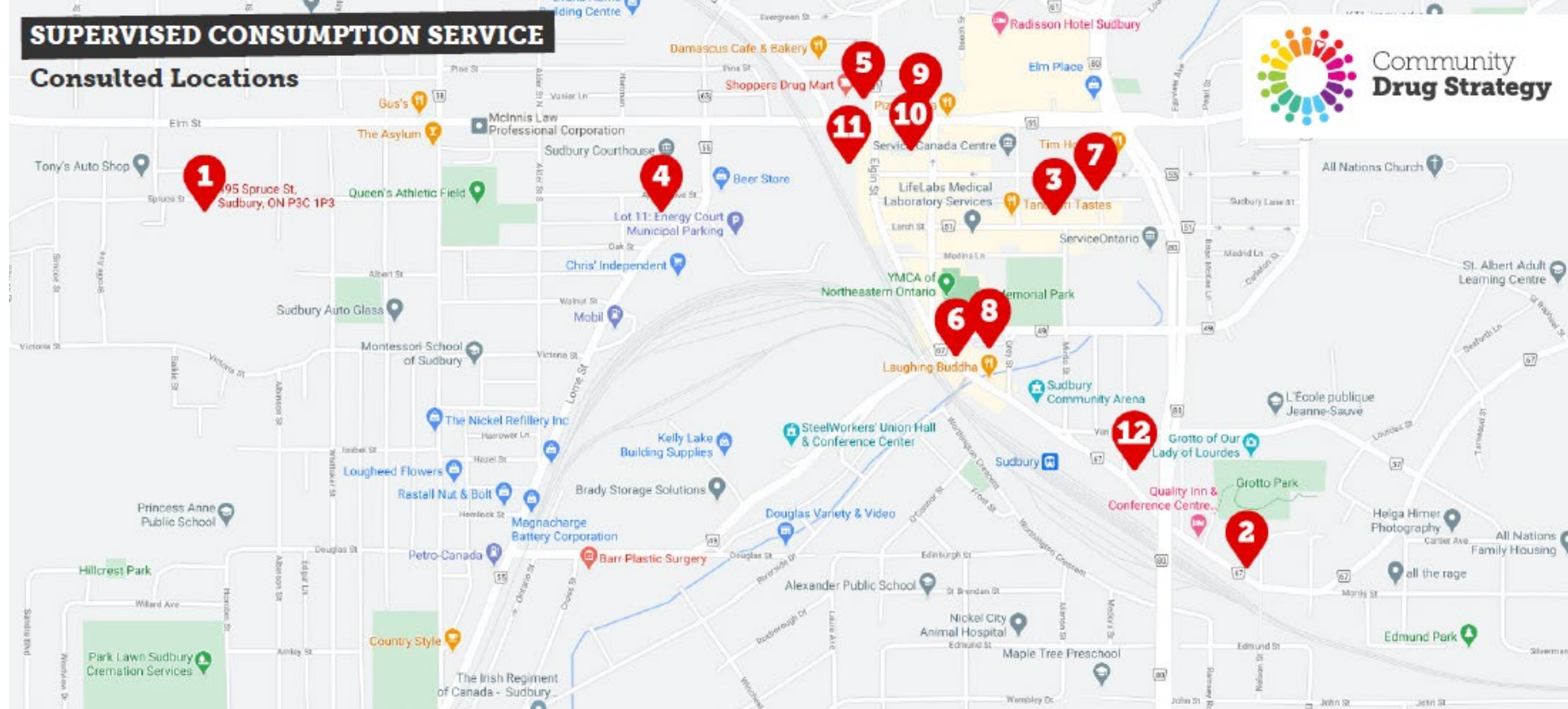
## Case Study: CarePoint, London, Ontario



- Located in central London
- Run by Regional HIV/AIDS Connection
- Was a temporary overdose prevention site (UPHNS)
- Had 20,000 visits, reversed 125 overdoses and 700 referrals to mental health, treatment and social services
- Offers peer-to-peer support
- Integration of Indigenous-based cultural services (e.g. smudging)
- Location had a battle over zoning, which caused some concerns, however, Mayor and Council supported the move

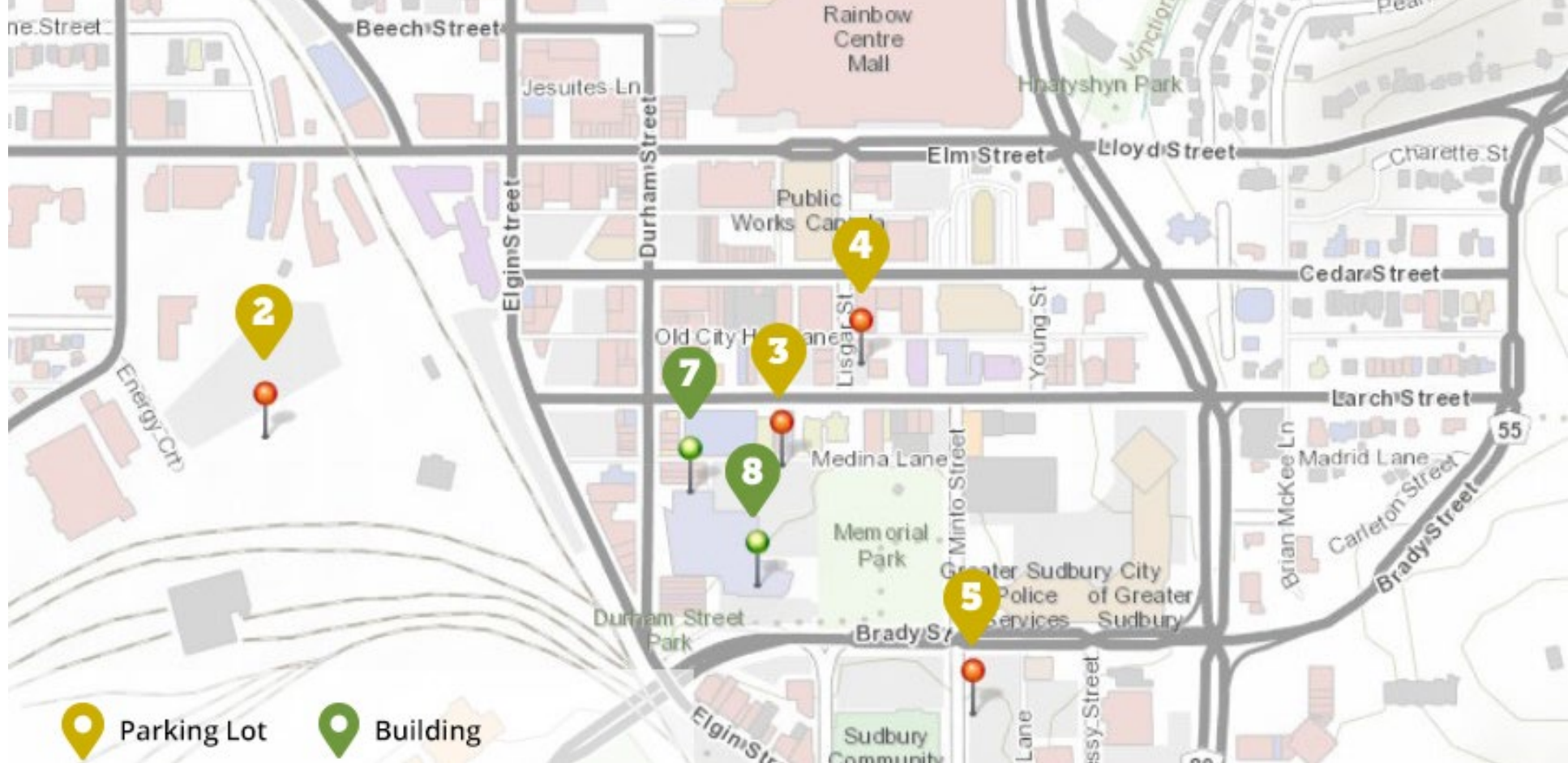
## SUPERVISED CONSUMPTION SERVICE

### Consulted Locations



Location  
search so far

- Expression of Interest issued on October 29 2020
- 12 sites visited/investigated in the downtown core
- Nothing has been feasible or has met needs



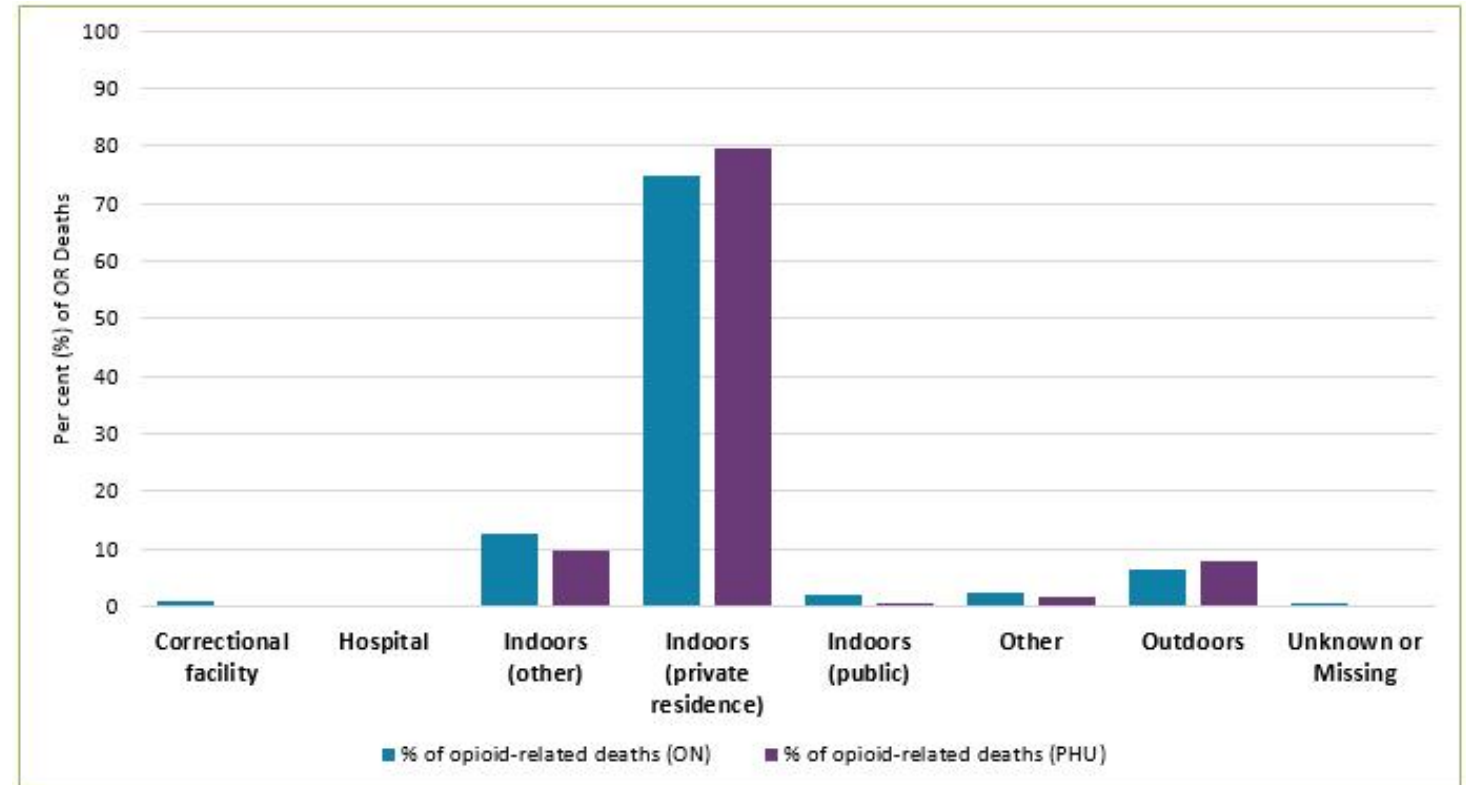
## Continued search

- Looking at city-owned properties
- Modular site located on vacant city-owned land

# Safety-focused considerations

- Impacts on crime; No significant relationship between SIS and crime
- Impacts on local disorder issues; Drug-related loitering and Public Injecting were shown to decrease, and injection related littering showed a statistically significant decrease
- Impacts on local health and well-being; Significant decreases in unsafe disposal of syringes and users being more likely to engage in safe disposal practices

Accidental opioid-related deaths by location of incident





# Summary: Sounding the alarm

- We have a local and regional opioid crisis
- We are losing community members to this crisis
- Supervised consumption and treatment centres save lives
- A comprehensive needs assessment study has been completed
- We are ready to move forward as soon as we locate a *site in the downtown area*
- We need the assistance of Council in order to move forward

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