

FACTS ABOUT METH CRISIS AND BLOOD BORNE INFECTIONS IN WINNIPEG

- In recent survey 50% of people accessing drug injection supplies reported “crystal meth as their most commonly injected drug”
- 47% of “people who died of apparent fentanyl-related overdose in 2017” were found to have crystal meth in their system
- WRHA on track to distribute 2 million needles in 2018 and “a rise in distribution represents a rise in demand”
- Population and Public Health has declared an outbreak of acute Hepatitis B in Winnipeg Health Region “almost exclusively linked to injection drug use”
- Since 2016 there have been 40 cases of Hepatitis B in WRHA, a “nine fold increase over the past 10 years prior to 2016”
- “Current data...appears to indicate the recent increase in Hepatitis C is also linked to injection drug use”
- There is a significant rise in Hepatitis C cases among youth under the age of 25, something that is “unprecedented for Hepatitis C”
- The current outbreak of syphilis “appears to be associated with the use of crystal methamphetamine”
- In 2018 “over 250 cases [of syphilis] are projected, the highest number ever recorded in Winnipeg Health Region”
- “One case of Hepatitis C costs over \$40,000 and one case of HIV costs approximately \$1 million to the health system”
- A single needle/syringe costs 9 cents

FACTS ABOUT PALLISTER GOVERNMENT’S LACK OF LEADERSHIP

- WRHA developed a proposal to address early intervention for meth psychosis in community and to minimize risk associated with psychosis. The WRHA has not received feedback on proposal from Government (as of August 2018).
- WRHA’s 6 inpatient mental health beds opened last January to address patients undergoing psychosis at HSC will be “reallocated as part of clinical consolidation” in November – “This will result in less capacity within the system to address needs of this population”
- “A lack of provincial leadership” has “exacerbated” efforts to respond to the current the blood borne disease outbreak

Source: *Crystal Methamphetamine in Winnipeg: Impact on public health and emergency response systems*, WRHA, August 1, 2018