

## Province supports program that transforms lives of those struggling with cravings for alcohol

More people in British Columbia who are suffering from alcohol use disorder will learn about effective treatment options, as the Province is providing \$900,000 to support the work of the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society. This non-profit raises awareness and advocates for understanding alcohol use disorder, aka alcoholism, as a treatable health condition.

“This funding will help us reach clinicians, communities, and individuals directly impacted by alcohol use disorder,” says Lori Motluk, Canadian AUD Society Board Chair. “We just attended UBCM, and, again, really heard why it’s so important to raise awareness of this condition -- the way other organizations do for cancer, heart disease and diabetes.”

After all, alcohol use disorder is one of the most harmful conditions in Canada, and also one of the least understood. “We’re creating videos, hosting events, engaging communities, attending conferences, working with partner organizations, helping individuals understand how medications can be a part of a holistic approach to care for AUD, and importantly, providing new hope for recovery,” adds Motluk.

“I am so thrilled that more people will get the help that I did,” says Princeton, BC resident, Nienke Klaver. After listening to a presentation from the Canadian AUD Society, Klaver spoke with her family doctor and received treatment that curbed her cravings for alcohol. “This was a game changer. I don’t experience cravings anymore and I can get on with my life. It’s amazing.”

“People struggling with addiction need to know the health care options available to them when they reach out for help,” said Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “By supporting organizations like the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society, we are making sure that anyone struggling with alcohol-related issues finds the expert guidance they need on their road to healing. This way, we are opening more doors for people who need help while also nurturing a broader awareness of alcohol addiction and the treatment options available.”

“It’s amazing to receive support from the Ministry,” says Dr. Roland Engelbrecht, a family physician and addictions specialist in Williams Lake, BC. “It shows they prioritize this work, and means so many more people with AUD will be reached.”

Canadian safe drinking guidelines have helped people understand WHY drinking less is better. With the support of funding, the Canadian AUD Society can help more people understand HOW to do so. For more information on alcohol use disorder and treatment options, please visit [www.cauds.org](http://www.cauds.org).

### **For more information and for interview opportunities:**

Heather Allen, Chief Communications Officer

Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society

Cell: 250-493-0330 Email: [heather.allen@cauds.org](mailto:heather.allen@cauds.org)

**Photo Caption:** Nienke Klaver (right) who successfully eliminated cravings for alcohol is pictured with Izabela Szelest of the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society at a community-wide awareness event in Princeton, BC.

## BACKGROUND

### About the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society

We are a national non-profit, which advocates for a more effective and compassionate approach to treating alcohol use disorder as a health condition. Find us at [www.cauds.org](http://www.cauds.org)

We formed in 2020 in Penticton, BC and are proud to collaborate with a variety of healthcare organizations and community groups, and to be supported by the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen, the BC Ministry of Health and the BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions.

### Alcohol Use Disorder:

- is a health condition affecting the brain, causing some people to intensely crave alcohol. These individuals are compelled to drink, to drink too much, and to not be able to stop even if that means harming relationships, family connections or employment opportunities.
- can be mild, moderate or severe.
- can be triggered by biological or environmental factors or by life experience, and can affect anyone at any point in their life.
- is one of the most prevalent and most harmful conditions in Canada: 18% of Canadians will be affected by alcohol use disorder over the course of their lifetime.
- deserves compassion and is NOT a moral failing or a sign of weakness.

### Treatment Options:

**Several medications are available that can curb or eliminate cravings for alcohol.**

- Medications are:
  - prescribed by a family doctor or nurse practitioner as part of an overall care plan.
  - selected based upon an individual's consumption history and their personal drinking goals.
  - taken temporarily until the brain heals.
- Treatment:
  - is tailored to an individual's drinking goals. This can be to stop drinking altogether or simply to reduce the amount a person drinks. It does not require abstinence.
  - complements and provides stability for counselling and many other types of care and supports.
  - allows for a full recovery for just about everyone.

### Turning a Compulsion Back into a Choice:

New [Canadian low-risk drinking guidelines](#) underscore WHY drinking less is better, advising that 2 drinks per week reduces the risk of health problems and several types of cancer. We aim to help people reach their drinking goals by providing information on the HOW.

### Quote from Ministry:

"People struggling with addiction need to know the health care options available to them when they reach out for help," said Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. "By supporting organizations like the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society, we are making sure that anyone struggling with alcohol-related issues finds the expert guidance they need on their road to healing. This way, we are opening more doors for people who need help while also nurturing a broader awareness of alcohol addiction and the treatment options available."