

Another successful year in the Overdose Prevention Site ends as we continue to provide a safe, comfortable space for our guests to access injection services, obtain harm reduction supplies and get referrals for other services. We continue to encourage our guests to access drug testing services to help identify harmful components in their substances. Drug testing services provide vital information about the local drug supply and increases awareness for the members in our community.

We have seen an increase in the use of the site over the year, even as inhalation becomes a more common practice among our users. We continue to supply new pipes for this purpose as well as supplies for our injection users in Nelson and the surrounding areas.

Benzodiazepines continue to be present in the local drug supply and often, in combination with opioids, can cause our guests to nod off in the space. In this case we provide a safe space for our guests to rest in a safe, monitored space where they can be assured that their belongings will be there for them when they wake up.

We have yet to see the significant presence of Xylazine, a tranquilizer that has been surfacing in much of the East coast drug supply. This drug can cause lesions and open sores that can be worrying for the unhoused members of our community who don't have regular access to washing stations. Our staff is trained in general wound care and often help our guests tend to minor cuts and scrapes and have received additional training for the type of wounds associated with Xylazine use.

The site continues to serve as a contact point to help our guests access nurses, mental health practitioners, social workers, and housing advocates. We are honoured to be able to help our guests access the resources they need, share a laugh or a story, and build relationships with the members of our community.

Wade Swagar
Overdose Prevention Co-ordinator