

Working in primary care from a harm reduction approach

April 9, 2019 - Wellington County
April 10, 2019 - Kitchener



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Sponsored by:

- Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy
- Waterloo Region Integrated Drug Strategy

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A little about us:

Dr. Yelena Chorny, Addiction Physician, RAAC Guelph & Homewood Health Centre
Dr. Lori Hasulo, Family Physician, Guelph Community Health Centre
Dr. Trish Uniac, Family Physician, RAAC Kitchener & Clinton Family Health Team

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Before we begin...

...a little about you...

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Jessica Okonoski, "The face we hide", 2018

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You might be asking yourself

1. What is harm reduction?
2. Why should I care?
3. How do I do it?

Our goals today are to normalize and demystify harm reduction as an approach to working with people who use substances, and to introduce you to specific harm reduction practices.

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What harm reduction is...

...and what it is not

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Every day harm reduction

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Principles of harm reduction

"Harm reduction is a set of **practical strategies** and **ideas** aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm reduction is also a **movement for social justice** built on a belief in and respect for the rights of people who use drugs"

Harm reduction coalition
www.harmreduction.org

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Principles of harm reduction

1. Accepts, for better and or worse, that licit and illicit drug use is part of our world and chooses to work to minimize its harmful effects rather than simply ignore or condemn them.
2. Understands drug use as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that encompasses a continuum of behaviours from heavy use to total abstinence, and acknowledges that some ways of using drugs are clearly safer than others
3. Establishes quality of individual and community life and well-being - not necessarily cessation of all drug use - as the criteria for successful interventions and policies
4. Calls for the non-judgmental, non-coercive provision of services and resources to people who use drugs and the communities in which they lie in order to assist them in reducing attendant harm

www.harmreduction.org

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Principles of harm reduction

5. Ensures that people who use drugs and those with a history of drug use routinely have a real voice in the creation of programs and policies designed to serve them
6. Affirms people who use drugs themselves as the primary agents of reducing the harms of their drug use, and seeks to empower them to share information and support each other in strategies which meet their actual conditions of use
7. Recognizes that the realities of poverty, class, racism, social isolation, past trauma, sex-based discrimination and other societal inequalities affect both people's vulnerability to and capacity for effectively dealing with drug-related harm
8. Does not attempt to minimize or ignore the real and tragic harm and danger associated with licit and illicit drug use

www.harmreduction.org

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Harm reduction is

- Aligned with principles of patient or person-centred care
- Part of a health equity lens
- Evidence-based
 - Overdose prevention: naloxone distribution, OPS
 - Provision of safer alternatives to substances: opioid agonists, injectable opioid therapy, managed alcohol programs
 - Safer consumption practices: needle exchange, safer smoking kits, safer sex supplies, lower risk drinking and cannabis use guidelines
- Something we already do

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Harm reduction is not

- Enabling or encouraging substance use
- Exclusive of abstinence or addiction treatment

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How a harm reduction approach benefits you and your patients

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HARM REDUCTION

A Family Physician's Perspective

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Guelph CHC Priority Groups

- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Low Income
- Newcomers to Canada with language barriers
- Moderate to severe Mental Health and/or Addiction Issues
- Moderate to Severe Disabilities
- Without access to primary care
- Aboriginal communities
- LGBTQ+ populations
- Other marginalized groups
- Vulnerable children and their families experiencing violence, family conflict, social isolation and attachment struggles

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Why would you want to practise Harm Reduction?

...because it's good medicine!

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Examples of Harm Reduction in Family Practice

- Nicotine Replacement Therapy
- Promoting condom use
- Recommending seat belt use
- Recommending bicycle helmet use
- Promoting use of sunscreen
- Suboxone and Methadone prescribing
- Naloxone prescribing
- Needle Exchange programs
- Education!

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Why would you want to practise harm reduction?

...because people who use substances need good doctors (and NPs)!

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"The Opposite of Addiction is Connection"

- Johann Hari

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Why would you want to practise harm reduction?

...because Health Equity is achieved through harm reduction

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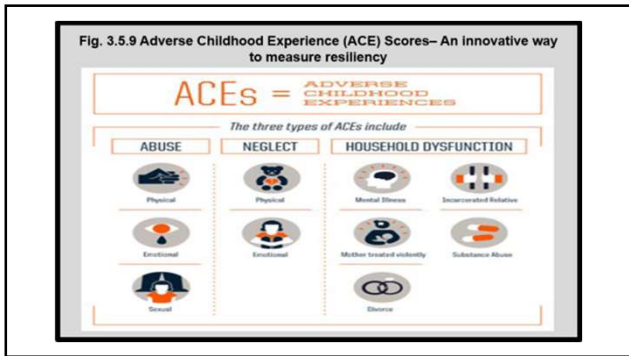
Social Determinants of Health

- Income and social status
- Employment and working conditions
- Education and literacy
- Childhood experiences
- Physical environments
- Social supports and coping skills
- Healthy behaviours
- Access to health services
- Biology and genetic endowment
- Gender
- Culture

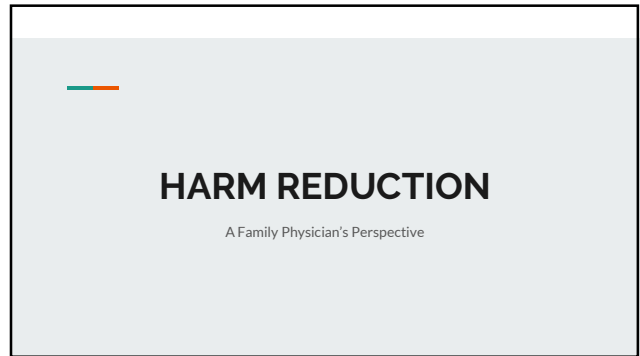
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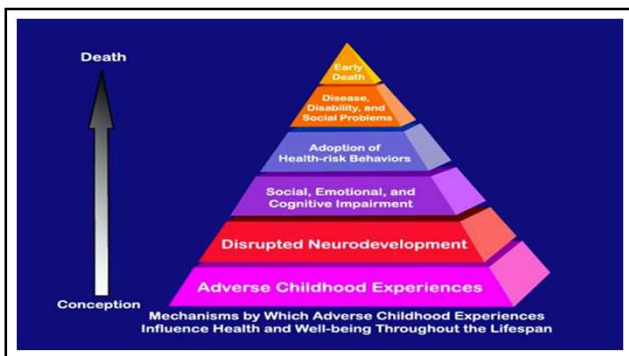
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Why would you want to practise harm reduction?

...because it is rewarding

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Why would you want to practise harm reduction?

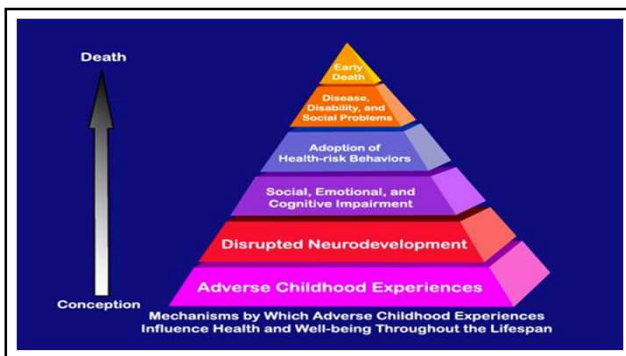
...because people who use substances deserve respect and proper health care

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“Cure sometimes, treat often,
Comfort always.”

Hippocrates

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Putting harm reduction into practice

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Role model flexible thinking

- Black and white thinking is the enemy of an enjoyable life
- Let go of wanting to fix everything

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Approach with a sense of curiosity

- Learn my patient's health goals
- Magic wand question
- Learning about how my patients behave in their reality expands my own knowledge base

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Reduce stigma

- Use scripts for frequently used topics
- Express knowledge and let my patients fill in the blanks
- Normalize

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Work with my patient to reach their goals

- Achievable goals
- Follow up appointments
- Course correct and make new goals

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Ask for help

- Use my entire health team, including eConsult
- Role modeling healthy problem solving

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Where do I get help and learn more?

Want to learn more?

Metaphi - a free education resource for clinicians, go to the provider section for information. Includes a very helpful handbook on treating addiction.

www.metaphi.ca

SuboxoneCME - <http://www.suboxonecme.ca/>

SBIRT for counselling patients with use disorders (via cfpc.ca)

BCCSU - Free online addiction medicine diploma

Harmreduction.org - foundations of harm reduction, overdose prevention and response, engaging with people who use drugs

Tripproject.ca

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Help available

OTN Hub - there are several addictions medicine physicians who take econsults

Community Withdrawal Support Services: 1-844-722-2977

House of Friendship: Day programs, residential programs, counselling

Stonehenge Therapeutic Community: (residential treatment, outreach, supported housing)


CADS: (outpatient addictions counselling in Guelph, Fergus, Mount Forest, Orangeville through Homewood):

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Harm reduction services - Kitchener/Waterloo

- ACCKWA satellite office at St John's Kitchen
- ACCKWA main office
- OATC Kitchener, Kitchener East
- oneROOF Youth Services
- Sanguen Community Health Van
- Towards Recovery Clinic
- Region of Waterloo Public Health


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Harm reduction services - Cambridge

- ACCKWA satellite office at Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank
- The Bridges
- OATC Cambridge
- Region of Waterloo Public Health


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Harm reduction services - Wellington

- WDG Public Health
- Sanguen Community Health Van (Coming soon!)

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Harm reduction services - Guelph

- Stay Sharp Needle Exchange
- Guelph CHC
- ARCH Guelph
- WDG Public Health
- Sanguen Health Centre & Community Health Van
- Safe Consumption Site at Guelph CHC

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