

LEGISLATIVE RETURN



SUBMITTED BY: Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Health and Social Services

1. On November 29, 2023, Annie Blake, Member for Vuntut Gwitchin
 - asked the following question during the Oral Question Period at page(s) [page numbers] of *Hansard*
 - submitted the following written question – WQ No. 44
 - gave notice of the following motion for the production of papers – MPP No. #

RE: Safe Supply

OR

2. This legislative return relates to a matter outstanding from discussion with [MLA] on [date] related to:
 - Bill No. # Second Reading Third Reading
 - Committee of the Whole: [Vote]
 - Motion No. # RE: [subject]
 - at page(s) [page numbers] of *Hansard*.

The response is as follows:

1. How many Yukoners are currently accessing safe supply in the territory?

Response: As of January 31, 2024, there are 232 clients registered with Opioid Treatment Services and 617 clients are being supported through the Referred Care Clinic.

We do not release the number of people on safer supply as it could compromise confidentiality.
2. Where is safe supply available?

Response: Safer Supply is available by prescription from a prescriber and dispensed through pharmacies. Safer Supply can be prescribed through Opioid Treatment Services. Any Yukoner can access it, but it must be dispensed from a pharmacy.

Yukoners can find out more about how to access safer supply by contacting the Referred Care Clinic at 867-668-2552. They can contact Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services at 867-456-3838 to learn more about opioid treatment services.
3. How is this program being advertised to Yukoners who need access to it?

Response: Over the last 3 months, we have led public awareness campaigns on Opioid Treatment Services, Alcohol-use Disorder, Rapid Access Counselling and the national 988 Suicide Crisis Helpline. Campaigns are advertised through social media, radio and print. We also provide information through Ministerial Statements and press conferences.
4. What substances are currently available and in what form?

Response: The Safe Supply program currently offers Hydromorphone tablets and Fentanyl Patch programs as a safer supply of opioids.

Physicians and Nurse Practitioners who have trained with Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services may prescribe evidence-based opioid agonist therapies such as methadone, suboxone, sublocade, and kadian to prevent withdrawal and reduce cravings for opioid drugs.
5. How are participants in this program being meaningful engaged and consulted?

Response: We work with Blood Ties Four Directions to engage people who use substances.

An independent contractor completed a Community Needs Assessment in Fall 2022, which engaged over 50 people with lived experience to inform the program.

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6. How are people with lived and living experience being meaningfully engaged and consulted?

Response: We completed Patient Journey Maps with people who experienced overdose, or are at risk of overdose from toxic drug supplies.

We have added a "Community Engagement Position" as part of the Safer Supply expansion, which is a person with lived experience to engage clients and inform programming.

7. What partners have you engaged in this implementation?

Response:

Blood Ties Four Directions

Pharmacies

Yukon Medical Association

Victoria SAFER

SAFER Knowledge Translation Team

8. When will safe supply be made available to Rural Yukon Communities?

Response: Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services is currently working with Community Nursing to expand Opioid Treatment Services to rural communities. Communities developing Community Wellness Plans, as outlined in the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy, may add safer supply options to be developed as part of those plans.

9. What training, support and education is being provided to health practitioners who would be willing to prescribe safe supply?

Response: Medical training can occur in many different ways. There is no standard Safer Supply training. The Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services Clinic Medical Advisor has visited multiple safe supply sites in British Columbia for continued medical education from safe supply practitioners.

We have contracted with an Addictions Medicine Specialist, who provides weekly consults to patients and prescribers through the Referred Care Clinic.

We have worked closely with the Yukon Registered Nursing Association to train Referred Care Clinic Nurse Practitioners in Opioid Treatment Services, including prescribing safe supply.

10. How are health practitioners who would be willing to prescribe safe supply outside of the Referred Care Clinic being supported and engaged?

Response: Any medical professional can consult with Referred Care Clinic physicians for addictions specific medical advice, including around Safer Supply and Opioid Treatment Services. Any physician can refer a patient to Opioid Treatment Services for a consult on addictions medicine, including safer supply. Patients of Opioid Treatment Services do not need to be patients of the Referred Care Clinic and can receive addiction specific medical services, while remaining patients of their own clinic.

11. How will the government ensure that the perspectives of people with lived and living experience is being included in program implementation on an ongoing basis?

Response: Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services has started a Mental Health Advisory Committee with community and people with lived experience providing consultation on mental health and substance use interventions. This will be on-going. A separate committee is being created for Youth issues.

May 2, 2024

Date



Signature