

PROGRAM INNOVATION

Safe Health Site Timmins (SHST)

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Let's talk SHST.

Located in Timmins, Ontario, Safe Health Site Timmins (SHST) is - for now - a temporary supervised consumption site brought forth by a collaborative effort from the Timmins and Area Drug Strategy, building on the momentum of other initiatives previously highlighted by fellow META:PHI members Dr. Louisa Marion-Bellemare and Dr. Julie Samson. There is no question Northern Ontario has been disproportionately affected by the opioid crisis. Since the infiltration of fentanyl into street substances, one would be hard pressed to find someone not impacted in some way by an opioid-related death, especially in a city of 43,000 people.

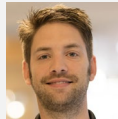
Supervised consumption sites are difficult to set up and require a collaborative effort from many different groups to address the many challenges which include finding a location and operator, securing funding, and dispelling misconceptions about people who use drugs. SHST is fortunate to have the support of the [City of Timmins](#), the [Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board](#), and our partners within the Timmins and Area Drug Strategy. And through the generosity and expertise of design agency [The Garden](#), we were able to launch a media campaign months prior to SHST's opening date.

Through social media blitzes, signage across the community, and messaging on our local mining headframe, we tried to dispel the myths of supervised consumption sites.

SHST is currently operated by the Timmins and District Hospital and is staffed with nurses and harm reduction staff. With nearly six months into its operation, SHST has hosted over 6000 visits to access an array of services ranging from supervised

consumption, harm reduction, wound care, and other practical supports. In December 2022, SHST was on track to log approximately 1000 visits to the supervised consumption service alone. Year to date, the supervised consumption service hosted approximately 195 unique individuals, with many more people seeking other services. Most importantly, SHST is saving lives: since its inception, SHST has regularly reversed overdoses, which frees-up already busy emergency services to respond to other community needs. Timmins is getting its SHST together. <https://www.shst.ca/>

FACES OF THE FIELD



Patrick Kolowicz RN BScN

Director, Mental Health and Addictions, Hôtel-Dieu Grace
Healthcare, Windsor

Happy New Year to the META:PHI community. I am pleased for this opportunity to describe my role as Director of Mental Health and Addictions at Hotel-Dieu Grace Healthcare (HDGH) – a role I've been privileged to fill for the past 5 years. My direct responsibilities include overseeing a variety of inpatient and outpatient Mental Health and Addiction services, including withdrawal management and problem gambling. My background is frontline nursing, administration and leadership.

When I transitioned into Mental Health and Addictions leadership in 2017, I realized just how much mental health and substance use are intertwined and developed a strong passion and commitment for serving those who are vulnerable. One of my goals as Director at HDGH has been to forge strong connections and partnerships with stakeholders serving similar patient populations. I view these affiliations as my indirect responsibilities; they range from connections with individual mentors, groups, and organizations across many ministries and levels - local, regional, provincial and national.

A key focus is to leverage these relationships (including META:PHI) to positively influence the health of our local community, and to share our successes with others in the spirit of shared interests and collaboration. Functions that have been helpful in my pursuit include chairing the [HDGH Patient and Family Advisory Council](#), co-leading our local substance strategy, and collaborating with Addictions and Mental Health Ontario (AMHO) and others to refresh the provincial [Withdrawal Management Services](#) (WMS) standards.

Specific accomplishments that I'm proud of include my involvement with a [Caring for Caregiver](#) research project and conference, leading a community implementation of [Breaking Free Online wellness and recovery support program](#), and the development of a unique, robust and equitable access model for local Rapid Access to Addiction Medicine (RAAM) services through use of eReferral.

One message I have heard from patients and families is that we need a comprehensive menu of mental health and addictions service options. These "menu options" should differ in format and intensity, but ultimately support an individual's biopsychosocial needs and influence their success in achieving lasting recovery. I look forward to our collective advancement in 2023, and our shared focus to maintain an environment that is inclusive and diverse, rich in collaboration, supportive and safe, and rooted in the best available evidence and research.

EVENTS

RAAM Monthly Videoconferences:

NEW: Provider	Jan 11	12pm
Counsellors	Jan 13	9 am
Addictions NP	Jan 25	12 pm

Webinar

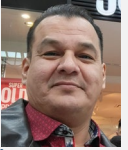
January 11, 7 – 8:30 pm
OPP – Crisis Response Continuum
Lisa Longworth
Register [HERE](#)

PERSPECTIVES

History as Healer

Jonathan Michael Peltier

Community Justice Engagement Worker
Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory, Manitoulin Island



My recovery journey through addictions to alcohol, opioids, and cocaine was met with many struggles and failures. My addictions played a significant role in my daily life, as well as being the catalyst to subsequent consequences such as hospitalization and imprisonment. Without a doubt I came to recognize the dysfunction and coinciding behaviours in my life. I tried on numerous occasions to cease my usage; however, without delving into the underlying

factors, those efforts were often in vain. For years I believed my hardships were interwoven into my childhood experiences and traumas, for which I blamed my parents. Moreover, I held them accountable for not providing me with a safe environment to grow and the necessary skills to live a meaningful life.

In my mid-thirties I started to see my poor behaviours and choices more clearly and realized I was accountable; going back to my default setting of “blaming others” and my “poor me” attitude was not serving me anymore. Rather, it was holding me back from moving forward past my dysfunction(s). By this time, I had three children of my own and they were beginning to cycle into addictions and heading down roads that were all too familiar to me. I was virtually witnessing history repeat itself. I felt I was to blame, and even more so when my eldest son overdosed from opioids and benzos on a Tim Horton’s floor in Sudbury. It is only by the grace of our Creator that he is still with us today. By far, this was the most significant event in my life that ultimately caused me to examine my own history, with the hope it could save me and my children.

Indigenous Peoples in Canada share a collective history and since the inception of colonization we have never had control of the narrative. My own story is interwoven into the history of my parents and those generations before me who were subjected to the colonial practices and policies of residential schools and the relocation from traditional lands onto reserves. I myself attended an Indian Day School. The history I learned there about my people did not include information about the Indian Act, the Royal Proclamation, or the Doctrine of Discovery. Those lessons did not reflect the entire truth; rather, I heard fluffy versions of how Jacques Cartier and Christopher Columbus discovered the New World and how our world and lives benefitted from their discovery. Without accurate history, I was naïve to my Indigenous history and as a result I fell into the stigmatized representation of my Indigenous identity.

Only after learning the true history of colonization and the subsequent losses and impacts to Indigenous People did I fully grasp the entire picture. I started to see my family’s experience and journey as part of my own. And it begged the question: how can I hold them accountable for how I am? Essentially, knowing our collective history helped me understand my family history, and led me to a clearer understanding of my own history. Through this, I also gained a wider understanding of compassion and empathy for those generations that came before me. Today, I gain strength from my journey to help others and promote resilience in all my work and personal life. I used history as a healer and it has changed my narrative of “poor me” to “I am a strong resilient Indigenous man”.

Miinidoo Migiizi (Eagle Spirit)

IN THE NEWS

[Naloxone in Ontario workplaces](#) (News Ontario)

[An opioid survivor story](#) (Thunderbird Partnership Foundation podcast)

[Ontario’s first supervised drug-inhalation service](#) (CTV News)

[New hospital program helps Toronto’s homeless](#) (CTV News)

[Backlash to B.C.’s drug policies?](#) (CBC Front Burner podcast)

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www.metaphi.ca

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