



Report to the Office of Controlled Substances, Health Canada,
Reporting per Conditions 18 and 19 of the
Sheldon M Chumir Health Centre
Supervised Consumption Services
Federal Exemption

Submitted by

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Calgary, Alberta

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Introduction

AHS respectfully submits this report to Health Canada as per conditions 18 and 19 of the exemption from the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* dated January 31, 2019.

AHS application for renewal

In December 2018, Alberta Health Services (AHS) submitted an application to Health Canada for renewal of the exemption from the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)* for the Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) site at the Sheldon M Chumir Health Centre (SMCHC).

Following public comments made in late 2018, the Calgary Police Service (CPS) released a report on January 29, 2019 containing statistical data related to reported crime and disorder near the SCS.

AHS submitted an addendum to the application for exemption for renewal to the Office of Controlled Substances on January 31, 2019 (see Attachment 1 for the addendum). This addendum provided:

- An overview of the CPS report called *Crimes and Disorder near the Sheldon M Chumir Health Centre's Supervised Consumption Services Facility Report*, publicly released January 29, 2019.
- The *Crimes and Disorder near the Sheldon M Chumir Health Centre's Supervised Consumption Services Facility Report*
- An overview of concerns raised by Calgary community members.
- A mitigation strategy to address local concerns about the SMCHC SCS.

Health Canada conditions for renewal

On January 31, 2019, Health Canada granted the renewal for exemption to AHS for one year with additional conditions 18 and 19. These conditions stipulate AHS is to provide Health Canada by February 28, 2019, detailed plans addressing:

- (18) “the specific measures that it will take to address inappropriately discarded equipment and supplies used for illegal consumption that are located within a 100 metre radius of the Site;”

(19) “the specific mitigation strategies to address the findings presented in the report prepared by the Calgary Police Service entitled ‘Crime & Disorder near the Sheldon M Chumir Health Centre’s Supervised Consumption (SCS) Facility 2018 Statistical Overview’.”

Notice of Motion by Calgary City Council

On February 4, 2019, the City of Calgary put forward a Notice of Motion (see Attachment 2) in response to community concerns and the statistics presented in the above-mentioned CPS report. The City of Calgary invited AHS to participate on a panel at the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services Report on Public Safety near Supervised Consumption Services on February 13, 2019. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss actions and solutions to concerns outlined in the recent CPS report. The panel members included Calgary Fire Department, CPS, Beltline Neighbourhoods Association, Victoria Park Business Improvement Area, Calgary Alpha House, and City of Calgary Corporate Security. Members of the public were invited to attend. The focus was on a multi-stakeholder approach to address community concerns.

The Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services will be presenting a report to Calgary City Council on March 4, 2019 (see Attachment 3 and Attachment 4). The report includes an update on what the Committee heard from the panel presentations and the public; progress on actions to address the Notice of Motion including associated costs, and next steps for developing a collaborative implementation framework in partnership with all stakeholders. City Council will be voting on the endorsement and funding for actions to address the Notice of Motion.

Action Plan to Address Health Canada Conditions

AHS has developed this report to satisfy conditions 18 and 19 of the SMCHC exemption from the *CDSA*, as well as to respond to community concerns raised about the SCS. AHS is concerned about increased reports of crime and social disorder near the SMCHC. AHS is committed to finding solutions to these safety issues, while continuing to ensure people who need this life-saving service can receive it.

AHS will continue to work closely with community partners, including the City of Calgary, CPS, Alpha House, and most importantly, those who live and work in this area.

Condition 18: “A detailed plan of the specific measures that it will take to address inappropriately discarded equipment and supplies used for illegal consumption that are located within a 100 metre radius of the Site”

Table 1: Overview of actions related to Condition 18 (inappropriately discarded supplies)

Actions:	Partners responsible:
Daily needle collection within 250 metre radius of the SCS	Alpha House Needle Response Team AHS
Needle debris collection in Calgary	Calgary Fire Department Alpha House Needle Response Team
Sharps containers at booths in SCS	AHS
Distribution of personal sharps containers at SCS	AHS
Mailbox-style needle collection boxes outside of SCS and Urgent Care Centre at the SMCHC	AHS
Sharps containers in public washrooms at SMCHC	AHS
Review of needle box locations	City of Calgary
Public education of safe disposal of needle debris	AHS Alpha House Needle Response Team City of Calgary

Alberta Health Services

AHS has a number of actions in place to address Condition 18:

- Injection equipment used at the SCS is safely disposed into sharps containers at each booth. Clients are provided personal sharps containers and education on safe disposal when accessing harm reduction supplies at the SCS.
- AHS has installed mailbox-style needle collection bins directly in front of the entrances of the SCS and Urgent Care Centre in SMCHC.
- All public washrooms at the SMCHC have needle disposal boxes.

- Outreach staff from AHS Safeworks Harm Reduction perform needle debris collection every Tuesday morning within a 250 metre radius of the SCS.
- A peer outreach group called Grateful or Dead performs needle debris collection every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday within a 250 metre radius of the SCS and throughout downtown.
- AHS Protective Services performs needle debris collection on the grounds of SMCHC.
- SCS staff offer support to owners and tenants in buildings in the immediate vicinity of the SMCHC through providing advice, assisting with needle debris collection, and distributing sharps containers.

Community Partnerships

Alpha House Needle Response Team

In response to growing public concern about needle debris and to create a more efficient and cost-effective response to this issue, Alpha House, a non-profit agency, launched a Needle Response Team in January 2019. Funded by the Government of Alberta, this program operates a phone line where Calgarians can report discarded needles on private or public property. The team also completes proactive needle debris collection sweeps in the community and within 250 metres of the SCS.

In addition, the Needle Response Team provides education for members of the public and local businesses about engaging with vulnerable individuals and safely discarding needles.

Hours of operation of the Alpha House Needle Response Team are Monday to Friday 7:00am – 6:00pm and is supported by two full-time staff. Needle debris can be reported to Alpha House at (403) 796-5334 or needle@alphahousecalgary.com.

AHS Safeworks provides the team with the sharps containers for debris collection and incinerates them for no cost.

City of Calgary

In response to social disorder issues in the downtown core, including increasing reports of needle debris, The City of Calgary has established a working group across its business units. This group is collaborating with partner organizations, such as AHS and Alpha House, to more effectively coordinate response to needle debris in the community. Calgary Fire Department continues to respond to phone calls reporting needle debris on public property or needles that may pose safety risks on private property when the needle response team is unavailable. Calgary Fire Department can be contacted by calling 911 or the non-emergency line at 403-264-1022. The City of Calgary and the Calgary Fire Department have 22 collection boxes throughout Calgary and regularly conduct reviews of the locations to ensure they are placed in the areas of highest need.

Condition 19: AHS must provide the OCS a detailed plan by February 28, 2019, of the specific mitigation strategies to address the findings presented in the report prepared by the Calgary Police Service entitled “Crime & Disorder near the Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre’s SCS Facility 2018 Statistical Overview”

Table 2: Overview of actions related to Condition 19 (safety concerns)

Actions:	Partners responsible:
On-site protective services in and around the SCS 24/7	AHS
SCS email address	AHS
Community Liaison Committee	AHS
Improved communication and relationships with community stakeholders. On-going collaboration and partnerships to enhance relationships at all levels	AHS CPS City of Calgary
Improved reporting process to better demonstrate actual number of referrals at SCS	AHS
Collaboration with condo associations and business groups on security that is already set up in the area	City of Calgary Corporate Security
Client transport to and from SCS	Alpha House DOAP team
Enhanced access to detox, treatment, housing	Alpha House
Enhanced access to additional addiction and mental health supports	AHS
Increased law enforcement presence near SCS	CPS
Targeted short-term police resourcing solutions near the SCS	CPS
Implement increased security surveillance at Central Memorial Park and Haultain Park	City of Calgary Corporate Security
Development of a framework to guide interactions between SCS and CPS staff	AHS Legal CPS Legal

Alberta Health Services

AHS works closely with its partners at the City of Calgary and the CPS to ensure the safety of the community, staff and clients at the SCS.

AHS has made several improvements at the site, including increasing patrols by AHS Protective Services staff to discourage loitering directly outside of the SCS. In addition, shopping cart parking spaces have been designated outside of the entrance of the site to help ensure sidewalks are passable and orderly. The SCS leaders and AHS Protective Services work closely with CPS and City of Calgary Bylaw to balance access to services while reducing public disorder concerns. AHS is committed to adapting its response to ensure the program’s success within the community.

The mandate of AHS is to save lives and provide healthcare services. The most important work the SCS does with clients is to meet them where they are at, and provide them connection to services. SCS staff refer clients to AHS and community-based programs and services to support their health. These include:

- An addictions counsellor on-site three times per week for four hours at a time

- A social worker available on-site Tuesday through Friday
- The Addiction Recovery and Community Health (ARCH) program at the Peter Lougheed Hospital (AHS)
- AHS Adult Addiction Services for support for clients and family members
- The Opioid Dependency and Injectible Opioid Agonist Treatment programs at the SMCHC
- Detox services at Renfrew Recovery Centre
- Primary care through CUPS health services, the Alex Community Health Centre, AHS Community Paramedic Team, and the SMCHC Urgent Care Centre
- Alpha House Downtown Outreach Addiction Partnership (DOAP) team
- AHS ID Program
- Shelter and housing supports
- Income support, including Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped through the Government of Alberta
- STI, Hep C, HIV testing and treatment, and vaccinations
- Calgary Allied Mobile Palliative Program

Staff at the SCS have made close to 600 referrals. Connection to care helps people get better and contributes to public safety. The SCS will improve the reporting process to better track numbers of referrals at SCS to other programs and services.

The SCS will continue working with AHS Addictions and Mental Health to enhance access to additional supports and integration with AHS and community-based programs. There are just under 300 addiction and mental health professionals working at programs and services at SMCHC. These include psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, social workers, addiction counsellors, mental health clinicians and outreach workers.

The SCS will continue to collaborate with the AHS Opioid Dependency and the Injectible Opioid Agonist Treatment programs to provide referrals to treatment for clients accessing the SCS.

A pilot project to have an AHS Protective Services staff member co-located within the SCS was implemented December 7, 2018. The decision to continue this collaborative practice model on a permanent basis was made January 4, 2019. The primary responsibility of Protective Services staff is to support the safety of staff and clients of the SCS. Protective Services staff are welcomed as important members of the SCS team: a team that provides care and a safe environment for clients. All staff are familiar with the rules designed to support safe and equitable access to the SCS. Signage clearly outlining site rules and expectations is posted throughout the SCS. Suspensions are implemented as necessary for inappropriate behaviour with follow-up and behavioural care plans through engagement with SCS leadership. Protective Services staff are an added resource in supporting adherence to the SCS rules.

AHS will continue to improve communication and relationships with stakeholders through on-going collaboration and partnerships. A dedicated email address is available for questions, comments, and concerns from community stakeholders including neighboring businesses and residents: scs.calgary@ahs.ca. AHS has established an SCS Community Liaison Committee that acts as a forum for the SCS and community members to freely exchange information, discuss issues and work towards

constructive solutions where concerns are raised. The Committee has met three times and meetings will continue monthly. Membership includes people with lived experience, CPS, the City of Calgary, local residents, and local businesses.

Community Partnerships

Alpha House DOAP team

In 2005, Alpha House initiated the Downtown Outreach Addiction Partnership (DOAP), a mobile outreach team that responds to the needs of vulnerable individuals at the street level and offers diversion away from unnecessary CPS, EMS and Bylaw responses when those types of intervention are not required.

Alpha House received funding to implement a second DOAP Team. The DOAP Team – Beltline will consist of two full-time and two part-time staff operating 8 hours a day. Engagement with community partners is underway to determine hours of operation. The team will complete foot and vehicle patrols with a focus on the five-block radius around the SMCHC. The team will work closely with the SCS to provide client transport to and from the facility and assist with access to resources such as housing, detox and treatment. Employee recruitment is underway with an expected launch date of April 2019.

Alpha House has a large continuum of care from outreach, shelter, detox and housing that enhances longer term outcomes with this population.

Calgary Police Service

AHS is committed to working closely with the CPS to address community concerns related to crime and disorder near the SCS. It is important to note that the CPS “recognizes that supervised consumption sites are one piece of a broader set of programs, policies and practices that fall under the umbrella of harm reduction” (*Crimes and Disorder near the Sheldon M Chumir Health Centre’s Supervised Consumption Services Facility Report*, January 2019). AHS Safeworks and AHS Harm Reduction leadership are actively engaged with Community Resources Officers and the District 1 management team. AHS and CPS legal departments are collaborating to determine an appropriate framework to guide interactions between SCS and CPS staff. AHS will continue to train SCS staff to work in collaboration and partnership with CPS.

CPS will complete another report in April 2019 covering the statistics from January to March 2019.

CPS supports the SCS through the following:

- Targeted enforcement through the introduction of adjusted schedules and deployment of beat teams starting in August 2018, patrol teams in September 2018 and bike teams in December 2018.
- Targeted enforcement to disrupt methamphetamine supply and distribution at Central Memorial Park started in December 2018.
- Implementation of a pilot beat team, staffed by officers from other districts, to help address other hot spot locations in the Calgary core.
- Ten additional officers available Monday to Friday during business hours.

- The Mobile Outreach Community Police Station launched in November 2018 and is parked near the SCS several times per week.

City of Calgary Corporate Security

City of Calgary Corporate Security supports the SCS through the following:

- Increased security guard mobile patrols and collection of needle debris at Central Memorial Park across from SMCHC.
- Remote monitoring of activities in Central Memorial Park through CCTV coverage. Staff monitor two cameras in the park and report any concerning behavior to CPS.
- Collaboration with condo associations and business groups in the area on security.

Conclusion

AHS is committed to being a good neighbour and community partner to ensure that Calgarians are able to access necessary health services while feeling safe in their community. AHS appreciates the partnerships that support this goal, and looks forward to continuing to work with all of our partners and the community on addressing these fundamental issues.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Addendum to the application for exemption for renewal



Sheldon Chumir
SCS Addendum 2019

Attachment 2: Notice of Motion from Calgary City Council



NoM Responding
to SCS Concerns.doc

Attachment 3: Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services on February 13, 2019
Update



Update on Public
Safety near Supervis

Attachment 4: Actions to Address Public Safety near SCS Sheldon Chumir as identified in the City Council
Notice of Motion



Actions to Address
Public Safety near SCS