

## **OPIOID STRATEGY PRESENTED TO CENTRAL EAST LHIN BOARD** **Local experts recommend strategies to combat crisis**

### **NEWS**

March 28, 2018

Chris Cull has recovered from an opioid addiction and now is speaking out, sharing his experiences, so that the human side of the opioid crisis and its impact on individuals and their families can support evidence-based solutions.

The 33 year-old Bowmanville resident was at the Central East LHIN Board meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup> to share his journey that started with a reliance on opioids as the way to deal with the untimely death of his father, eventually leading to the loss of everything that was important to him, before he got on a path to recovery.

The Board recognized Chris' courage in sharing his story as the Opioid Strategy Action Group, co-chaired by Paul McGary from Lakeridge Health and Dr. Rosana Salvaterra from Peterborough Public Health, presented the Board with the Central East LHIN Opioid Strategy.

The Action Group's Central East LHIN Opioid Strategy, based on the Four Pillars model of Prevention; Treatment; Harm Reduction; and, Enforcement, contains recommendations that [build on recent investments by the Central East LHIN to help people impacted by opioid addiction and overdose](#). The Strategy also highlights the need for collaborative, coordinated, comprehensive and evidence-based responses involving integrated teams of people with lived experience, primary care and other health care providers and partners.

The Opioid Strategy Action Group was established by Lakeridge Health in late 2017, at the request of the Central East LHIN as part of the [Central East LHIN Regional Mental Health and Addictions Plan](#), to provide focused input regarding the best path forward in addressing the opioid crisis in the LHIN's seven sub-regions. The Action Group included members with lived experience, physicians, hospital representatives, Public Health, paramedic services, social housing, harm reduction services, police services and community health centres.

The 21 recommendations in the Strategy are based on the Action Group's shared commitment toward improved processes, targeted education, upstream prevention and intervention, and a dedication toward improving service quality for better outcomes.

The Central East LHIN Board received the Strategy and directed staff to return to the Board in June with an Action Plan on how the recommendations would be implemented.

## QUOTES

“The impact of the opioid crisis crosses every sub-region and every demographic in our LHIN and requires all of us, either as individuals or organizations to work together. By building on what we have done to date, hearing from people with lived experience and those who are providing front line care, we will be able to respond in an integrated and coordinated way. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the Opioid Strategy Action Group for their leadership in developing the Central East LHIN Opioid Strategy and we look forward to supporting the ongoing implementation of recommendations.”

- Louis O'Brien, Chair, Central East LHIN Board of Directors

## QUICK FACTS

Health Quality Ontario's recent [Starting on Opioids](#) report highlights that:

- Canadians are the second-largest per-capita users of prescription opioids after the U.S. at over 34,000 daily doses per million people in 2013-2015, according to the Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2016.
- In 2016, 867 people in Ontario died from opioid toxicity, up from 366 in 2003, according to Public Health Ontario. Although many deaths involved opioids that were obtained from street sources, opioid-related deaths have also been shown to be concentrated among patients who are prescribed opioids more often.
- Opioid related emergency department visits more than doubled to 4,427 in 2016 from 1,858 in 2003: Public Health Ontario.

HQO recently released [quality standards for prescribing opioids](#) as well as treating opioid use disorder. HQO's new quality standards provide support for prescribers to ensure they have the tools to best support their patients.

## LEARN MORE

- To download a copy of the Central East LHIN Opioid Strategy, please click [HERE](#).
- To learn more about Understanding Opioids, please click [HERE](#).
- To register for the April 4, 2018 screening of Chris Cull's "Inspire" documentary at Lakeridge Health, that focuses on Chris' journey through addiction and recovery and reveals how widespread prescription drug addiction is across Canada, please click [HERE](#).
- To learn more about the Central East LHIN Regional Mental Health and Addictions Plan and the system leadership being provided by Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences and Lakeridge Health, please click [HERE](#).

For more information:

Katie Cronin-Wood

Director, Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Relations

Central East LHIN

1-866-804-5446 ext. 3218