

MULTI-YEAR INNOVATIVE PROJECT FOR A COMPREHENSIVE CANADA-WIDE STANDARD AND TRAINING PROGRAM REGARDING THE PARAMEDIC RESPONSE TO THE OPIOID CRISIS

The opioid epidemic has affected every part of the country

Canada continues to face a serious and growing trend, with the Government reporting almost 14000 apparent opioid-related deaths between January 2016 and June 2019. To address this crisis the Paramedic Association of Canada (PAC), in conjunction with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA Group) under the Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) delivered by Health Canada, will facilitate the development of a national Standard and educational training on the paramedic response to the opioid epidemic.

The new Standard will outline a comprehensive national framework for paramedic emergency and front-line response to the opioid crisis across the treatment and care continuum in out-of-hospital emergency and community settings that can be implemented by first responders across Canada. With a complementary education and training program and Community of Practice developed, this project will progress through the following milestones as we work to fill a critical need for prehospitalization care to help ease emergency department visits and hospitalizations related to opioid overdoses.

Research

- Perform a pan-Canadian literature review and environmental scan.
- Conduct a multi-stakeholder engagement workshop.

Standard Development

- Establish a multi-stakeholder Technical Committee (TC).
- Conduct balloting and public review of the draft Standard.
- Publish the Standard simultaneously in both English and French.

Knowledge Translation

- **Dissemination and promotion of the Standard.**
- **Development, pilot, and release of training and information toolboxes for paramedics and communities.**
- Create an online Paramedic Community of Practice.
- Generate a coordinated Canadian First Responder Action Committee to support ongoing discussions.

The uptake and dissemination of the Standard and education program will result in training for up to 40,000 paramedics to facilitate the delivery of evidence-informed quality care, including health promotion, opioid prevention, and harm reduction treatment services to Canadians dealing with substance use. This increased knowledge, raised awareness, and competency will equip paramedics and other first responders with the information needed to recognize and respond to emergency and overdose situations and save lives. This exciting multi-year project will increase access to treatment options and create a wider resource of supportive programs to benefit the health of Canadians for generations to come.

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