



Street Health



Community Harm Reduction Response Teams Project (CHRRT)

Pharmacology Class Presentation: **Community-based Evaluation**

U of T, October 14, 2020

Funded by the Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) of
Health Canada

Community Engaged Learning

Agenda

1. Overview of Street Health and the CHRRT project
2. Rationale for engaging community throughout our programming
3. What is evaluation?
4. Overview of our participatory approach to learning
5. Sharing the experience of community members engaged in the process

Purpose

By the end of today's session you will:

- Understand the importance of community engagement in learning about HR initiatives
- Explore the benefits and challenges of participatory, community engaged approaches

Street Health

Community Nursing Foundation

Street Health provides healthcare services for individuals who are homeless and underhoused.

Our services are based at Sherbourne and Dundas Streets.

2021 marks Street Health 35th Anniversary



CHRRT Project Overview

Aim:

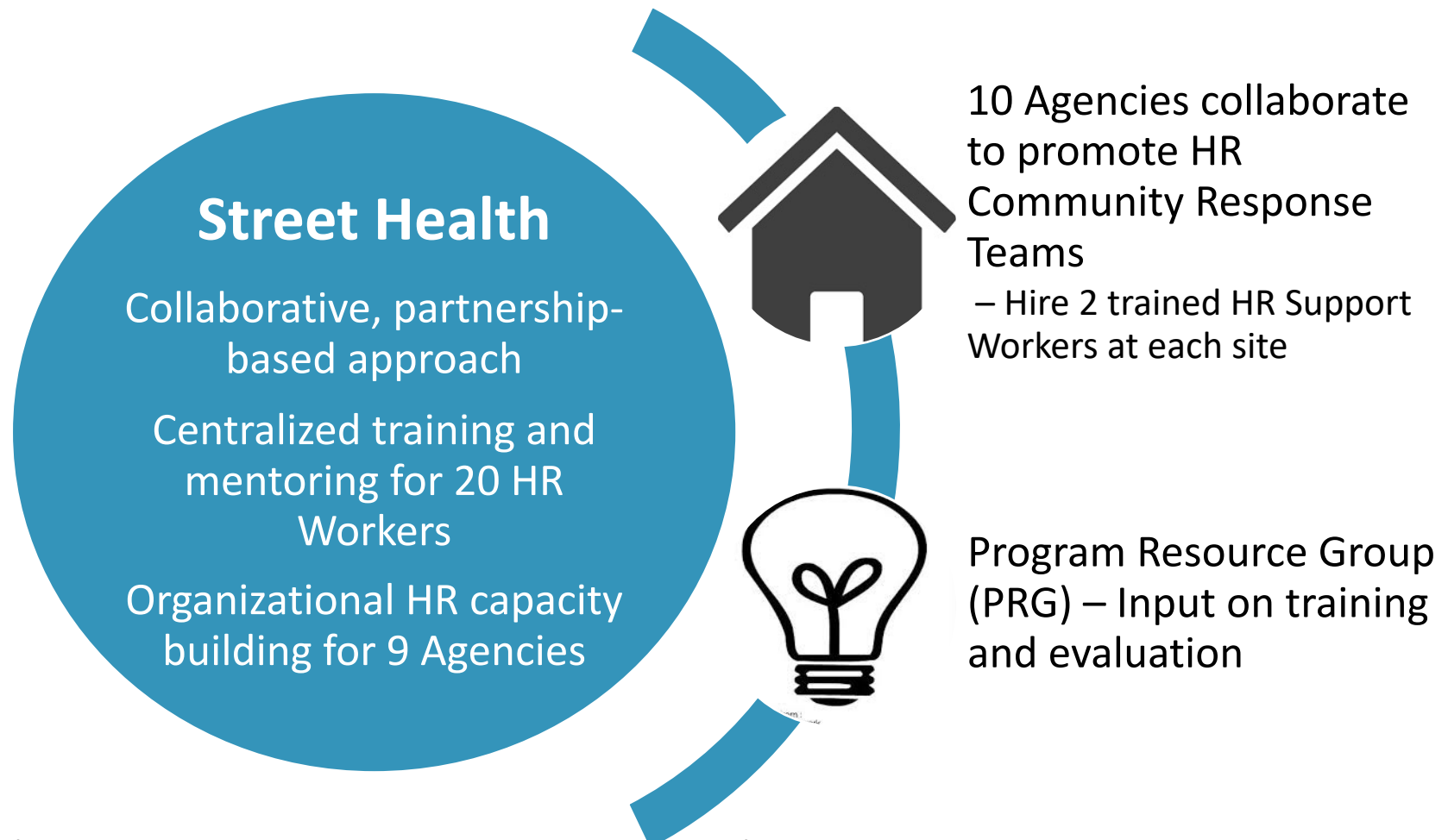
To improve community public health in the face of the growing Overdose crisis and the urgent need for accessible, low-threshold community-based Harm Reduction services.

The Community Harm Reduction (HR) Response Teams Project

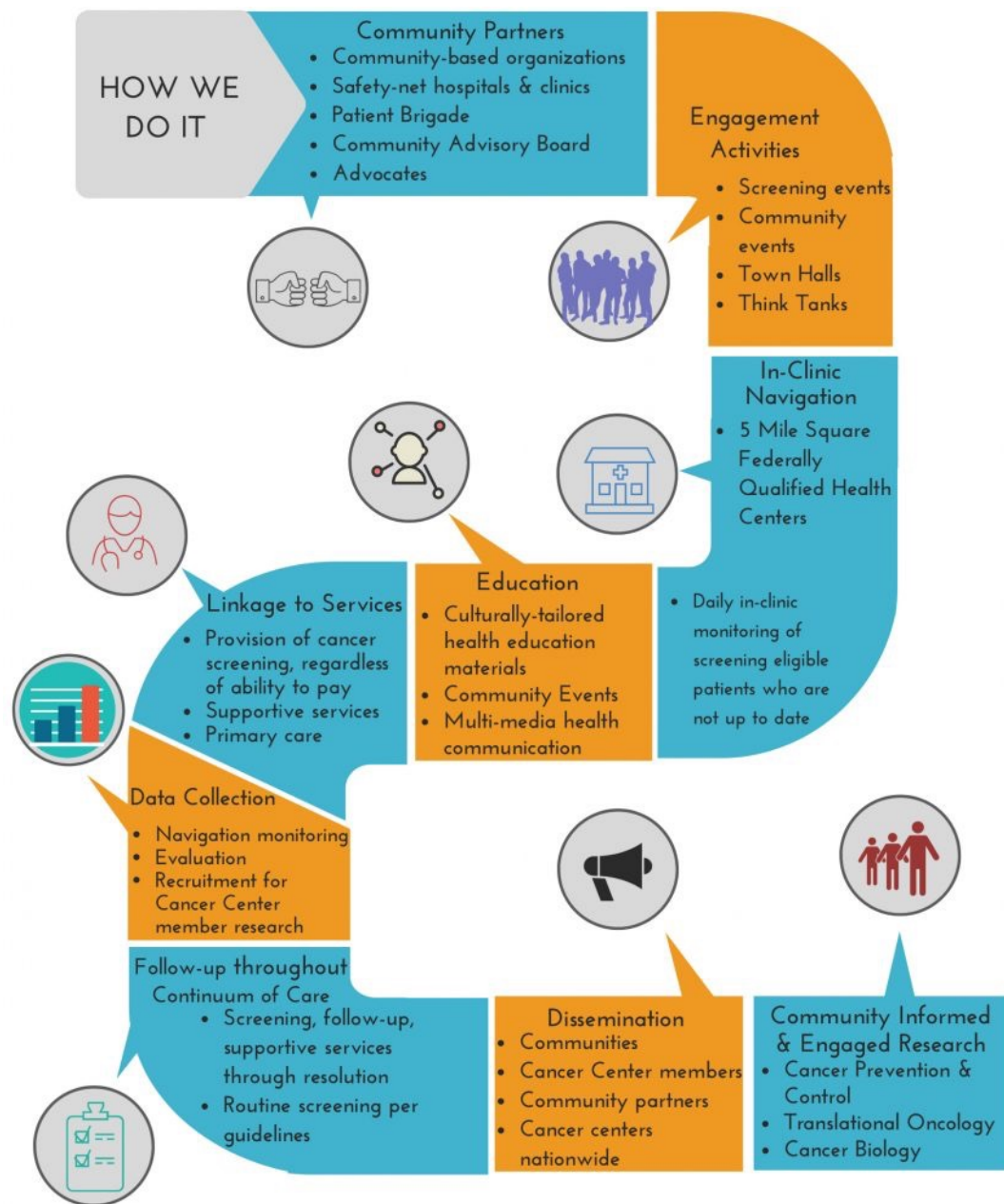
- CHRRT has leveraged Street Health's extensive expertise in promoting low-threshold harm reduction services guided by people with lived experience.
- CHRRT is working with nine other agencies to build community HR capacity.
- **Funder:** Health Canada's Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP).
- Street Health received 3 years of funding from April 2018 to March 2021.

CHRRT Model

An innovative new model that promotes community-based capacity for low threshold Harm Reduction Services, supported by a centralized resource team with strong expertise in low-threshold HR strategies.



A commitment to participation



Low-threshold, community-based approaches in health require an intentional, long-term investment in building engagement and participation at all levels of the work.

Who is the learning and evaluation for?

Giving community a voice...

A shift of power in evaluation

“Community-based research positions the organization as a thought leader, transforming ideas into actions that make a difference in our communities.

- community-guided research
- community voice
- knowledge exchange
- network building
- leadership development.” (CBRC)

“Ensure that people who traditionally have been excluded from decisions that affect their lives - typically people of color; low-income families; youth; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people; and people with different disabilities - are engaged in a way that values and is not dismissive of their perspectives.”

Reference: Kellogg Foundation, *The Step-by-Step Guide to Evaluation How to Become Savvy Evaluation Consumers*

Seeking to empower and build leadership from within the community

The Spectrum of Community Engagement

INCREASING IMPACT ON DECISION-MAKING				
INFORMING	CONSULTING	INVOLVING	COLLABORATING	EMPOWERING
Providing balanced and objective information about new programs or services, and about the reasons for choosing them. Providing updates during implementation.	Inviting feedback on alternatives, analyses, and decisions related to new programs or services. Letting people know how their feedback has influenced program decisions.	Working with community members to ensure that their aspirations and concerns are considered at every stage of planning and decision-making. Letting people know how their involvement has influenced program decisions.	Enabling community members to participate in every aspect of planning and decision-making for new programs or services.	Giving community members sole decision-making authority over new programs or services, and allowing professionals to serve only in consultative and supportive roles.

Adapted from the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, developed by the International Association for Public Participation.

Note: Engagement activities can include community surveys, neighborhood outreach projects, partnerships with grassroots organizations, public meetings, and efforts to select community representatives

What is Evaluation?

Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the design, implementation or results of an initiative for the purposes of learning or decision-making.

(Canadian Evaluation Society)

Project evaluation typically covers three simple questions:

- What was done, and how well?
- What difference did it make?
- Was it the *right* thing to have done?

Evaluation – A continuum of approaches

	Early Stage - Community-based/Developmental	Ongoing Learning and Accountability	Evidence of Effectiveness
Themes	Community-Based Learning	Academic Evaluation	
Nature of evaluation	Developmental – evolving Useful with complex innovations Participatory – engaging communities in learning	Experimental research methods grounded in an hypothesis – control groups or “matched comparison” groups	
Priority	Exploratory – grounded learning Challenging assumptions Changing perspectives	Rigour Reliability of learning Develop valid indicators of outcomes	
Perspective	Informed by activist, social justice perspective – grounded in community Engaging Peer researchers as learners and analysts Aim to support advocacy	Informed by more academic perspective, valuing “objectivity” and scientific knowledge	
Accountability	Focused on learning and telling a story about the experience of people	Often focused on outcomes Outcomes often defined by funders	
Data	Emphasis on Qualitative (Data still important)	Emphasis on measurement	
Reporting	For Knowledge Development and learning by and for the community – more accessible reports and posters	For publication Inaccessible format and language	

Rationale for community participation

What were we trying to achieve?

Benefits

- Participation carries with it feelings of **ownership**, and builds a **strong base** for the intervention in the community.
- It ensures that the intervention will have more **credibility** in all segments of the community
- Bringing a broader range of people to the planning process provides access to a **broader range of perspectives and ideas**.
- A participatory planning approach **avoids pitfalls caused by ignorance of the realities of the community** or the target population. It can provide an opportunity for often-disenfranchised groups to be heard and teach the community that they have important things to say.
- It implies **respect for everyone** in the community and **sets a standard for community participation** and empowerment that other organizations—and the community at large—can follow.
- A participatory **planning should be more effective**. The fact that it includes the views and perspectives of everyone affected by the intervention should work to assure that all assets and needs are identified and addressed, and that unintended consequences are minimized

Challenges

- A participatory planning process takes **patience and commitment** on everyone's part. People need to maintain their commitment over time, remain civil while discussing issues about which they may have strong feelings, and be willing to compromise. A few misplaced words, or one or a small number of key people losing interest can upset the whole process.
- **Education may be needed** for community members and the organization. Members of the target population and the community may not have important technical knowledge or experience, therefore may need to understand some theory or past practice in order to see what the organization is trying to do. Some may need new skills in order to participate fully in the planning process. The organization, on the other hand, may need to learn more about local culture, political issues, and community history in order to tailor the intervention to the community and avoid past errors. Education takes time.
- **A participatory process takes longer**. A diverse group always takes longer to make decisions and come to conclusions than an individual or small group.

CHRRT Evaluation

The CHRRT Model

Participation and Learning in three Key Areas



1.

HR Support
Worker
practice and
outcomes



2.

Organizational
Capacity for
low-threshold
harm
reduction



3.

Service User
and
community
outcomes

Methodology

Mixed Method approach

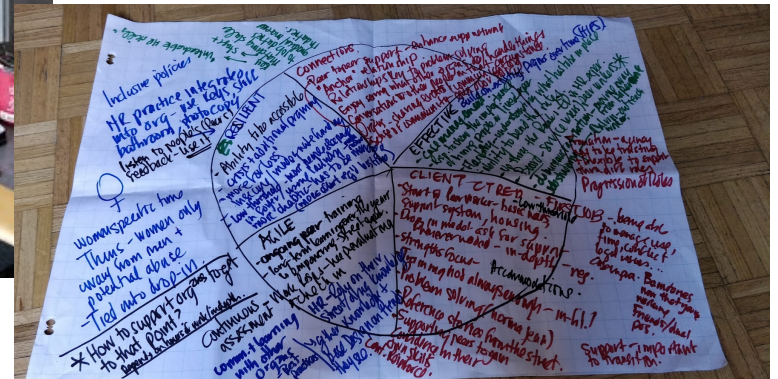
- Participatory process – workshops to capture what people already knew
- Forming a research group of community leaders to guide the process
- Shift tracking data – worker training
- Interviews with HR Support Workers, Partners and service users
- Street Polls – agile learning
- Engaging stakeholders in reading and improving papers
- Repackaging learning for the community
- Policy learning

Learning Products

For different audiences:

- Website
- Accessible PP reports
- 5 formal research papers
- Learning to be shared through video, posters, tip sheets

Starting with what
people already
know



A whole new experience for me as an evaluator

Participatory approaches are demanding!

A change in culture

- Change of perspective – integrate community guidance into all aspects of the work – planning, questions, etc.
- Relationship building – friends for life!
- Evaluator deeply engaged in the project itself
- Flexibility and a sense of humour
- Listening, open mind, “humility” – challenge your assumptions
- Pay attention to language and different ways of seeing things

Implications

- Team’s wisdom resulted in – changes in timing and direction, new learning
- An investment in Capacity building
- Can be expensive
- Pushed us to work and communicate in new ways – “slow” process is time consuming
- Empowering – builds leadership and gives community members new options in their careers
- COVID challenges – loss of in-person working sessions and setback for group

Program Resource Group (PRG) Perspective

An approach that engages people with lived experience in exploration and learning



"Nothing About Us Without Us!" is a slogan used to communicate the idea that no policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of members of the group affected by that policy." (Wikipedia)

What is the Program Resource Group (PRG)?

- We're people with lived experience
- We have extensive experience working in community Harm Reduction
- We've made a commitment to guiding the learning process
- We have met regularly through the project to support learning and sharing
- We did all the participant interviews
- We'll work to package the learning so that the community gets to see the findings
- We will present the findings back to the community



CHRRT Participant Interviews

- 15 one hour confidential interviews with participants
- Four teams of two Interviewers
- PRG = lead interviewers
- Associates took notes
- Team analysis
- Co-authorship



PRG
Interviewers



Street Poll #1

A Snapshot of Substance Use

Organized at the CHRRT community BBQ

Paper-based survey – 20 questions about substance use and risks



Reflections on evaluating HR



Community-based Evaluation is low-threshold and mirrors HR approach

- **Activist perspective** – aiming to capture and communicate the context and challenges, giving community members a voice
- **Transformational** – Our research mirrored the values and approach of the HR work – non-judgmental, inclusive, mentored and supported
- **Continuum of capacity building** and opportunities for skill building, learning and leadership

A final thought about evaluation in your work

*“Evaluative thinking”
is key*

*Become a “savvy
evaluation consumer”
in your work*

Evaluative thinking is about understanding —

- It is based on the belief that a systematic process is valuable and necessary. Using a **systematic process of collecting and analyzing data** instead of a set of disorganized, random opinions — and **telling the story** about your strategy, initiative or program.
- This **involves identifying assumptions** about what you think works and doesn’t work and why; **posing thoughtful questions about what you expect to see differently** during and after you implement your effort; pursuing deeper understanding through reflection and dialogue; communicating what was learned without underestimation or exaggeration; and making informed decisions in preparation for action.
- Evaluative thinking also has the **potential to shift the narratives about certain issues** and groups of people by challenging widespread assumptions associated with them, providing data to support alternative explanations, and shifting mindsets through education and learning. (Kellogg Foundation, p.16)

THANK YOU!



With thanks for leadership and expertise: Frank Coburn, Debra Neil, Peter Leslie, Monica Forrester and Mary Kay McVicar.

For more information:

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Resources for Results (R4R)

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Resources for Results

- *Resources for Results* is a private sector evaluation firm that offers a full range of evaluation services.
- We have extensive experience managing complex, multi-site partnership initiatives designed to engage communities in learning and evaluation activities.
- Over the years, we have worked with community-based organizations to co-develop innovative strategies and practices that empower marginalized people to build sustainable livelihoods.
- *Resources for Results* is offering CHRRT its professional services as an independent evaluator / Knowledge Translator.



Janet Murray (MA)
Credentialled Evaluator (CE)



With thanks and respect
to the Street Health Team

Sampling of Clients:

- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Nishnawbe Aski Nation
- ONESTEP
- Ontario Society of Professional Engineers
- Prosper Canada
- Street Health
- United Way of Greater Toronto

Sampling of Publications:

Engaging Users, Reducing Harm, United Way Greater Toronto (2003)

<http://ekonomos.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Harm-Reduction-Report.pdf>

The Business of Inclusion, Toronto Enterprise Fund

<https://ccednet-rcdec.ca/en/toolbox/business-inclusion>

Selected references

Harm Reduction

Harm Reduction International Website

<https://www.hri.global/what-is-harm-reduction>

Research 101 : A Manifesto for Ethical Research in the

Downtown Eastside Boilevin, Louise; Chapman, Jules; Deane, Lindsay; Doerksen, Caroline; Fresz, Greg; Joe, DJ; Leech-Crier, Nicolas; Marsh, Samona; McLeod, Jim; Neufeld, Scott; Pham, Steven; Shaver, Laura; Smith, Patrick; Steward, Martin; Wilson, Dean; Winter, Phoenix 2019-03-15
<https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubccommunityandpartnerspublicati/52387/items/1.0377565>

Engaging Users, Reducing Harm, Janet Murray and Mary Ferguson, Eko Nomos, United Way Greater Toronto (2003)

<http://ekonomos.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Harm-Reduction-Report.pdf>

Evaluation of Overdose Prevention Sites in Toronto –
Poster

<file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/OPS%20Evaluation%20Infographic%20FINAL.pdf>

City of Toronto Overdose Information System Website

Tableau - Contains an animated map of Toronto - monthly 911 calls for suspected overdoses
https://public.tableau.com/profile/tphseu#!/vizhome/TOISDashboard_Final/ParamedicResponse

Evaluation

Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) Website:

<https://evaluationcanada.ca/what-is-evaluation>

The Step-by-Step Guide to Evaluation, Kellogg Foundation (p. 15) <https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resources/2017/11/the-step-by-step-guide-to-evaluation-how-to-become-savvy-evaluation-consumers>

A Developmental Knowledge Mobilization Primer,

Gamble, J. (2010), p. 13
<https://www.jcsh-cces.ca/download/a-developmental-evaluation-primer-j-gamble/>

Government of Canada Knowledge Translation Planner

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/about-health-canada/reports-publications/grants-contributions/knowledge-transfer-planner.html>

Community Engagement

Community Engagement and Health Equity (CEHE), The University of Illinois Cancer Center's (UI Cancer Center) Community Engagement and Health Equity Office (CEHE)
<https://cancer.uillinois.edu/community/community-engagement-and-health-equity/>

Stanford Social Innovation Review -

Community Engagement Matters (Now More Than Ever)
https://ssir.org/articles/entry/community_engagement_matters_now_more_than_ever#

Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) Website –

<https://www.cbrc.net/about>