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CASE PACKAGE

LET'S TALK OVERDOSE

YOUTH CASE COMPETITION

**Early risk - Early intervention: Overdose
among Youth**



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Addictions & Concurrent Disorders Research Group
Department of Psychiatry

PURPOSE

This case competition provides an opportunity for youth to get involved in the conversation about the overdose crisis and think critically to develop creative solutions. Youth voices are important and provide a unique perspective when developing new approaches and ideas in healthcare. This competition will also raise awareness about key issues, including prevention and early intervention in high-risk substance use among youth. Finally, this will provide a unique opportunity for youth to develop research skills, gain mentorship, and to share their innovations with leaders in this field.

This case competition is a part of the **Let's Talk Overdose 2022 Conference** where you will be able to meet with and/or present your ideas to thousands of healthcare professionals and other people in the field of Medicine.

WHAT IS THE LET'S TALK OVERDOSE EVENT?

The 'Let's Talk Overdose' event is a 2-day virtual conference that will bring together thousands of researchers, physicians, youth and people with lived experience on **April 6 and 7, 2022**. April 6 will focus on youth, including treatment, high-risk substance use and overdose, while April 7 will focus on creating synergy. The purpose of the event is to ***raise awareness, share perspectives and develop solutions to the ongoing global overdose crisis***. For more information and to register for your free ticket, please visit: <https://acdresearch.med.ubc.ca/events/>

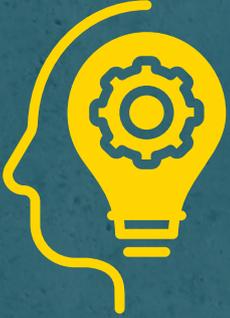
WHO ARE WE?

The **Addictions and Concurrent Disorders (ACD) Research Group** is a team of interdisciplinary researchers based in the UBC Faculty of Medicine under the leadership of Dr. Michael Krausz. The group conducts research that *primarily supports people who use drugs*, as well as connections with other areas of Psychiatry. We are developing the Risk Assessment and Management Platform (RAMP), a Health Canada funded e-mental health platform that aims to support people at risk of overdose through educational modules. We have also been involved in the SALOME clinical trial, developing the WalkAlong for youth mental health and numerous publications on the topic of the overdose crisis. For more information, visit: <https://acdresearch.med.ubc.ca/>

WHY YOUTH?

Young people have valuable and unique perspectives, experiences and knowledge of the overdose crisis. However, youth voices are not always heard in larger discussions on this topic. We chose to host this youth case competition to provide a platform for young people interested in developing solutions to the opioid crisis to share their ideas in a supportive environment. We hope that this event showcases original solutions and demonstrates how crucial young people are in ending this crisis.

BENEFITS



Develop valuable research and public speaking skills

Present your solution at an international research conference to physicians, researchers and decision-makers



Mentorship by graduate and undergraduate students in the field who have experience with presenting at large-scale conferences

Gain knowledge of the opioid crisis and how young people can help



The winner will receive a \$100 cash prize, the title of 'Youth Ambassador' and the opportunity to share a meal with Dr. Michael Krausz to discuss volunteer opportunities.

BACKGROUND

The opioid overdose crisis is an ongoing epidemic characterized by a rapidly increasing number of deaths associated with opioids, a class of drugs commonly prescribed to treat pain. Examples of opioids include morphine, codeine, oxycodone, and heroin. The opioid crisis has its roots in the overprescription of opioids by doctors, as pharmaceutical companies downplayed their risks and overstated their benefits. As the risk of addiction came to light, the prescription of opioids as painkillers decreased. Today, the crisis is driven primarily by an increasingly toxic drug supply laced with highly toxic synthetic opioids such as fentanyl and carfentanil. **50 times more potent than heroin, fentanyl is capable of causing death in small doses and was involved in 87% of apparent opioid poisonings in Canada in 2021.**

Fentanyl is increasingly being found mixed into drugs including heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine, leading to an increased risk of opioid poisoning across the entire drug supply. In Canada, there have been more than 24,000 suspected opioid toxicity deaths since 2016. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the situation, with deaths and hospitalizations related to opioid poisonings soaring to record highs in 2020 and 2021. Factors thought to have contributed to this are increased feelings of loneliness, stress, and anxiety, as well as decreased access to services for people who use drugs. With two concurrent public health emergencies and the situation continues to worsen, action is urgently required.

More and more young people are being impacted by the overdose crisis. In BC, people as young as 12 years old have passed away due to overdose. It is evident that early interventions, increased prevention strategies and youth-focused integrated treatment is needed to protect our youth from this crisis.

References

- <https://www.addictioncenter.com/opiates/opioid-epidemic/>
- <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/substance-related-harms/opioids-stimulants/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/otherdrugs.html#fentanyl>
- <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021PSSG0034-000704>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/opioids/stigma.html>
- <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/olderpeople/resources/improving-access/ia-interdisciplinary>
- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-youngest-overdose-1.6019389>

AREAS OF FOCUS

Besides an increasingly toxic drug supply and COVID-19, other important aspects of the overdose crisis include stigma around people who use drugs, a lack of interdisciplinary care, policy and prevention. Developing solutions to some or all of these areas is a key step to mitigating the severity and impact of the opioid crisis on vulnerable populations such as youth.

Stigma

Stigma consists of negative beliefs about people who use drugs, which creates barriers to accessing services and leads to poorer health outcomes overall for people who use drugs.

Prevention

Prevention is a key step in reducing the incidence of problematic substance use and its associated social consequences among youth. Prevention programs can keep young people from using drugs or encourage them to use safely.

COVID-19

COVID-19 has differentially impacted people who use drugs. The pandemic has impacted safe drug practices, access to healthcare facilities and the drug supply. For youth, COVID-19 has impacted mental health, their social connections and ability to access support.

Policy

Policy plays an essential role in determining the type and quality of care youth receive. Given the unpredictable nature of the overdose crisis, policies must shift to address the changing needs of youth.

Lack of interdisciplinary care

Interdisciplinary care is important because individuals may have multiple needs that require attention, including those that are physical, psychological, or social in nature. Interdisciplinary care involves teams of healthcare professionals, support workers and facilities. Current models often provide fragmented care, where only one type of need is met, such as housing, without considering other aspects of care. Care that spans a wide range of disciplines leads to a higher quality of care and improves health outcomes.

CASE

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Design an intervention (program, technology etc) that addresses one or more of the above areas of focus, with an emphasis on youth. The goal of your idea should be to reduce the severity and impact of substance use and overdose among youth. Your solution should be evidence-based and can incorporate information found in the background information section of this package as well as your own research. Your solution should be realistic, focused on one region or city of your choice and have a reasonable budget. You must describe how your initiative can be implemented and sustainable for the long-term. We encourage you to be creative, innovative and think outside the box!

JUDGING

A panel of judges who work and have experience in this field will judge the live finals based on creativity, feasibility and quality of background research. Rubrics will be sent to registered groups.

TIMELINE



LOGISTICS & SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Eligibility

- This case competition is open to anyone aged 25 and under. You can participate from anywhere in the world.
- You can participate as an individual or in teams of up to 5 people
- Teams must register prior to March 21, 2022

ROUND 1

Each team will submit a **1-2 minute video** that **outlines the areas(s) of focus you are addressing, the main idea of the solution, and how it will be implemented.** This first round is an overview of your solution, so you do not need to include detailed information. This video can use visual aids, slides or any other creative elements. The submission form link will be emailed to registered groups. Please upload your video onto Youtube and include the link in the submission form. If you have any trouble uploading your video or would rather submit in a different format, please email acdevents@cheos.ubc.ca.

- Examples of previous Round 1 submissions can be found [here](#).

Finalists will be emailed within a week of the submission deadline to inform them of their next steps and assign them a mentor for the finals.

ROUND 2

The finals of this competition will happen live at the 'Let's Talk Overdose' virtual event on April 6 from 11:15-12:15pm PST. Finalists will present for **5-7 minutes** on their initiative in front of attendees and a judging panel. If no members of a finalist team are able to attend, a 5-7 minute video can be submitted. Each team will have a 5-minute Q & A period after their presentation. This presentation can include any visual aids and should provide detailed information about your solution based on the rubric.

- Examples of previous Round 2 solutions can be found [here](#).

MENTORSHIP

Each group of finalists will be assigned a mentor about one week prior to the live finals. This mentor will be a research assistant, undergraduate or graduate student with knowledge and research experience in psychology, medicine, public health and/or addictions psychiatry. These mentors will be a valuable resource when creating your final presentation and can advise you on your background research, content and presentation style. We suggest you connect with your mentor via email and set up a Zoom call to explain your solution, practice your pitch and get feedback. We hope this mentorship opportunity can help you build connections and prepare for the final presentation.

REGISTRATION

All teams must register **prior to March 21, 2022**. Registration will include **your names, email addresses and location**, but does not require any information about your solution. Teams that have registered will receive email reminders about deadlines and the link to the submission form.

Register here:

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