

QUICK FACTS

Opioids

Opiates are drugs with pain relieving properties that are used in Canada to help manage acute and chronic pain. Due to the euphoric effect they produce, they are often misused and people can develop substance use disorders. (Health Canada, “About Opioids”).

CSC recognizes that, despite ongoing efforts to eliminate illegal drugs entering federal prisons, and despite access to the availability of treatment and support, some inmates will continue to access illicit opioids and are at risk of bad health outcomes.

Eliminating opioids in our institutions

CSC prevents the flow of drugs in its institutions through partnerships with other public safety departments to share and receive vital information. Security checks at entrances and routine searches of inmates, living units and cells with non-intrusive search tools such as ion scanners, x-ray machines, visual inspections and detector dogs help keep out illegal drugs.

CSC programs

Offenders have access to programs that target various behaviours such as family violence, substance abuse, violence and sexual offending to help them rehabilitate, among others.

In 2010, CSC piloted the Integrated Correctional Program Model (ICPM) for male offenders. The program was implemented in 2017 throughout CSC facilities.

ICPM is designed to enhance the range of intervention and allow offenders to access and complete correctional

programs earlier in their sentences.

Women offenders have access to the Women Offender Correctional Programs, which use a similar approach of targeting multiple behaviours in one program.

Offenders with substance abuse issues examine the life-style choices, relationships, emotions, and thinking that contributed to their involvement in crime and substance use. The programs are available to all offenders, who meet the referral criteria, and are based on “best practices”, recent evidence and relevant theory in correctional research.

CSC Health Services

Inmates have access to health services, including:

- screening and testing for infectious disease at admission and throughout incarceration
- access to trained peer support workers for information, support, and health promotion materials;
- mental health referral and counselling
- Opiate Agonist Therapy (OAT), including methadone and suboxone
- pre-exposure prophylaxis to prevent HIV transmission
- access to medical specialists as well as HIV and HCV treatment

In response to the emerging opioid crisis in Canada, CSC has increased the number of inmates on OAT to 1,215, a 40-per-cent increase since October 2016. Health Services continue to look for improvements and efficiencies in OAT delivery to meet the needs of inmates with opiate use disorders.

In 2018, CSC implemented a Prison Needle Exchange Program (PNEP) at one men’s and one women’s institution. The roll-out to other institutions begin in January 2019. The PNEP will help reduce needle sharing

among people who inject drugs and will facilitate referral to health services.

We ensure the continuity of care after release for inmates with ongoing health care needs, including HIV / HCV treatment, mental health counselling, and community OAT clinics.

In keeping with the Canadian Drugs and Substance Strategy, CSC is committed to protecting the health and safety of staff and inmates through continued enforcement and access to harm reduction and programs.

For more information

Please visit our website at <http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/lois-et-reglements/800-cd-eng.shtml>

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