The Hamilton Drug Strategy (HDS) is a community collaboration aimed at addressing the harms associated with substance use experienced by individuals, families and the community.

The HDS addresses 5 key substances of concern – opioids, alcohol, cannabis, cocaine, and methamphetamine (crystal meth). Deaths due to opioids, predominantly fentanyl, continue to increase, with 123 deaths attributed to overdoses in 2018 (21.3 per 100,000) for a rate over double the provincial rate (10.2). Deaths due to cocaine and methamphetamine use are also increasing. Emergency department visits for overdoses for most substances are also increasing. Quarter 1 of 2019 saw some of the highest monthly counts of suspected opioid overdose calls to Hamilton Paramedic Services. While opioids are currently an issue locally and across Ontario, all five of these substances have an impact on the health, safety, and well-being of Hamilton’s residents and communities.

With over 150 community partners and people with lived experience, the HDS capitalizes on the existing strengths and assets present in our community. The HDS strives to provide an integrated and comprehensive approach, and to connect community agencies, strategies and programs to reduce the impact of substance use in the community.

Through research and community consultations the HDS has developed a strategy to address systems-level gaps and to implement innovative and evidence-based practices to ensure all individuals can live their best quality of life.
Our Goal: All residents of Hamilton are free of harm due to substance use and are able to enjoy the best quality of life

Our Strategy:

The Hamilton Drug Strategy is using a four-pillar approach to achieve its goal incorporating the principles of health equity, evidence and data-driven interventions. The organizational structure includes a Steering Committee and 4 work groups that focus on the following outcomes:

- **Prevention**: Prevent youth aged 12-24 from ever using substances.
- **Harm Reduction**: Reduce the harms caused by substance use in the community.
- **Social Justice/Justice**: Increase access to community services for people involved in the justice system.
- **Treatment**: Improve accessibility and quality of care within addiction treatment and rehabilitation services.
**Goal #1: To increase the percent of priority youth serving organizations who have implemented substance use prevention core competencies for staff to 100% by 2021**

**Activities**

- Implement training to address substance use prevention core competencies for priority youth serving organizations

**221**

HWCDSB staff trained

**Status**: On track

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**Goal #2: To increase the percent of grade 5-8 classes that implement substance use prevention modules to 100% by 2022**

**Activities**

- Implement grade 5-8 substance use prevention modules in HWDSB School Board
- Implement grade 5-8 substance use prevention modules in HWCDSB and French School Boards

**Status**: On track
Harm Reduction
Our Outcome: Reduce the harms caused by substance use in the community

Quarterly naloxone distribution and overdoses reversed, Hamilton 2017-2019

Goal #1: To increase the number of people revived with Naloxone by 20% by the end of 2020

Activities

- Distribute naloxone signage to non-OPA pharmacies and naloxone expansion sites
- Assess eligibility of HDS partners to become naloxone distribution sites
- Deliver coordinated naloxone training to HDS partners and targeted populations
- Review and revise Careful Use campaign

Status

On track
### Hamilton Drug Strategy

#### Harm Reduction

**Our Outcome:** Reduce the harms caused by substance use in the community

#### Goal #2: To increase the percent of adult Hamiltonians who report awareness of the anti-stigma campaign key messages by 10% in Q3 2020

**Activities**

- Launch “See the Person” substance use anti-stigma campaign

**Status**

- On track

#### Goal #3: To increase the percent of HDS partners who adopt or enhance anti-stigma practices and policies to 100% by the end of 2022

**Activities**

- Assess status of HDS partner’s policies and procedures
- Identify and distribute "gold standard" substance use-related anti-stigma practices and policies
- Reassess status of HDS partner’s policies and procedures

**Status**

- On track

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*Graphs showing trends in substance use related deaths and overdoses.*

Harm Reduction

Our Outcome: Reduce the harms caused by substance use in the community

Goal #4: To increase the percent of HDS partners who have substance use stigma core competencies for staff to 100% by the end of 2022

Activities

- Deliver substance use stigma and related trainings to HDS partners

Status

On track

Goal #5: To support full implementation of a 2nd CTS site by Q4 of 2020

Activities

- Partners to provide letters of support
- Support development of pathways to community supports

Status

On track
Social Justice/ Justice
Our Outcome: Increase access to community services (i.e. housing, health/medical, treatment, harm reduction and basic needs) for people involved in the justice system

Goal #1: To increase the number of youth and adults with substance-use cases accessing diversion programs by 10% by 2021
Activities:
- Conduct a review of local diversion programs in Hamilton

Goal #2: To increase the number of adults transitioning from provincial corrections system to community support programs by 10% by the end of 2020
Activities:
- Implement St. Leonard’s Society Hamilton provincial court pilot
- Promote Grenfell Ministries Connections in Corrections program
- Apply for SUAP grant
- Develop a common referral resource

Goal #3: To increase the percent of individuals with substance use related intoxication diverted by HPS/HEMS from ED into withdrawal management services to 25% by the end of 2020
Activities:
- Develop an intoxication ED diversion program with HEMS, HPS, and MASH/St. Joseph’s Healthcare

Increase diversion from the justice system to community programs

Note: data is incomplete; additional data has been requested

* CDSA offence diversion referrals by Hamilton police ** Mental Health Court support services - entering diversion program

Sources: Hamilton Police Service & CMHA

Graph:
- HPS Youth 12-17
- MH Court Diversion

Status:
- Goal #1: On track
- Goal #2: On track
- Goal #3: On track
Goal #1: To increase the number of patients who initiate treatment for AUD and OUD by 10% by 2020

Activities

- Develop addictions services map
- Determine access points for treatment
- Assess how to improve access and treatment

Status

On track
Goal #2: To increase the number of patients with OUD and AUD who complete their service plan by 10% by 2020

Activities

- Develop treatment pathways
- Assess "completed service plan" with patients in treatment

Status
Goal #3: To increase the percent of referrals that are followed up within 48 hours from treatment settings to community settings to 50% by 2021

Activities
- Develop referral pathways with 48-hour follow-up

Goal #4: To increase the percent of HDS partners who engage in organizational substance use treatment competency training and have related policies to 50% by 2021

Activities
- Review HDS partner substance use treatment practices, trainings and policies
- Identify and share “gold standard” substance use treatment practices, trainings and policies
- Promote CAMH and MHCC “Understanding Stigma” online module program
- Ensure anti-stigma substance use disorder treatment practices

Status
- On track
- On track