FINAL REPORT

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NOTES:
This report is to be read in conjunction with Evaluation Report by Christine Leonard Consulting report. Our hope for this report is that it is a helpful tool to understand Stimulus 2018, but also to help guide subsequent conferences.

Thanks to the Stimulus 2018 staff and volunteers who made this event the best we have ever experienced.

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BACKGROUND
Canadians who work in Harm Reduction involved in planning Stimulus 2018: Drugs, Policy and Practice in Canada recall attending a Canadian harm reduction conference in Toronto more than 15 years ago but not who had planned and implemented it. Alberta harm reduction programs had successfully implemented 13 provincial harm reduction conferences that were held annually initially and then biannually. The lack of information on the previous national conference left Alberta harm reduction and drug policy leaders as the defacto holders of harm reduction conference knowledge.

The last Alberta Harm Reduction Conference was in June 2015 in Edmonton Alberta. The next conference was projected for spring 2017 but it was pushed back a year as the 25th Harm Reduction International Conference was scheduled for Montréal, Quebec in May 2017. This left the Alberta Harm Reduction Conference to be planned and implemented for 2018.

Alberta harm reduction programs, between 2015 and 2017, heard from a range of Canadian harm reduction and drug policy leaders that there was interest in having Alberta work collaboratively with national and regional leaders to plan, implement and evaluate a national harm reduction and drug policy conference. The combination of the two themes would be a first for Canada.

In the autumn of 2017, Marliss Taylor, Streetworks (Edmonton) Director had confirmed that there was interest from the Canadian Association of People who Use Drugs (CAPUD) and Canadian Drug Policy Coalition and the Alberta Harm Reduction Committee (the provincial planners of previous events) that there was interest in holding a national harm reduction and drug policy conference. The conference would be locally hosted by the Streetworks Program in Edmonton, Alberta in 2018. Streetworks is a non-profit unincorporated program, with Boyle Street Community Services as its banking agent.

PLANNING COMMITTEES
The planning committee structure was created in the likeness of the methods used for the Alberta Harm Reduction Conferences. A large multi-stakeholder committee was struck, it was named the Stimulus 2018 National Advisory Committee. The purpose was to lead planning of the event, make recommendations and decisions that support the work of Streetworks staff and contractors to strike and support ad hoc committees as necessary.

The Advisory Committee members were:
- Shanell Twan and Karen Turner from Alberta Addicts Who Advocate and Educate Responsibly (AAWEAR) and As It Is
- Celeste Hayward (or Tammy Pfeiffer while Celeste was on maternity leave) from the Alberta Community Council on HIV (ACCH)
- Julie-Soleil Meeson from Association québécoise des centres d'intervention en dépendance (AQCID)
Stacey Bourque from AIDS Outreach Community Harm Reduction Education and Support Society (ARCHES)
- Jordan Westfall from the Canadian Association of People who Use Drugs (CAPUD)
- Lynne Belle–Isle from the Canadian AIDS Society (CAS)
- Donald MacPherson, Scott Bernstein and Caroline Mouseau from the Canadian Drug Policy Coalition (CDPC)
- Richard Elliot from the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
- Cam Wild from the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM)
- Leslie Hill (or Janak Bajgai if Leslie was unavailable) from HIV Community Link
- Melissa Byers from HIV North
- Lori Phillips from HIV West Yellowhead
- Stacey Carmichael from Turning Point
- Claire O’Gorman was replaced by Rob Milner when Claire went on maternity leave from Safeworks
- Marliss Taylor and Shay Vanderschaeghe from Streetworks

Lynne Belle–Isle from CAS and Caroline Mouseau from CDPC left their positions during the planning stage and were not replaced by their home organization. The Advisory Committee meeting was chaired by Marliss and minutes were produced by Shay.

**ABSTRACTS**
The Abstract and Content Ad-Hoc Committee was tasked to create and market the call for abstracts in addition to reviewing and approving the content for Stimulus 2018. The members of the committee were:

- Karen Turner from AAWEAR
- Celeste Hayward from ACCH
- Julie Soleil Meeson from AQCID
- Richard Elliott from the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
- Lynne Belle-Isle from CAS
- Donald MacPherson, Caroline Mousseau, Scott Bernstein from CDPC
- Cam Wilde from CRISM
- Jody Tomm from HIV Community Link
- Marliss Taylor, Tia Smith, Shay Vanderschaeghe from Streetworks.

The committee met 4 times with 31 contacts.

The abstract submissions were made using an online form on the website available in either English or French. The abstract submission form is available in the Abstracts Appendix.

The call for abstracts opened on March 25th, 2018 and the deadline was May 31st, 2018 and we marketed the possible topics to include:

- Cannabis legalization
- Culture
- Drug checking
- Drug markets
- Drug specific related topics including: opioids, stimulants, cannabis and psychedelics, etc.
- Emergency response
- New ideas, what the future holds
- Nightlife Harm Reduction
- Overdose prevention
- Peer support and services
- Policing, corrections and remand
- Population specific (i.e. Indigenous, Women and Gender, Youth)
- Positive relationships between harm
The quantity of abstracts received was more than we had hoped with 226 abstracts being submitted. They were dominantly submitted in English with 10 coming in French or English and French. 24 abstracts said they could be posters at time of application. People living in Canada submitted 93% of the Stimulus 2018 abstracts.

The abstracts came from British Columbia: 40%, Alberta: 22%, Ontario: 18%, Saskatchewan: 6%, Quebec: 3%, Nova Scotia: 2%, Newfoundland and Labrador: 1% and no abstracts initially came in from Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nunavut, Yukon or the Northwest Territories.

The range of abstract types included:

- Art showing
- Book Reading
- Book Signing
- Theatre
- Live Musical Performance
- Photography
- Film or Documentary
- Spoken Word
- Conversation Cafe
- Community Tours
- Poster Presentation
- Panel - 45 minutes
- Panel - 90 minutes
- Oral Presentation - 15 min
- Oral Presentation - 45 min
- Oral Presentation – 90 min
- Workshop - 45 minutes
- Workshop - 90 minutes

The process to review the abstracts initially was created so that every committee member would review all of the abstracts and rank them. With so many abstracts received, the process was changed so that four groups of reviewers having 2 to 3 committee members each would review, rank and be able to speak to their portion at the face to face meeting.

The abstract review included each abstract being evaluated out of 10 in the areas of: innovation; relevance: harm reduction; potential impact on community; relevance to drug policy; knowledge exchange; other relevance; and inclusion of people with lived experience. These rankings were compiled into a general score with along with the reviewer’s notes was used as the basis of the review conversations. Large recipe cards were created by Streetworks staff to facilitate the review. The recipe cards included the abstract number, the name, the speakers, the themes and the ranking they received.

The face to face meeting was held June 28th, 2018 at HIV Edmonton’s offices in Edmonton Alberta where people flew in from across Canada.
Rarely did an abstract get granted the time they requested in their submission. Often the abstracts were compiled with like content and were invited to collaborate with two or even three other abstracts for a 45-minute block. Some stand-alone sessions were offered lightning round sessions (15 minutes). In some cases, abstracts were offered time and space outside the session schedule including an interactive and supportive Sharing Circle introducing Wellbriety that was held in the Indigenous Resource room on October 3rd, 2018 at 5:30 pm.

Abstracts that were not approved but were considered on topic were offered to be displayed as posters, with uptake on this option was higher than predicted. A total of 26 posters were expected at Stimulus 2018 with approximately 22 being displayed onsite. Format guidelines were shared with the applicants and in most cases were followed.

Gaps in content were identified by the Abstract Review Committee and these pieces along with the yet to be identified 5 Plenary Sessions were tasked out for curation to committee members with support from the Conference Coordinator.

In the end 109 abstracts were approved to be presented.

Recommendations

1. Continue and enhance where possible the meaningful involvement of people who use drugs
2. Streamline the abstract selection process:
   2.1. At least one person should read all of the abstracts in order to identify any hard to identify duplicate sessions, underlying issues and common players.
   2.2. The specific amount of content that can be approved is clear and accounted to.
   2.3. Planners are clear which specific abstracts were approved, not approved, still under consideration and needing to be curated within the context of Recommendation 1.2.
   2.4. Communicate as soon as possible that Stimulus content may involve curation, emerging or late breaking abstracts.
   2.5. Some abstracts may be approved to participate only in collaborative panels with other related content.
   2.6. Limit the amount of speakers who would be supported in participating for each type of session
   2.7. Hold the face to face meeting for more than one day. Consider at least 2 full days.
   2.8. Keep a diligent watch on the registrations of speakers as many missed the Scholarship Application Deadline

COMMUNICATIONS

Stimulus 2018 primarily worked through the National Advisory Committee. But for pieces related to branding a Stimulus 2018 Communications Ad Hoc Committee which met 3 times in January 2018. The Communications Ad-Hoc Committee members were Celeste McKenzie and Don Stannard from ACCH, Julie-Soleil Meeson from (AQCID; Jordan Westfall from CAPUD, Caroline Mouseau from CDPC, Marliss Taylor and Shay Vanderschaeghe from Streetworks.

The Committee identified Julie-Soleil to chair the committee and report to the National Advisory Committee. They made recommendations to the Advisory Committee, including:

✓ The conference name in English and French: Stimulus
The tag line: Drugs, Policy and Practice in Canada

Identification of social media channels to use and their names:

- Twitter: @Stimulus2018
- Facebook: @Stimulus2018
- Social media hashtags: #stimulus2018
- The Stimulus logos
- The Stimulus website address: stimulusconference.ca

Communication work was led by the relevant planners and staff and where necessary we held each other accountable.

Website

The Stimulus 2018 website (www.stimulusconference.ca) was designed by Brenda Sargent from Unlimited BS expanding on the work of the Two Stone Design created logos and colours. The website was created in WordPress with Shay updating the content as it became available. Some content pieces were added or updated by Brenda because it could impact the websites structure and design. All feedback, processes and information to Unlimited BS was funeled through Shay as one Stimulus contact person was identified as best.

Marketing

Canada does not have a national harm reduction organization and there is no master list of organizations or groups. This limitation was managed by using the National Advisory Committee member’s networks and list serves. Stimulus staff also used the website, the Facebook page and Twitter account to connect with people about Stimulus 2018. As people registered for Stimulus 2018 we were able to email them through the Eventbrite software.

Media

Elliot Tanti, from Boyle Street Community Services led media contacts and coordination for the event and was involved in writing content, he was responsible for the distribution of the media alerts and releases.

In preparation for media requests during Stimulus 2018 we created a list of contacts who were available to speak to specific issues as they arose. The range of contacts and the topics included:

- Donald MacPherson: policy, cannabis, National
- Elaine Hyshka: research in the area
- Erica Schoen: SCS services in Edmonton, stigma and barriers to social and healthcare services, HR in general
- Hakique Virani: drug policy, harm reduction, opioid addiction treatment, public health, social determinants
- Jenna Valleriani: cannabis use, cannabis policy, youth cannabis education, youth cannabis use, drug policy reform.
- Jordan Westfall: safe drugs, drug user organizing, decriminalization, overdose response, national issues and politics, overdose prevention services, stigma, people who use drugs, policy, CAPUD, drug supply, protest, injectable opioid agonist treatment (iOAT)
- Julie-Soleil Meeson: feels fluent in all - drugs, drug policy and HR practices. (French and English speaker)
- Marilou Gagnon: harm reduction nursing, supervised consumption, overdose prevention services, homelessness (French and English speaker)
- Marliss Taylor: all
- Dr. Mark Tyndall: BCCDC doctor, health care systems, vending machines for hydromorphone.
Melissa Byers: rural, mobile SCS, harm reduction, homelessness, housing and related issues
Michelle Boudreau: national, government of Canada
Nicholas Etches or Shobhit Maruti: Public Health, Alberta Health Services
Petra Schulz: family lived experience, loss and advocacy; drug policy reform and decriminalization
Richard Elliot: Syringe distribution in prisons, human rights (French and English speaker)
Shanell Twan: Indigenous, people who use drugs
Stacey Bourque: safer inhalation services (first in North America), harm reduction, supervised consumption services, continuum of care, siOAT, homelessness, addiction, harm reduction supply distribution
Stephanie Lake: cannabis use, cannabis policy, opioids/overdose crisis, drug policy reform.
Steve Rolles: regulation, cannabis regulation in detail, decriminalization, street drug checking and international drug policy
Susan Boyd: women; mothering; pregnancy, history of Canadian drug prohibition and harms of criminal justice approach, heroin assisted treatment and community activism/research

In late August 2018, the Advisory Committee identified the need to have a Stimulus Statement that would be a national Call to Action.

Stimulus 2018 media outputs included:
- Building relationships best way to help addicted youth, advocates say
- Coalition of addiction advocates urge federal government to decriminalize opioids
- Conference calls for decriminalization of possession of illicit drugs
- Families affected by opioid crisis need more support, Alberta prof says
- HIV North team gaining knowledge at conference in Edmonton
- Shay Vanderschaeghe of Stimulus Harm Reduction
- Sympathy for the crack house: Drug houses serve important role, advocates tell Edmonton drug policy conference

Please see the media alerts, media releases, the stimulus Statement and examples of media stories located in Communications Appendix.

Stimulus 2018 Program
Two Stone Design was the company that was contracted to create the Stimulus 2018 logos. Bryan from Two Stone Design’s work and our experience was excellent so we engaged them to design the program. The Stimulus 2018 program was a 16 page three colour magazine available at the Stimulus Conference in either French or English. Two Stone Design worked with Fletcher Printing in Red Deer to have 900 English and 100 French Programs printed. The printer in Red Deer was selected based on their price and their ability to print within our timelines. The Program continues to be available on the Stimulus website.

The photos for the Program was supplied by Nigel Brunsdon. Nigel is an internationally recognized harm reduction photographer who’s Hands Project: These hands reduce harm was generously shared with Stimulus 2018. One specific set of hands was noted in the Opening Plenary. These hands were Dan Bigg’s from the
Chicago Recovery Alliance. Dan was credited as the North American leader of overdose prevention and Naloxone distribution who had supported all of the early programs in Canada. Dan had recently died.

Capturing Stimulus 2018
Stimulus 2018 was able to contract the Rights Reporter Foundation (RRF) to participate. The RRF is a non-profit organization founded by Hungarian activists to advocate for the human rights of vulnerable populations. RRF is internationally renowned for their work documenting harm reduction and drug policy internationally. Péter Sárosi and István Gábor Takács from RRF joined Stimulus 2018 as our official video journalists to document the event and related drug policy issues in Canada. They were able to produce an 8:53 minute video about Stimulus 2018 for the closing Plenary.

Kalisha Mendosa, in addition to being a Stimulus 2018 contractor, through her company Chroma Capture became our official Stimulus 2018 photographer. Kalisha’s work was loaded each evening to the Hall C screens as part of the presentation running through conference breaks.

Recommendations
3. Have media releases out earlier
4. Ensure there are multiple media releases
5. Have more information about Indigenous supports available onsite
6. Have Session Hosts announce where they can get emotional or practical support where needed

Stimulus registrants that were not morning people and therefore not in attendance at the first Plenaries did not hear the morning housekeeping and other important information shared.
7. Identify an additional way to share housekeeping and important information to augment morning announcements. Something visual, onsite like a Stimulus announcements message board may work.

The conference staff did not include anyone that was fluent in french. Kalisha had some French, but did not know any of Quebec’s harm reduction terms. This meant that a lot of communication was late in going out or was not as good as we would have liked.
8. Identify at least one key bilingual harm reductionist who can support the communications work.
9. Have at least one staff/contractor who can translate or communicate in French. To some degree you don’t need a translation of the English content. You need someone who can share the content in French.

In the Stimulus program
10. Include a Notes Section
11. Explain where Lost and Found will be

FINANCIAL
Boyle Street Community Services was the identified banker for this event as they are the parent organization of Streetworks Edmonton.

Stimulus 2018 was able to start planning because the Alberta Harm Reduction Conference planners allowed their seed funds of $110,005.85 to be used for Stimulus 2018. The hope for this seed money was that at the end of Stimulus 2018 it would be returned in full.
Stimulus 2018 registrations were available online via Eventbrite. There was a cost per registration and while some cost more, Eventbrite gave more access to info we needed. Based on experience from previous conferences we worked hard to support people and institutions to only register using the software. People were able to register up to an including the mornings of each day, they were encouraged to do that online onsite while at the registration table. The Eventbrite user fees were passed on to the registrants and are not included in the totals below.

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Early Bird Registration (prior to July 15, 2018)  
Regular Registration  
Presenter Registration  
One Day Registration

Exhibition Hall Booths (which included 1 registration fee)

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Corporate and Government  
Non Governmental Organization

Income from the Eventbrite software was $192,434.88  
Income from product sales was $4,082.25

We worked to keep registration costs as low as possible so as many people as possible can attend. Sponsorship asks was coordinated through the National Advisory Committee with supports from staff.

Contributions were made to the conference scholarship fund could be in the amount of donor’s choosing. The contributions could be allocated to a specific population of people including people from affected populations or people from specific regions of Canada. Donors to this fund will be recognized in the conference program and on our website.

Stimulus 2018 Sponsorship opportunities were broken into levels which were:

- **Friend Level - $5,000** which included 1 conference registration, the sponsor’s name on the conference website with a hyperlink to your website and listing in the conference program
- **Ally Level - $10,000** which included 2 conference registrations, 1 display booth, 1 complimentary delegate bag insert, the sponsor’s name on the conference website with a hyperlink to their website and a listing in the conference program
- **Advocate Level - $15,000** which included 3 conference registrations, 2 display booths, 1 complimentary delegate bag insert, the sponsor’s name on the conference website with a hyperlink to their website, the sponsor’s logo in the conference program, social media mentions (Facebook x 1/month prior to conference and Twitter x 1/month prior to conference)
- **Leader Level - $25,000** which includes 3 conference registrations, 2 display booths, 2 complimentary delegate bag inserts, the sponsor’s logo on the conference website with a hyperlink to their website, the sponsor’s logo in the conference program, social media mentions (Facebook x 1/month prior to conference, Twitter x 1/month prior to conference) and a day 1 and day 2 podium mention
- **Peer Level - $50,000** which includes 4 conference registrations, 2 display booths, 2 complimentary delegate bag inserts, the sponsor’s logo on the conference website with a hyperlink to their website, social media mentions (Facebook x 1/month prior to conference and Twitter x 1/month prior to conference)
conference and daily during the conference, Twitter x 1/month prior to conference and daily during the conference), a day 1 and day 2 podium mention and a half-page ad in the conference program

- **Champion Level - $75,000** which includes 4 conference registrations, 2 display booths, 2 complimentary delegate bag inserts, the sponsor’s logo on the conference website with a hyperlink to their website, social media mentions (Facebook x 1/month prior to conference and during the conference, Twitter x 1/month prior to conference and daily during the conference), a day 1 and day 2 podium mention and a half-page ad in program booklet

- **Transcendent Level - $100,000** which includes 5 conference registrations, 3 display booths, 2 complimentary delegate bag inserts, the sponsor’s logo on the conference website with a hyperlink to their website, social media mentions (Facebook x 1/month prior to conference and daily during the conference, Twitter x 1/month prior to conference and daily during the conference), a day 1 and day 2 Podium mention, their logo on the delegate bag, a banner located in the plenary room (Sponsor to provide) and a full-page color ad in the conference program

Stimulus 2018 received financial support from 3 governmental programs, a pharmaceutical company, 7 businesses and one university based collaboration. Specifically, they were:

- Alberta’s Minister’s Opioid Emergency Response Commission (MOERC): $25,000
- Aurora Cannabis: $25,000 of which $5,000 was designated to Indigenous Welcoming Room and $5,000 to scholarships
- Alberta Health Services: $15,000 for Speaker sponsorship
- Canopy: $10,000
- Stevens: $10,000
- First Step Health Solutions Inc.: $10,000
- CRISM: $8,000, split between nodes
- BC Centre for Disease Control: $7,500 of which $2,500 was designated to scholarship for British Columbian people who use drugs
- PAMCO and Global Protection: $7,500
- Omega Labs: $5,000

Unsuccesful applications or requests for support included:

- Governmental, including First Nations Inuit Health, Community Action Iniative, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec, Service lutte contre les ITSS, Alberta Culture Community Initiatives Program Project-Based Grant, Government of Canada: Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP) Canadian Heritage Grant-Interpretation/Translation, Francophone Secretariat Grant
- Canadian businesses, including Air Canada West Jet, Tilray
- Harm Reduction related, including Best Buy Medical, Pegasus, Neo 360, Open Society Foundation, MAC AIDS
- Alberta centric organizations, including Max Bell Foundation, Suncor Energy, Husky Energy, Canadian Natural Resources Limited

Gifts in Kind included:

- Volunteer hours at the event was quantified as $8,531.25
- Committee member’s time
- ACCH provided the use of their teleconferencing
- Boyle Street Community Services donated a remarkable and tremendous amount of staff time, including but not limited to time from:
Recommendations
12. The cost of holding Stimulus 2018 included more than just scholarships but with many 2018 donors want to give money for scholarships the related costs (e.g. venue, coordination, travel agent) rose. Work to keep everything in balance. Account for the cost to the event for each scholarship.

Registration fees
13. Continue to have an early bird rate
14. Implement a student rate
15. Implement a day rate for each of the days
16. Market all of the rates as soon as possible
17. Increase registration fees moderately

HARM REDUCTION AT STIMULUS 2018
The staff and committee members involved in planning Stimulus 2018 had a long history and range of experience in planning and attending harm reduction and drug policy conferences. However, because of the increased toxicity of Western Canada’s drug supply Stimulus 2018 was going to have additional dynamics and challenges.

Harm reduction services at a harm reduction and drug policy conference are not new, but the depth and range of services available at Stimulus 2018 were increased wherever possible.

Connecting with People Who Use Drugs
The Canadian Association of People who Use Drugs (CAPUD), Alberta Addicts Who Educate and Advocate Regularly (AAWEAR) and As it Is were all included in the Advisory and Ad-Hoc Committees. Additionally, a small sub-committee of a member from each organization and the Conference Coordinator met to discuss specific onsite harm reduction strategies and consult on areas of concern as necessary. Conversations included a local brief, hotel liason, per diem coordination and other related issues.

A local person not directly affiliated with Stimulus wrote a one page ‘YEG Drug Guide October 2018’ brief that was targetted to people who use drugs conference goers who were new to Edmonton. The brief included a price list, harm reduction messages and pictures.

Stimulus found value in the YEG Drug Guide October 2018 and worked to copy and distribute it to CAPUD, AAWEAR, people staying at the Coast Edmonton Plaza and other Stimulus 2018 attendees. The guide was available in the Stimulus office and was well received. Please see the samples located in the Harm Reduction at Stimulus 2018 Appendix.
Harm Reduction Supplies
Through a partnership with Stevens Company Limite and the ACCH, Stimulus 2018 was able to order a range of harm reduction supplies to be drop shipped to the Shaw Conference Centre. In planning for this order, Stevens was able to identify per capita the range of harm reduction supplies being distributed across Canada. The Conference Coordinator was able to order supplies that most people were able to access in their home communities. Additionally, Streetworks ensured that their local stock of harm reduction supplies was fullsome during this time as back up if needed.

Although not all of the supplies ordered were received, Streetworks was able to access their stock to provide us with the missing items.

Harm reduction supply distribution in Edmonton was augmented by harm reduction supply distribution onsite at the Stimulus 2018 Overdose Prevention Site (OPS). Alberta harm reduction organizations were able to absorb unused supplies back into their programs. No naloxone kits were returned to AHS.

Overdose Prevention
In February 2017 at a national meeting on scaling up supervised consumption programming they had a prominent speaker with significant drug knowledge and experience overdose and die on his first night in British Columbia (BC).

Albertan Stimulus 2018 planners knew that people coming to Alberta from BC would find drugs that were less strong than they were used to. Additionally, the range of drugs available would be different than their home communities.

Through partnership with Omega Labs, First Step Health Solutions and Alberta Health Services (AHS) Stimulus was able to order and drop ship 1,500 nalaxone kits to the Shaw Conference Centre.

Naloxone was available in the case of an emergency at the OPS, Stimulus Office, Exhibition Hall and at the Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel front desk (the CAPUD and AAWEAR host hotel). Overdose prevention training and distribution of nalaxone was held on the breaks in the Exhibition Hall and when the OPS was open.

During Stimulus overdose prevention training and naloxone distribution was increased to include the Omega Labs and First Step Health Solutions booth as they had substantial skill and access to train and distribute whenever the Exhibition Hall was open. This decision was made onsite in response to the identified need.

As far as we know there were no complications with overdose prevention and response onsite or at the Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel.
Overdose Prevention Site
The Stimulus 2018 Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) had 2 booths available as well as drug testing and naloxone training and distribution. First aid, including emergency distribution of nalaxone was also available in the OPS. The OPS application was applied for through Alberta Health and granted 2 days ahead of the event. Stimulus 2018 believe that this is likely the first event – specific OPS in the country.

Arthur Sherren from the Boyle Street SCS was the full time onsite OPS coordinator. He worked collaboratively with the team of OPS volunteers and the Drug Testing volunteers to assemble and run the succesful OPS. Streetworks in their coordination of the OPS borrowed from their current programming to augment and fully stock the remaining materials needed to host the OPS. As well, the Edmonton SCS sites were well advertized.

Chloe Sage was able to coordinate the use of and transport the ANKORS Fourier-transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy. The FTIR spectroscopy took infrared pictures of the drug samples provided and compared them to its database.

Stimulus Conference Drop
In the Alberta experience the emotional drop post a conference or event can be substantial. In preparation for this the National Advisory Committee and the Alberta harm reduction organizations worked to educate people on this and encourage people to prepare. Conference drop was discussed with participants from the podium during Stimulus 2018. We believe, the post Stimulus 2018 drop was larger than expected.

Recommendations
18. Hire harm reductionists to event plan, not event planners. There needs to be a deep understanding of how to work well to address the issues for people who use substances and enhance their comfort and safety
19. Increase connection with regional and local groups of people who use drugs across Canada (e.g. Halifax Area Network of Drug Using People, Méta d’Âme)
20. Continue to liaise with local peer groups and other key contacts so that the best street information can be obtained
21. Increase sharing of information on Conference Drop and how to manage it

Overdose Prevention Site
22. Keep drug checking demonstrations separate from the Overdose Prevention Site
23. Manage tourist traffic so that the confidentiality of the people using the services is retained.

HUMAN RESOURCES – STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS
As was the standard Alberta process, the host organization would identify a staffing model that would work for them. As with the previous Alberta Harm Reduction Conference’s hosted by Streetworks, the staff and resources of Streetworks and their home organization Boyle Street Community Services would be part of the implementation of Stimulus 2018.

Marliss Taylor engaged Shay J. Vanderschaeghe as the Conference Coordinator in November 2017. Shay, like Marliss had experience with planning, implementing, evaluating and hosting 13 Alberta Harm Reduction Conferences. Shay telecommunicated from her home office in Red Deer, Alberta 1.5 hours south of Edmonton. Shay sustained her other full-time job throughout the planning and holding Stimulus 2018.
It became quite clear early on that between Marliss and Shay’s full lives that there would be the need for more staff or contractors as they got closer to the event. Tia Smith, a part-time employee with Streetworks with 2015 Alberta Harm Reduction Conference 2015 experience was engaged in December 2017 to support Shay and take the lead in scholarships and local Edmonton coordination where needed. Ashley Robertson, a former Streetworks employee, now living in Calgary was engaged in June 2018 to collaborate with Tia in managing the scholarship and related travel processes.

Kareen Lambert and Kalisha Mendosa, based in Red Deer, began as contractors in July 2018 and August 2018 respectively. Although Kareen and Kalisha did not have front-line harm reduction experience, between them they had skills in communications, website management, journalism, marketing and volunteer coordination and could work in tandem in Shay’s home office in Red Deer.

All of the Stimulus staff had other full or part – time jobs and so we were lucky that people’s work for the most part was clear or became clear. The staff teams gelled and with only some slight confusion were able to implement a successful Stimulus. All staff were hired as hourly staff for Streetworks and accounted for their hours accordingly.

Because staffing was organically created some of the work processes were also created on the fly. Pieces that were complex included how to access other staffs work in real time through google documents and sheets, electronic filling (i.e. emails) and who to cc or bcc and when.

Volunteers
The Stimulus volunteers were almost entirely registered conference participants. The types of Stimulus 2018 volunteer roles included:

- Evaluation
- Exhibition Hall
- Free Hugs
- Information Table
- Overdose Prevention Site
- Plenary Support
- Registration - Presenter
- Registration - General
- Room Host
- Runners
- Swag Bag Stuffers

Free Hugs volunteers were the only new volunteer role from the previous Alberta Harm Reduction conferences. These volunteers wore stickers on their shirts or name tags offering free hugs to other delegates. These volunteers were instructed that all hugs should be mutually consented and that they were welcome to attend the conference as planned. So many people loved the concept of Free Hugs and this volunteer role that we had to print additional stickers for the influx of self-identified Free Hugs volunteers. One volunteer remarked that the hugs he received from this volunteer role had made a substantial positive impact to his health.

99 volunteers donated 341.25 hours of time to Stimulus 2018. This gift in kind is quantified as $8,531.25

Recommendations
24. Create and implement a plan to increase staff as needed
25. In order to increase communication between staff, hold staff meetings
26. As recommended by a number of participants, identify a method to provide child care onsite.

27. Ensure that there are volunteers to give out Free Hugs at subsequent Stimulus conferences.

28. In supporting people who are triggered by what they have seen, heard or learned at Stimulus, have more people available to respond.

29. Have Indigenous people introduce the Indigenous presenters.

Volunteer management and registration management are each full-time positions during Stimulus.

30. Onsite, have a designated staff for volunteer management and for registration management.

31. We experienced dramatic perceived name badge loss. The primary people who initially alphabetized the name badges and the onsite volunteers who worked to re-alphabetize were not successful. An amazing amount of new name badges needed to be made onsite. They were all found later, having been mis-alphabetized.

32. Have people alphabetize well and have the work checked before the event.

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Scholarship Ad Hoc Committee members were Shanell Twan from AAWEAR; Vanessa L. Constantineau from AQPSUD; Donald MacPherson from the CDPC; Janak Bajgai from HIV Community Link; Rob Milner from Safeworks; Marliss Taylor, Tia Smith, Shay Vanderschaeghe from Streetworks; and Stacey Carmichael from Turning Point. Although the Scholarship Committee was struck, it only met once with 4 contacts.

Timelines for the Scholarship Committee were negatively impacted by the time it took to approve, notify and confirm abstracts/sessions and related speakers. This led the process to be changed and managed internally by two Stimulus staff, Tia Smith and Ashley Robertson under the supervision of Marliss Taylor. The selection of scholarship recipients and related budget and travel management was linked to the outcomes of the Abstract and Content Committee in addition to supporting participation for people with lived experience followed by a broad section of people from across Canada.

The Stimulus 2018 application was a fillable form only available through the Stimulus 2018 website. Stimulus 2018 worked where possible, to encourage organizations that serve people who use drugs to support them in accessing the form. Stimulus 2018 received 287 scholarship applications.

Tia and Ashley worked collaboratively to ensure the Scholarship applicants received notice of their application outcomes and then moved on to support their registration, travel, per diem and accommodation needs. 133 people received scholarship support that included registration and all or a portion of accommodation and travel to attend Stimulus 2018 for a projected cost of $44,023. Some scholarship recipients...
would not have the income to pay for their meals and other incidentals throughout the conference. A per diem rate, sometimes called a stipend was collaboratively set at $25/ half day with CAPUD and AAWEAR. The per diem was provided to 31 scholarship recipients who identified as needing it. The per diem was dispensed in cash daily by Tia or Ashley in the Stimulus 2018 office.

Tia and Ashley also coordinated Stimulus 2018 registration, travel and accommodation for:
- 75 Plenary and Session speakers which was projected to cost $38,684
- 6 French/English Interpreters
- 6 Stimulus 2018 staff and contractors
- 4 Advisory Committee members not included in other areas of this list
- 2 Rights Reporter Foundation staff from Hungary
- 2 Film Festival Curators

Recommendations
33. Work more closely with home agencies/organizations to help organize per diems.
34. Possibly put per diem as an option on the Scholarship Application Form
35. Scholarships for professionals/staff people can be partial, rather than full scholarships

SESSIONS
The approved abstracts led to 78 Stimulus sessions. The number of sessions and their lengths dictated the number of rooms (called Salons) Stimulus would need. Their order in the program was …

The projected participation in a session informed which Salons it could be placed in. It’s location in one of those Salons in the schedule was dictated by remembering to:
- Accommodate room set up requests
- Prevent double booking and over scheduling of presenters
- Prevent a session with a related topic being scheduled at the same time
- Availability of presenters or key participants (i.e. Minister of Health)
- Put sessions on the same topic in an appropriate order (e.g. basic vs advanced content)
- Flow of each day, including interplay between Plenary and Satellite events
- Other issues identified including specific requests from presenters

Session rooms all held a laptop, projector, screen, a water station, garbage and recycling. The chair set ups were primarily in Theatre Style with Rounds Style in three salons (3, 5 and 6).
Each session was able to change the room set up to meet their needs with the participants and volunteers resetting it in time for the next session. The Shaw set up chart is available in the Sessions Appendix.

Volunteer hosts supported each session which included land recognition the first morning session each day, liaising with the presenter(s), welcoming the participants, time management, introduction of the session and presenter and responding to any issues or questions that arrive. In the session rooms that had simultaneous interpretation they would also identify a microphone runner and inform them of how the interpretation worked with the microphones in the room.

Along with the 109 abstracts identified, five Plenary Sessions were recognized and they were placed within the conference schedule each half day of the 2.5 day conference. The Plenaries, in order were: Setting the Stage; Decriminalize Us!; Cannabis Regulation and the Future of Drug Policy; Pushing the Boundaries; and Where do we go from here? Between the sessions and plenaries 179 people presented at Stimulus 2018: Drugs Policy and Practice in Canada. We want to honour a scheduled presenter, Grant Schlotter from Victoria, BC who passed away on August 21st, 2018.

Stimulus had two areas to display poster presentations that were located in a high traffic area on each floor of the centre. On October 4th at lunch time the posters authors were available to speak to the conference participants. Please see the samples located in the Sessions Appendix.

There were 14 abstracts identified as art, multi-media or theatre. Unfortunately, the costs of some of these pieces were a significant factor as many had either a high number of participants in need of travel assistance or additional fees attached to their participation. There were 3 art, multi-media or theatre abstracts approved, they were:

- **Positive Resistance Community Quilt**
  The Positive Resistance Community Quilt was a project infused with positive energy to counter all the negative rhetoric about people who use drugs. This multi-generational, multi-cultural, “work in progress” on display was a way for people to take positive action, commemorate individuals, learn about harm reduction and express hope for the future through the painting of quilt squares.

- **InfoScreen Project**
  The InfoScreen Project was a large 2 monitor display outside of Hall C that used technology as an innovative mechanism for the dissemination of fact-based harm reduction information and the drug checking results to attendees of Shambhala Music Festival for the past 3 years. The InfoScreen Project installation was also linked to a session and a satellite event that spoke to their work.
Queer Coping Mechanisms.
The Queer Coping Mechanisms was an exhibition of workshopped art from previous and the current workshop for anyone who identifies as queer or trans or as having experience with drug use, mental health issues, addictions, trauma, and recovery.

Recommendations
36. List poster presentations in the Stimulus program
37. In the envelopes for volunteer hosts include the contact information for onsite technical support
38. Plan for more than the usual AV needs in regards to cost (eg Info Screen)

SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION
Simultaneous French-English interpretation was provided in the 2 largest Stimulus 2018 spaces, Hall C and Salon 4. The sessions placed in those rooms included all of the Plenary Sessions and workshops that were expected to have the most participants and/or the most French speaking participants. There was no translation provided to the Stimulus Satellite Events.

Stimulus worked with L. Craig Pollock Consultants Inc. to provide simultaneous interpretation. Craig worked with Tia to identify what our translation needs were and coordinated the 6 contractors to fly in for the conference, as Alberta does not have a robust interpretation pool to draw from. The needed audio equipment was provided by Freeman AV a subcontractor of the Shaw Conference Centre. As with all interpretation the session participants must speak into the microphones in order for the interpretation to occur. Where there was issues with microphone non-compliance other session participants supported use of the microphones in real time.

Through the Conference many francophone speakers and participants chose to not speak extensively in French. Therefore in preparation for the Final Plenary where we knew interpretation would be necessary we had to coach participants to get translation devices. This led to a substantial back up for the signing out of equipment and their return.

Recommendations
39. Work with the vendor providing the head sets to ensure that headsets can be distributed in an efficient manner. May need volunteer help

TRANSLATION
Translation was a challenge for the Alberta anglophones involved in working as Stimulus 2018 staff and contractors. The staff worked and communicated in English wherever possible. Initially we have engaged Pakatra Inc. to work as the conference translator. When Pakatra identified that they would not be available to work in the weeks leading up to the conference we worked swiftly to identify an alternative vendor.

Nicole Giguère from Advisory Translation Services was able to manage our content along with some of her peers in work heavy times. Nicole proved to be invaluable in not only translation, but in proof editing the French program.
Both Lynne Belle-Isle and Julie-Soleil Meeson originally provided translation support to the staff and contractors. As Lynne transitioned to a new position and off of the National Advisory Committee, Julie-Soleil became a pivotal team member in managing ongoing content and communications support. A key area of support was in the translation of drug related slang into French or English. The Stimulus staff eventually realized that often what they needed wasn’t translation, but rather french language communication of content. We heard a number of comments from our French participants that indicated were happy with interpretatuion/translation efforts.

**Recommendations**

There were no translation recommendations that were not included in other parts of this report.

**VALUE ADDED PIECES**

In addition to the Stimulus 2018 sessions and plenaries available there was a range of other events and activities that added value to the Stimulus 2018 experience. These value added pieces included an onsite film festival, an Indigenous welcoming room, an exhibition hall, posters display, satellite events, a space to honour our lost, persistent resistance- a living scrapbook, emotional care, the Streetworks Supervised Consumption Service tours and the supper club.

**Conference Totes**

As with most conferences there is an assortment of material that needed to be distributed to the participants. Working with the people providing the materials we had them ship them directly to the Shaw Conference Centre. A large group of volunteers met the night before Stimulus 2018 started and compiled them all.

The tote’s shape was practical and reusable and would accommodate packing groceries home. The design on the totes was uniform with 3 colours available (light beige, black and purple) and bright pink printing of the Stimulus logo without year branding. The totes were made of a washable strong canvas that would be useable long term. Stimulus 2018 ordered 1,500 totes with the left over totes in preparation for the next Stimulus conference.

When participants or speakers registered onsite they could select their tote colour.

**Emotional Care**

Recognizing that the content and conversations at Stimulus 2018 can be heavy, two supportive listening volunteers were seconded from Boyle Street Community Services. Rohan Dave and Mahrukh Babar were available on October 3rd and 4th to connect with delegates to debrief and chat. They were available at the end of each day of the conference for 2 hours.

**Exhibition Hall**

The Exhibition Hall included 26 booths, the uptake on the booths meant that although initially we had planned to use only Salon 8, we needed to expand into Salon 9 as well. We began renting Salon 8 and 9 on October 2, 2018 to facilitate set up for the vendors. The Exhibition Hall hours were 8 am – 5:30 on October 3rd and 4th and 8-10:30 am on October 5th.
Exhibition Hall booths were included in the recognition packages and these were the most subscribed. The rates to purchase booths were:

- NGO Exhibition Booth (without a Stimulus 2018 Registration): $125
- NGO Exhibition Booth (with a Stimulus 2018 Registration): $450
- Exhibition Booth - Corporate and Government (includes 1 Stimulus 2018 Registration): $2,500

The non-profit booths were hosted by CAPUD, CATIE, Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy, CDPC, CRISM, 2nd Floor Women's Recovery Centre, Metis Nation of Alberta and Streetworks. The corporate and government booths included Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services (2), Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy First Step Health/Omega, Neo 360, One-Use Harm Reduction Products, PAMCO/Global Protection and Stevens. One booth was designated for overdose prevention and naloxone distribution during the conference breaks which was managed by Streetworks staff. Stimulus 2018 was able to provide Boyle Street Community Services artists a place to display and sell their art. These spaces were initially planned for 4 booths, but onsite expanded to 5 booths. Last minute booth cancellations included the University of Ottawa and the Boyle Street Community Services Bank.

Located within the Exhibition Hall was a concession that was managed by the Shaw Conference Centre staff. The Conference Coordinator was able to select from a larger menu on what was available. The items available included options for vegans, vegetarians and people with nut or gluten restrictions. One of the pieces that was a hit was taco in a bag, pictured here. Taco in a bag is a standard food item at Pow Wows in Alberta and for its ease in eating. The concession hours included before, during and after lunch time.

Also located in the Exhibition Hall was a Stimulus logo backdrop for media and social media opportunities as well as a small seating and meeting area.

**Film Festival**

Stimulus 2018 planners took their experience from attending international harm reduction and drug policy conferences and added a Stimulus 2018 Film Festival. We were lucky to engage Shannon Riley and Cookie Bain from Vancouver as volunteers to plan and implement the film festival. Shannon and Cookie were connected into the community of advocates and film makers who were producing films and shorts. Coordination of the Film Festival was almost entirely independent of the greater Stimulus 2018 planning. The Film Festival ran the afternoons of October 3rd and 4th.

Conference participants had the opportunity to view feature films and shorts that highlight the experiences of harm reduction and drug policy. In some cases film makers were available to join the festival to participate in a question and answer session.

The Stimulus 2018 Film Festival schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wednesday, October 3rd, 2018</th>
<th>Thursday, October 4th, 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:00pm Indian Horse</td>
<td>12:15pm The Stairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:40pm Q&amp;A with Filmmaker</td>
<td>1:50pm Q&amp;A with Filmmaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:10pm Strong Medicine</td>
<td>2:10pm SACY Fentanyl Film</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2:40pm Break
2:50pm **Diabetes and Harm Reduction**
3:00pm **Our Harm Reduction Stories: Working Toward Healthier Outcomes**
3:10pm **Using Urine Drug Test Strips as a Harm Reduction Tool**
3:15pm **Harm Reduction and Abstinence Based Treatment ‘Bridging the Gap’**
3:20pm **Harm Reduction**
3:50pm Break
4:05pm **Safer Sex Work**
4:10pm **Safer is Better: For Marah**
4:15pm **Safer is Better: For Amber**
4:20pm **Safer is Better: For Andrew**
4:25pm **Bevel Up – Drugs, Users, and Outreach Nursing**
5:10pm Q&A
5:30pm End

2:15pm **The Safer Stroll**
2:35pm Break
2:50pm **Naloxone “Breaking the Stigma”**
3:00pm **Taking Care of Each Other: A short film series and teaching tool about Indigenous Harm Reduction**
3:10pm **Using Urine Drug Test Strips as a Harm Reduction Tool**
3:15pm **Harm Reduction and Abstinence Based Treatment ‘Bridging the Gap’**
3:20pm **Harm Reduction**
3:50pm Break
4:15pm **Better Harm Reduction with Heart**
4:25pm **WAHRS – The Healthcare Experiences of Aboriginal peoples living in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside**
4:40pm **A Day in the Life: The World of Humans Who Use Drugs**
5:05pm Q&A
5:25pm End

**Honouring our Lost**
The harm reduction and drug policy movement continues to lose many people to the War on Drugs and drug poisoning. This space was an opportunity to create, connect and support one another as we remembered and honoured our lost.

**Indigenous Welcoming Room**
This intimate space was an opportunity to gather and learn about Treaty 6 lands and the Metis Nation in the region. Smudging was available throughout the conference with tea and bannock available if participants wanted to join the circle. The bannock provided by the Shaw Conference Centre was disliked as it wasn’t like real bannock.

**Persistent Resistance- a living scrapbook; 10 years of pushing back and saving lives** was a curated piece that was envisioned and led by people from AIDS Vancouver Island, with Shane Calder being the lead person connected into Stimulus. Below is the background and marketing of the scrapbook along with 2 pictures from Persistent Resistance.

Harm Reduction, and the resistance to the war on drugs, takes a myriad of forms. Lifesaving Peer to Peer interventions, innovative programming, street nursing and other healthcare services, and HR distribution form much of the back bone of how Harm Reduction is produced in Canada. Without the rallies, protests, forums and marches,
however, we would quickly find ourselves without the critical expression of outrage and solidarity that has slowly but surely moved Harm Reduction ever slowly forward. Possibly unique to Harm Reduction, many of those who find themselves engaged in saving lives during the day, also find themselves at night planning the protests and the resistance to the war on drugs. We are both sides of the same coin.

The last 10 years have seen some huge gains and some very hard losses; all the while harm reductionists have persistent in pushing the conversation forward. With the grief and the losses we’ve experienced, it is critical that we take the time to reflect on our hard work and revel in the achievements of others. We recognize that our works has taken many forms, and this ‘living Scrap book’ is our collective tale of our how we have persisted, through our own grief and rage, to end senseless death and to honour those who have come before us.

Please bring what you have in your archives. This living scrap book of posters, photos, leaflets, flyers and program statements was installed in real time on the walls of our largest room, Hall C.

Please see the outcomes of Persistent Resistance in the Value Added Pieces Appendix

Satellite Events
As was the process with the Alberta Harm Reduction Conferences community organizations were given the opportunity to hold complimentary satellite events to Stimulus 2018. There was a range of satellite events before and during Stimulus. The satellite events were marketed by the convenors and also on the Stimulus website. Stimulus did not financially support people coming in early for these events, nor the cost of audio visual or catering of the events. However, Stimulus did absorb the costs of the banquet rooms for the events. The Stimulus Conference Coordinator coordinated scheduling to try and prevent conflict with other events and linked the satellite event planners with the Shaw Conference Centre where needed.

The Satellite Events included:

- September 4
  - eduCATIE+ Hep C Basics blended learning course convened by CATIE

- October 1 - 2
  - Canadian Association of People Who Use Drugs (CAPUD) Annual General Meeting (by invitation only) convened by CAPUD
  - CATIE Programming Dialogue (by invitation only) convened by CATIE

- October 2
Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) research meeting (by invitation only) convened by CRISM

Pregnancy and Substance Use: Emerging Policy and Practice Trends II convened by Streetworks

Hepatitis C in Primary Care & Drug and Alcohol Settings: Treating hepatitis C in people who inject drugs convened by INHSU

Harm Reduction Nursing Across Canada: Shared Experiences and Advancing Practice convened by HRNU

National Drug Checking Meeting (open to current and prospective members only) convened by a National collaborate of organizations involved in Drug Checking

Drug Checking Messaging Workshop convened by a National collaborate of organizations involved in Drug Checking

Introduction to CRISM, followed by a social mixer for people with lived experience hosted by CRISM (open to all with lived experience of substance use) convened by CRISM

October 3

Free Tour: Streetworks Supervised Consumption Services convened by Streetworks

Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy Annual General Meeting convened by CSSDP

An interactive and supportive Sharing Circle introducing Wellbriety convened by Stimulus 2018

Alberta Community Council on HIV (ACCH) Annual General Meeting convened by ACCH

Alberta Community Council on HIV (ACCH) Hosted Meet n Greet convened by ACCH

October 4

How can communities support families affected by the opioid crisis? convened by Moms Stop the Harm

Free Tour: Streetworks Supervised Consumption Services convened by Streetworks

Stimulus 2018 Shopping

Stimulus 2018 connected with Audreys Books, an independent bookstore in Edmonton and engaged them as Edmontonian planners had in the past. Stimulus 2018 provided Audreys Books with a dedicated banquet room that they filled with the books and related material for sale. The collection Audreys Books curated for sale at Stimulus represented not only the authors participating in the conference but all of the themes, issues and topics included in the Stimulus program as well. The bookstore was well utilized and both Audreys Books and conference goers found great value in this opportunity.
Also available onsite was the Stimulus Store. The store was entirely coordinated by ACCH staff and was open throughout Stimulus 2018. Stimulus 2018 planners ordered Stimulus branded t-shirts and hoodies using the logo without the year so that the leftover clothing could be transferred to the next Stimulus.

In addition to the Stimulus material for sale there was also stock provided by other organizations and people participating. At the end of the conference participants could connect with the ACCH staff and receive their unsold stock and income.

**Boyle Street Community Services' Supervised Consumption Service tours**

In preparation for what inevitably happens when people travel to a conference for work, delegates schedule or pop into see interesting and innovative local programs. In order to manage this influx 2 tours were scheduled of the Boyle Street supervised consumption service (SCS). The tours were held at 5:20 pm on October 3rd and 4th. They were free to attend, but pre-registration was necessary via eventbrite. Stimulus 2018 rented the Boyle Street Community Services van to shuttle people to and from the Shaw Conference Centre. The tours quickly filled up with 31 people in total participated in the tours.

**Supper Club**

Streetworks staff collaborated to create a listing of recommended restaurants and cafes with a range of price points in walking distance. In addition Stimulus 2018 created space for people to sign up for opportunities to network over dinner through a white board close to the information desk.

Please see more details located in the Value Added Pieces Appendix.

**Recommendations**

There are extensive benefits of complimentary events happening at Stimulus.

40. Continue to provide Satellite opportunities.
41. Encourage more National meetings and events
42. Secure enough funding to support the Satellite event costs when needed.
43. Work with the caterers to ensure the food is culturally relevant (i.e. bannock)
44. The Stimulus Store was set up with the staff behind tables that had the stock on them. This was not adequate to prevent loss and complications. Set up the Stimulus Store to ensure that smaller stock items (i.e. buttons) are secure.

**VENDORS**

In order to plan, implement and evaluate Stimulus 2018: Drugs, Policy and Practice in Canada we needed a range of vendors. The engaged vendors included:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact and City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audreys Books</td>
<td>Onsite Bookstore</td>
<td>Sharon Budnarchuk, Edmonton, AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Daddy</td>
<td>Domain registration</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Leonard</td>
<td>Evaluation Consultant</td>
<td>Christine Leonard, Edmonton, AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Craig Pollick</td>
<td>French/English Interpretation</td>
<td>Craig Pollick, Ottawa, ON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakatra Inc</td>
<td>French/English Translation</td>
<td>Katherine Aerts, Calgary, AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory Translation</td>
<td>French/English Translation</td>
<td>Nicole Giguère, Calgary, AB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In two cases we discontinued our relationship with a vendor, they were the Hyatt Hotel and Pakarta Inc.

Stimulus 2018 worked with a selection of hotels to provide room rates for delegates with an array of price points. Where possible the room rates included a complimentary breakfast.

Chateau Lacombe
✓ Starting at $139/night ~ Full hot breakfast buffet ~ 9 minute walk ~ Parking $20/day

Coast Edmonton Plaza (AAWEAR and CAPUD host hotel)
✓ Starting at $129/night ~ Full hot breakfast buffet ~ 15 minute walk ~ Parking $20.95/day

Comfort Inn & Suites
✓ Starting at $100/night ~ breakfast buffet ~ 15 minute walk ~ Parking $5/day

The Sutton Place Hotel
✓ Starting at $129/night ~ 11 Minute Walk ~ Parking $31/ay

Recommendations
1. Consider providing transportation options to people who can’t afford public transportation

VENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Stone Design</td>
<td>Graphic Design</td>
<td>Bryan Heck, Salt Spring, BC</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chateau Lacombe</td>
<td>Host Hotel</td>
<td>Sherri Schurer, Edmonton, AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westin Hotels &amp; Resorts</td>
<td>Host Hotel</td>
<td>Janice Huber, Edmonton, AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort Inn &amp; Suites</td>
<td>Host Hotel</td>
<td>Gary Singh, Edmonton, AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast Edmonton Plaza</td>
<td>Host Hotel &amp; Satellite location</td>
<td>Monica Zeniuk, Edmonton, AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chroma Capture Photography</td>
<td>Photographer</td>
<td>Kalisha Mendosa, Red Deer, AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fletcher Printing</td>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>Red Deer, AB</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Minutemen Press</td>
<td>Printer</td>
<td>Red Deer, AB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eventbrite</td>
<td>Registration software</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shamrock Sportswear</td>
<td>Design &amp; Printing: bags, clothing</td>
<td>Dean Wrobel, Edmonton, AB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniglove Aquavacs Travel</td>
<td>Travel Agent</td>
<td>Julie Charon, Ottawa, ON</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sign Up</td>
<td>Volunteer coordination software</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unlimited BS</td>
<td>Website Manager</td>
<td>Brenda Sargent, Red Deer, AB</td>
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</table>

Shaw Conference Centre specific contractors and staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shaw Conference Centre</td>
<td>Event Manager</td>
<td>Oksana Fedko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaw Conference Centre</td>
<td>Sales Manager</td>
<td>Monica Reyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeman Audiovisual</td>
<td>Furniture and Audiovisual</td>
<td>Simon Hollington-Sawyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GES Canada</td>
<td>Exhibition Hall set up, Shipping and Receiving</td>
<td>Tod Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showtech Power &amp; Lighting</td>
<td>Exhibition Hall power and lighting</td>
<td>Chris Weder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marliss Taylor took the lead in identifying possible venues within Edmonton. Through her research she identified whether they could meet the conference’s needs. The Shaw Conference Centre became the logical location for Stimulus 2018: Drugs, Policy and Practice in Canada and is the largest Edmonton venue of its kind. Negotiations happened in the spring and summer of 2017 by Marliss. The engagement began to include Shay Vanderschaeghe as she began working on the event. The Shaw gave us a designated liaison Oksana Fedko, who provided invaluable information and support.

One drawback of such a substantial venue is the range of sub-contracting organizations working onsite. Staff routinely had troubles figuring out which Shaw vendor was responsible, who the contact was at that time of day and then finding their phone number. Luckily, Oksana was able to direct us as needed.

Relationship Building
As harm reduction and policy work is marinated in relationship building and education it became a routine part of Marliss and Shay’s role to not just simply ask or answer questions. They took the time to explain the reasoning behind the requests for something to happen a certain way and what information our answers were based on.

On October 1st, 2018 Marliss and Shay attended a pre event meeting that included all of the Shaw department and sub-contractor leaders. This meeting was an opportunity to ask and answer any questions as well as meet the key contacts and continue to identify which pieces of work was completed by whom.

Working with security is always an important part of the conference planning. Where possible we worked to explain how we can work together to provide a safe event as well as prevent conflicts between our registrants and the Shaw staff and sub-contractors.

The Shaw staff were exceptional. We found that they were entirely a pleasure to work with and would recommend them as a future host for related events. They continued to show a willingness to learn and adapt to issues as they arose.

Connecting with staff included:

- Providing feedback to a tall male security guard about the impact of triggers, uniforms and body positioning on people with lived experience.
- Staff reminded security that we were available to respond to any troubles onsite whether they were our registrant or not.
- Briefing security that our conference participants are advocates and our vision of appropriate service levels is a routine part of our work and that we are comfortable addressing them in real time.
- Explaining why and how we wanted soft fruit like grapes instead of apples on breaks.
- Responding onsite to drug debris before Stimulus 2018 started.
- Training cleaning staff on sharps safety.
- Explaining the value of gender inclusive bathrooms.
- Emergency access to kleenex in the Closing Plenary.
- Welcoming them into the session(s) on harm reduction at EDM events.
The Shaw is one of the key venues for Edmonton Electronic Dance Music (EDM) events. The Conference Coordinator was able to link pieces they were speaking to that would be relative to those events (i.e. security methods, gender neutral bathrooms). We welcomed Shaw staff to the Stimulus sessions that included EDM themes so they could increase their knowledge and capacity. Thoughout Stimulus 2018 we were able to foster a strong relationship between Indigo, the local EDM harm reduction organization and the Shaw staff. The Shaw staff and contractors appeared to find value in the strategic thoughtfulness of harm reductionists in event planning.

Gender Neutral Washrooms
Working to create inclusive space, the Conference Coordinator identified the East washrooms to be re-signed as gender neutral. The Shaw Conference Centre worked with the Conference Coordinator to create appropriate signage that would allow gender diverse people to have a welcoming washroom to access. The Shaw Conference Centre was able to make their signs reusable for subsequent events including Electronic Dance Music events and Homeless Connect.

Stimulus Office
The Stimulus Office was a planned space where staff could work and volunteers could be coordinated out of. It was located centrally on the primary floor of the event. It became clear that a multi-function printer would be needed onsite but based on the cost of renting a machine, it would be more financially sound to purchase a new machine which is what we did.

The office became a hub for staff, volunteers, media contacts, Rights Reporter Foundation gear and charging, information booth, name tags, a mini fridge available for breast milk and formula, registration problems and presenter coordination.

Please see more information in the Venue Appendix.

Recommendations
45. Have a coat, luggage and bag check, perhaps a charity ‘by donation’
46. Although initially planned, charging stations were cut as part of the budget management process. Have electronic charging stations
47. Separate out the volunteer coordination work out of the general office and into a close but separate space
48. Clearly deliniate where only staff are allowed to be