



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health / CEO

DATE: 2018 October 18

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## MIDDLESEX-LONDON COMMUNITY DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY: A FOUNDATION FOR ACTION

### ***Recommendation***

*It is recommended that report No. 061-18 re: “Middlesex-London Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy” be received for information.*

### **Key Points**

- The Middlesex-London Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy is a collaboratively developed, long-term strategy to prevent and reduce the harms of substance use in London and Middlesex County.
- The Strategy consists of 23 recommendations and 98 associated actions, with 59 of those actions prioritized for the next three years.
- Ongoing commitment of partners, and continued and strengthened collaboration among and between sectors, will be critical to success.

### **Background**

In late 2015, the Middlesex-London Health Unit brought together more than eighty diverse community stakeholders to share information and discuss concerns regarding the impacts of substance use in our community. Although considerable work was already being done to assist those using substances, it was recognized that a long-term comprehensive strategy was required to support collaboration across sectors to bring about positive long-term change. Development of a local drug and alcohol strategy began in the spring of 2016, with a four-pillar approach—prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and enforcement. Board of Health [Report No. 046-16](#) (July 2016) describes some of the early work in the development of the Middlesex-London Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy (CDAS).

The CDAS was developed through the dedicated involvement of numerous community partners. The process was guided by a Steering Committee, co-chaired by MLHU and Regional HIV/AIDS Connection, with support and input from four work-groups, each representing a pillar of the strategy. The development of the strategy was grounded in a collaboratively developed mission, vision, and guiding principles, and required intentional consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including service providers and the wider community, as well as focused input from LGBTQ2+ youth, Indigenous persons, and women with lived experience of substance use.

### **Move to Implementation**

The release of the report, *Middlesex-London Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy – A Foundation for Action*, attached as [Appendix A](#), marks the official shift to implementation. Overall, the Strategy consists of 23 recommendations, with 98 associated actions. Of these actions, 59 were identified for priority focus over the next three years. These comprise both new actions and actions that build upon and strengthen initiatives currently underway in our communities.

**Next Steps**

The CDAS lays out recommendations and actions that, when implemented, will prevent and reduce harms of substance use in London and Middlesex County. Many actions will depend on effective leveraging of existing resources, and some will require new sources of funding. Progress in implementing the Strategy will be monitored and reported on at regular intervals, with the CDAS website (<https://www.mldncdas.com/>) serving as a source of information. As the CDAS shifts to implementation, the structure and composition of CDAS governance and workgroups will shift somewhat, the better to support implementation. The ongoing commitment of the CDAS partners, together with continued and enhanced collaboration among and between sectors, will be critical for success. As implementation moves forward, everyone in the community will have a role to play. Any resource implications for MLHU will come forward in the 2019 budget process.

This report was prepared by the Healthy Living Division.



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