



Working Group Activity Update

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The **Opioid Crisis Response Working Group** continues to provide direct outreach, support, overdose prevention, harm reduction, and addiction treatment services to members. We're also making progress on our fixed-term projects and on building relationships with external partners.

The Working Group has been re-organized to include Cowichan Tribes staff only. Under this new, simpler structure, the **Working Group members** are:

- Erin Kapela (Co-Lead), Acting Manager Kwun'atsustul Counselling
- Jen Charlie (Co-Lead), Membership Administrator
- Toni Williams, Youth Centre Program Manager
- Michelle Louie, Embracing Life/Prevention Office Manager
- Stella Nilsson (RN), Harm Reduction Team Lead, Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre
- Edward Joe, Harm Reduction Team, Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre

The Working Group will meet every two weeks to coordinate ongoing work, and more often when needed to support the Community Needs Assessment, the feasibility study for Cowichan Tribes to establish its own detox and treatment centre, and the Final Report with Recommendations to address the crisis of addictions and overdoses.

The Working Group will continue to meet with Cowichan Tribes' partners from Island Health, FNHA, and RCMP on specific projects to improve services for members. We would like to acknowledge and give thanks to Georjeana Paterson (FNHA), Jenny Peters (FNHA), Cpl. Jeremy Evans (RCMP), and Amy Rosborough (Cowichan PCN) for sharing your wisdom and experience, and we look forward to continuing to work with you. Huy tseep q'u!

Working Group Vision: A strong, safe, healthy Nation, free from addiction and overdoses, where members get the services and supports they need, delivered by Cowichan Tribes and firmly grounded in Quw'utsun culture.

Working Group Mission: Lead and coordinate Cowichan Tribes' ongoing response to the crisis of addiction and overdoses.



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April Highlights

- Our outreach team continues to provide in-person support to at-risk members and youth. This includes checking in on members to see how they're doing, distributing harm reduction supplies, providing meals, providing Narcan and training, and helping members access the services and supports they need.
- Kwun'atsustul Counselling is providing on-call counseling, addictions counselling, as well as Zoom groups and ongoing counselling.
- **Nature-based Treatment Program.** We're excited to report that Kwun'atsustul Counselling received a Rural, Remote and Indigenous Overdose Grant from the Province of BC and Community Action Initiative to create a nature-based outpatient addictions treatment program. This program will be based on the Quw'utsun Snuw'uy'ulh (Teachings), and will be on Cowichan Tribes land, for Quw'utsun people. This program will support members to access ongoing addictions treatment quickly, without having to leave their home and support system. The program is currently in development and will be launched later in 2021.

Working Group Fixed-Term Projects

The deadlines for completion of the Working Group's fixed-term projects have been pushed back due to the redeployment of staff during Cowichan Tribes' Shelter-in-Place Order and COVID response, and the recent re-structuring of the Working Group.

- **Community Survey Report.** The analysis and report for the online survey undertaken last fall will be complete by May 15th. We will report to Council and community on what we heard.
- **Final Report and Recommendations.** The Working Group's Final Report with Recommendations to address the crisis of addictions and overdoses will be complete no later than October 30th.
- **Feasibility Study on Cowichan Tribes Detox and Treatment Centre.** The feasibility study for Cowichan Tribes to establish our own detox and treatment centre is underway, and will be completed by Fall 2021.

More info on overdose prevention, where to get help, and Working Group activities at:

<https://cowichantribes.com/opioid-response>

Ts'its'uw' atul tseep. Nuts'umat kwun' syaays sh-hwuys kwtho' mukw'

(Help one another and work together for the good of all)