

Overdose prevention site in Brampton

Peel HIV/AIDS Network (PHAN) has received short-term funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to open and operate an overdose prevention site in Brampton.

PHAN Executive Director Phillip Banks said the site is slated to open April 3 at 257 Main St. in Brampton.

This site is among the first four sites announced by the Province that will receive funding to expand life-saving overdose prevention programs in Ontario.

Services at the site will include drug testing, distribution of sterile drug use equipment and naloxone, self-administered drug use stations under supervision, and critical life-saving assistance in the event of an overdose. The site will also offer responsive and proactive needle sweeps, collection and disposal in the surrounding area by trained peers and volunteers.

“More people died of opioid-related deaths in Peel in three months last summer than in all of 2013,” Banks observed. “Our overdose prevention site will save lives. We look forward to working with community members, elected officials, public health, and other key stakeholders as we implement this urgently needed health service in our region. Our community will be better for it.”

In 2016, there were 46 deaths in Peel involving opioids, compared to 21 deaths in 2013. In the three-month period between May and July 2017 alone, Peel had 23 opioid-related deaths.

“Peel Public Health supports overdose prevention sites as evidence-based measures to prevent death from overdose,” Medical Officer of Health Dr. Jessica Hopkins commented. “As part of its Provincial mandate, Peel Public Health will provide PHAN with support for infection prevention and control, as well as injection and harm reduction supplies, including naloxone for on-site emergency use.”

The funding for this overdose site is for six months.

“PHAN is grateful that the government of Ontario is demonstrating leadership and funding frontline organizations for these temporary sites, however much remains to be done to truly combat our current opioid overdose crisis,” Banks said.