



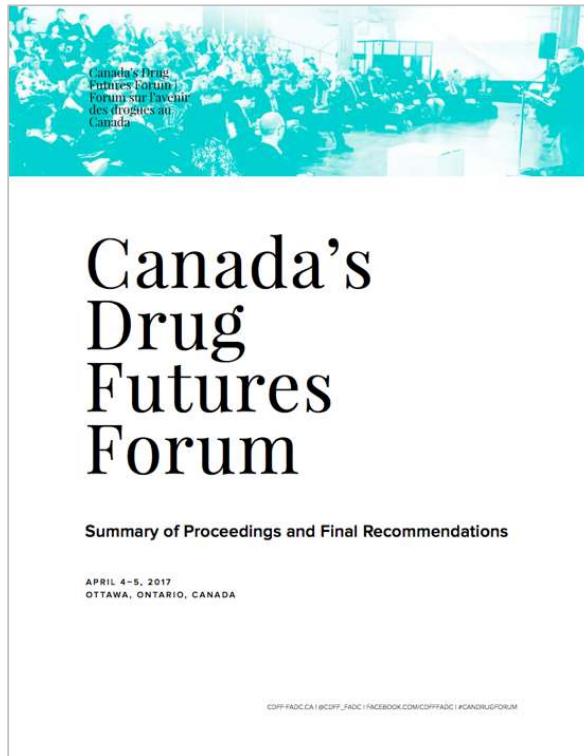
Canada's Drug
Futures Forum |
Forum sur l'avenir
des drogues au
Canada

APRIL 4-5, 2017
OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA

A roadmap for the next decade of drug policy reform in Canada

Webinar release of Canada's Drug Futures Forum: Summary of Proceedings and Final Recommendations

14 July, 2017



The report is available in English & French at cdff-fadc.ca

Twitter: [@cdff_fadc](https://twitter.com/cdff_fadc) [#candrugforum](https://twitter.com/candrugforum)

Canada's Drug
Futures Forum
Forum sur l'avenir
des drogues au
Canada

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Introduction from the Organizing Committee	8
Building a Future-oriented Agenda on Drug Policy	10
Speaker Summaries	12
Keynote Presentations	12
Panel Presentations	13
International control and management	13
Integrating policing and public health	16
Decriminalization and regulation	18
Strategies for health and social equity	20
How to move policy forward: Real talk on reform	22
Process for Generating Recommendations	23
Recommendations	24
1. National Drug Policy Reform	24
2. Criminal Justice Reform	24
3. Prevention, Harm Reduction, and Treatment	25
4. Research and Knowledge Exchange	25
5. International Leadership	26
List of Recommendations	27
Where We Couldn't Agree	29
Next Steps	31
Notes	32

4

©2017 FNDCC. CA | @CDFP_FAQDC | FACEBOOK.COM/CDFFNDCC | #CANADADRUGS

Introduction

- On April 4-5, 2017, over 200 academics, policymakers, and community leaders representing more than 100 national and global organizations participated in *Canada's Drug Futures Forum* in Ottawa;
- Forum aimed to build on existing policy momentum and rapid drug policy reforms to articulate priorities for the next decade of Canadian drug policy.
- Concerted efforts were made to include divergent voices and positions on this issue.
- This report:
 - Synthesizes dialogue generated from the speaker panels and keynote presentations;
 - Summarizes the recommendations generated by Forum participants;
 - Documents some of the areas where dissent was voiced or agreement could not be reached.

Building a future-oriented agenda on drug policy

1

Forum agenda built around four 4 themes generated by the organizing committee:

- International management and control;
- Integrating criminal justice and public health responses;
- Decriminalization and regulation;
- Strategies for health and social equity.

2

These themes provided basis for day 1, which included four panels with over 20 diverse speakers, as well as 4 keynote presentations.

3

Panels stimulated a dialogue on policy options corresponding to each of the four Forum themes.

4

On day 2, participants joined facilitated policy working groups that generated a list of policy recommendations presented back to attendees at the end of the Forum.

Recommendations



1. National Drug Policy Reform



2. Criminal Justice Reform



3. Prevention, Harm Reduction, and Treatment



4. Research and Knowledge Exchange



5. International Leadership



1. National Drug Policy Reform

- 1a.** Create a mechanism for stakeholders, including people who use drugs, to advise on the implementation of the *Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy*.
- 1b.** Develop regulations for newly-legal substances (e.g., cannabis) in tandem with adjustments to regulations for other regulated substances (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, pharmaceuticals) to ensure harmonization of laws on marketing and promotion.
- 1c.** Before enacting any supply-side restriction (e.g. removing an opioid analgesic from the market), conduct tests to predict its likely impacts on multiple dimensions of Canadian drug markets (e.g., regulated, pharmaceutical, grey, and illegal) and the health and safety of communities. This analysis should also consider the optimal sequencing for implementation of interventions.
- 1d.** Commit a portion of tax revenues from sales of legal cannabis into programs that directly address the needs of communities most deeply impacted by drug criminalization.
- 1e.** Establish a federal commission to: a) conduct a cost-benefit analysis of current drug control policies, b) explore potential steps toward decriminalization, legalization, and regulation of each class of currently illegal drugs, and c) consider formal acknowledgement and redress for harms of drug prohibition policies.



2. Criminal Justice Reform

- 2a.** End the practice of requiring that individuals plead guilty to access diversion programs, and expand the range of offenses eligible for drug treatment courts and other diversion programs.
- 2b.** Create prosecutorial guidelines instructing Crown Prosecutors not to pursue charges for personal possession and use of cannabis in the period prior to the full implementation of recreational cannabis regulation.
- 2c.** Establish a system for persons with existing convictions for non-violent cannabis offences to apply for pardons.
- 2d.** Implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action (#30-32) related to sentencing for drug-related offenses.
- 2e.** Repeal elements of the *Safe Streets and Communities Act* that evidence suggests have harmful public health and/or discriminatory effects (e.g., on people with problematic substance use, or on other grounds such as race or gender), such as mandatory minimum sentences and other restrictions on conditional sentences.
- 2f.** Conduct a review of policing and police oversight practices related to drug law enforcement, in order to identify practices where adverse public health consequences outweigh public safety benefits, and propose alternative approaches.



3. Prevention, Harm Reduction, and Treatment

- 3a.** Implement and evaluate harm reduction-based drug checking services as a public health and consumer safety measure, to ensure a safe supply.
- 3b.** Commit to providing and monitoring adequate coverage for evidence-based comprehensive treatment and harm reduction interventions, including opioid agonist therapy, needle and syringe programs, supervised consumption sites, naloxone, and distribution of safer consumption kits.
- 3c.** Develop national and provincial child welfare policies that prioritize the long-term best interests of the child, in acknowledgement that substance use and/or poverty alone do not justify removal from otherwise loving parents.
- 3d.** Develop harmonized national guidelines on best practices for supporting youth in transition out of foster care who are at heightened risk of substance use disorder.
- 3e.** Develop national guidelines and infrastructure to improve access to injectable treatments in community settings (i.e., hydromorphone, diacetylmorphine [medical heroin]), and to opioid agonist therapy (OAT; e.g., methadone, buprenorphine, slow-release oral morphine).
- 3f.** Develop comprehensive discharge plans for people released from jail or prison, including harm reduction strategies (e.g. overdose prevention) and, if indicated, substance use disorder treatment, with monitoring and follow-up.



4. Research and Knowledge Exchange

- 4a.** Integrate the issue of stigma against people who use drugs into broader anti-discrimination strategies and in training on harm reduction, trauma-informed practice, and cultural safety for health, justice, and social systems.
- 4b.** Improve the collection and analysis of criminal justice statistics related to drug law enforcement (e.g., arrests, incarceration), with disaggregation by race/ethnicity, Indigenous ancestry, and gender. Publish an annual report by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.
- 4c.** Establish a national drug policy observatory mandated to a) conduct drug surveillance and analysis of multiple dimensions of drug policy (e.g., public health, legal and illegal markets, violence, crime) with an equity lens, b) publish annual reports and convene dissemination and knowledge exchange, and c) develop metrics for measuring progress in drug policy implementation.



5. International Leadership

- 5a.** Explore options to reconcile domestic recreational cannabis regulation with the UN drug control treaties, including at the next session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the High Level Ministerial Meeting in 2019, and through discussions with member states, UN agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.
- 5b.** Integrate evidence-based drug policies in foreign policy and development cooperation strategies, through the frameworks of Sustainable Development Goals, gender equality, human rights, and international security, and allocate commensurate resources toward their achievement.

Where we couldn't agree

- Need for systematic drug policy reform (i.e. decriminalisation, regulation) vs focusing resources on micro-targeted interventions.
- Role of police and the criminal justice system in design and implementation of drug policy.
- Root causes of population- level drug use trends.
- Implications of the potential incompatibility of domestic regulatory systems for drug control within international drug treaties.

Next steps

- Targeted outreach to policymakers in key government entities, as well as broader stakeholder networks.
- Dissemination and knowledge translation activities, including presentations at academic & policy forums, and to media via press releases, opinion editorials, podcasts.
- Active dialogue to be maintained with relevant stakeholders to support and facilitate the implementation of the Forum's recommendations via email, website, and social media platforms.
- Dissemination by all stakeholders involved is encouraged - report belongs to all participants and their networks.

Thank you to the following supporters*:



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE
FOR SCIENCE IN DRUG POLICY



BC Centre for Disease Control
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority



Canadian Centre
on Substance Use
and Addiction
Centre canadien sur
les dépendances et
l'usage de substances



Canadian Drug
Policy Coalition
Coalition canadienne
des politiques
sur les drogues



Canadian
HIV/AIDS
Legal
Network
Réseau
juridique
canadien
VIH/sida



CPHA ACSP
CANADIAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE



Carleton
UNIVERSITY | FACULTY OF
Public Affairs

camh

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale



Labo de stratégie mondiale
Global Strategy Lab

FONDATION
PIERRE ELLIOTT
TRUDEAU
FOUNDATION



Thank you also to the following individuals*:

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

Dr. Dan Werb, Assistant Professor, University of California San Diego; Director, International Centre for Science in Drug Policy

Jennifer Peirce, 2015 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Scholar; PhD Candidate, John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY)

Ayden Scheim, 2014 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Scholar; Vanier Scholar; PhD Candidate, Western University

Claudia Stoicescu, 2014 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Scholar; PhD Candidate, University of Oxford

Meaghan Thumath, 2015 Pierre Elliott Trudeau Scholar; PhD Candidate, University of Oxford

MASS LBP: **Peter McLeod** (Principal), **Adam Hasham** (Forum Coordinator), **Joanna Massie**, **Alex Way**, **Caitlin Myles**, **Ana Qarri**, and **Laurie Drake**.

Committee Coordinator:
Jamie Forrest, PhD Candidate, University of British Columbia

International Centre for Science in Drug Policy: **Nazlee Maghsoudi**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Adam Blackwell, Former Secretary of Multi-Dimensional Security, Organization of American States

Prof. Timothy Caulfield, Health Law Institute, University of Alberta

Dr. Jean Daudelin, Norman Paterson School of Public Affairs, Carleton University

Dr. Jocelyn Downie, Faculties of Law and Medicine, Dalhousie University

Richard Elliott, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

Elaine Feldman, Centre on Public Management and Policy, University of Ottawa

Dr. Steven J. Hoffman, Global Strategy Lab, University of Ottawa

Alexia Jaouich, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Rebecca Jesseman, Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

Dr. Lisa Kerr, Faculty of Law, Queen's University

Sean Leblanc, Drug Users Advocacy League Ottawa

Megan Leslie, Board of Directors, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation

Donald MacPherson, Canadian Drug Policy Coalition

Donna May, moms united and mandated to saving the lives of Drug Users

Peter McCaffrey, Director of Research, Manning Foundation

Nandini Saxena, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Jillian Stirk, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation Mentor

Dr. Mark Tyndall, British Columbia Centre for Disease Control

Dr. Frank Welsh, Canadian Public Health Association

Jordan Westfall, Canadian Association of People Who Use Drugs

The views expressed in this report reflect reporting from the *Canada's Drug Futures Forum* participants and the opinions of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the views of all participants, sponsors, and advisors, or their organizations.

**Disclaimer:* The views expressed in this report reflect reporting from the *Canada's Drug Futures Forum* participants and the opinions of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the views of all participants, sponsors, and advisors, or their organizations.

Download the report at: cdff-fadc.ca

Twitter: [@cdff_fadc](https://twitter.com/cdff_fadc) [#candrugforum](https://twitter.com/cdff_fadc)
