



International Overdose Awareness Day- 2021

A message from Michael Sandler, Executive Director

I would like to recognize the work that is being done by nurses and other healthcare providers across BC, across our country and across international borders, to slow down the relentless devastation that the overdose crisis continues to inflict on our families, friends and communities. We acknowledge all the point of care providers, educators, administrators, researchers and advocates for their invaluable contributions to slowing down this health crisis. The urgency of this work has become more pronounced as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has added to the escalation of the overdose crisis. As the death toll from an increasingly scarce and toxic illicit drug supply continues to climb, we must reaffirm our commitment to harm reduction, safe supply and de-stigmatization. While we have made great strides this year with the introduction of RN/RPN prescribing for safer alternatives for street drugs, there is more to do.



I would like to acknowledge the families and friends of those who have lost their lives to overdose. As nurses, we also acknowledge the heavy weight of stigma that surrounds substance and want you to know that nurses are here to help. I encourage members to check out our [resources](#) and learn more.

On behalf of Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of British Columbia, I look forward to further collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Mental Health & Addictions, and other important partners as we continue to develop mechanisms and provide evidence informed solutions to combat this crisis. Together we can positively affect policy by providing evidence-informed recommendations to government, facilitate consultations with subject matter experts and work collaboratively towards finding opportunities to enhance effective harm reduction strategies.

I ask each of my nursing colleagues to reflect on this International Overdose Awareness Day and share your thoughts on what we can do collectively to help reduce suffering, harm and stigma. Please feel free to send comments to info@nnpbc.com.

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Executive Director