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# Media Release



## **Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy coming to Timiskaming District December 17, 2021 - For immediate release**

Many local organizations in Timiskaming are partnering in the development of a community drug and alcohol strategy to detail the current situation in Timiskaming related to substance use, and address the harms associated with it.

In January of 2021 a Steering Committee formed to provide coordinated leadership and direction in the development, implementation and evaluation of a Timiskaming District Drug and Alcohol Strategy (TDDAS). "Many organizations and groups have been working to prevent and address harms associated with the continuum of substance use" said Kerry Schubert-Mackey, co-chair of the Steering Committee and Director of Community Health at the Timiskaming Health Unit (THU). "Organizations want to make an impact together by addressing gaps and building on one another's efforts," adds Schubert-Mackey.

The Steering Committee, co-chaired by THU and Canadian Mental Health Association Cochrane-Timiskaming, recently approved their Terms of Reference to provide direction and guidance for all members. The Strategy is based on the pillars of prevention, harm reduction, treatment, enforcement, and includes an opioid early warning and response system. It will work to strengthen systems related to responding and preventing overdoses and poisonings, recognizing and disrupting stigma and discrimination associated with substance use and addiction, enhancing pathways to substance use services and supports, and advocate for funding, resources, and public policy to address the root causes of substance use and substance use disorders.

"Co-chair Tyler Twarowski and I are grateful for a dedicated group of steering committee members who are sharing their knowledge and wisdom. Together they are recommending actions specific to Timiskaming that are based on the best evidence," said Schubert-Mackey. Steering Committee members represent mental health and addictions treatment services, Indigenous services, community members including those with lived experience, social services, family health teams, hospitals, school boards, police, and public health.

Work is underway to determine local priorities for action. A TDDAS Primer Report will be released in the coming months along with a request for community feedback ahead of the launch of the local TDDAS. A website and communication plan are in development to ensure that information is accessible to anyone interested in learning more.

[www.timiskaminghu.com](http://www.timiskaminghu.com)

For more information

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