

Substance Use Stigma Reduction Trainings in Canada

For professional groups & the media

Background

Reducing substance use stigma is one of the five priorities of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Problematic Substance Use and Harms (PSUH) Committee. This collection of training resources was compiled by the FPT Substance Use Stigma Working Group to support federal, provincial, territorial and other stakeholders in stigma reduction efforts. The following document presents a collection of substance use stigma reduction trainings for various audiences, such as healthcare providers and the media. The majority of the trainings included are free of cost and available online in a virtual format.

Reducing stigma is important

- Stigma is one of the biggest barriers to seeking and receiving assistance, support and treatment for people who use substances. Stigma takes the form of negative attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours.
- People who use substances often experience stigma from healthcare professionals, social service workers, and first responders, such as police. Experiencing stigma from service providers is a structural barrier to getting help.
- These trainings aim to provide accurate information about substance use disorder, dispel harmful myths, and help learners identify their own biases with the ultimate goal of reducing stigma and providing better, more compassionate and responsive services.

These trainings are offered through various organizations that work in the areas of substance use and substance use stigma reduction. They were developed for diverse target audiences, including for those who work in health and social services, post-secondary education, law enforcement, and the general population. Details about each training are included in the following table, including the organizations that developed the trainings, target audience, brief descriptions of the content, and links.

General inclusion criteria

- Trainings focused on substance use stigma reduction
- Publically available or available upon request
- Scalable
- Developed by reputable professionals or organizations
- Involved people with lived and living experience of substance use in development and/or evaluation

Please note: This document is evergreen. We acknowledge that this list is not exhaustive and welcome recommendations for additions to the collection, especially trainings developed by and for Black, Indigenous and People of Colour. Please reach out to Rebecca Brodmann (Rebecca.brodmann@Canada.ca) with suggestions.

Call to Action

- Please share this document widely with internal and external stakeholders, networks, provincial and territorial agencies and organizations working across sectors including health, social services, education and public safety, to increase uptake of stigma reduction training. We encourage everyone to engage in stigma reduction training.

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Name of Training	Organization(s)	Description/Content & Evaluation Information	Format	Target Audience	Links/Resources	Languages Available
<i>Trainings for Health, Social and Emergency Care Providers</i>						
Compassionate Engagement Modules	British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Toward the Heart	The Compassionate Engagement Modules are a series of interactive case studies about stigma and discrimination experienced by People Who Use Drugs (PWUD). These modules are designed to engage PWUD and the people who provide services to them (healthcare providers, frontline service providers, managers, and leadership). It works best when there are both PWUD and providers together. The Compassionate Engagement Modules provide an opportunity for PWUD and providers to learn from each other's perspectives, develop solutions and practice compassionate care, effective communication, and self-advocacy.	Facilitator-led. The facilitator shows the case study clips, then lead the group of PWUD and providers through a discussion about what happened in the case study. The group will have the option of re-enacting the case study, changing any behaviour they think can be done differently. All materials are provided.	People who use drugs & service providers (healthcare, frontline, managers and leadership)	https://towardtheheart.com/reducing-stigma	English
Compassionate Action: An Anti-Stigma Campaign	BCCDC Toward the Heart	The Compassionate Action modules are a series of interactive case study videos about stigma and discrimination experienced by People Who Use Drugs (PWUD) and an accompanying reflection/discussion guide. The videos are based on real life experiences of PWUD, and build upon the <u>Compassionate Engagement</u> modules. Recognizing that many service providers have lived or living experience of substance use, the modules can be adapted to meet local needs and situations. Thus, the modules are intended to bring PWUD and other providers together to encourage collaboration and mutual respect.	The Compassionate Action campaign consists of five modules, each highlighting a different context where PWUD often experience stigma. The guide for the Compassionate Action modules provides suggestions on what to consider while watching the video, a brief video clip, followed by prompts for a discussion between PWUD and service providers, ideally led by a facilitator in a physical or virtual classroom setting. Questions for individual reflection are also provided. It is not necessary for individuals/groups to complete all the modules; one may select the modules relevant to their context.	The modules are designed to engage PWUD and the people who provide services to them, such as healthcare and frontline service providers, first responders, and organizational managers.	https://towardtheheart.com/peer2peer-project	English
Reducing Stigma and Promoting Recovery for Opioid Use	The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)	The course aims to provide information related to the opioid crisis, opioid use risk factors and related harms, harm reduction strategies, recovery-oriented practice, as well as promising treatment strategies for people with opioid use disorders. The course has two overarching goals: 1. Reduce stigma towards opioid use and individuals that use opioids. 2. Reinforce the notion of recovery-oriented care and that recovery is highly individualized. This training is currently being evaluated using MHCC's OM-PATOS scale. Data collection has begun, no results are available yet.	Online, self-directed.	Professionals who assist people with opioid dependence, including counsellors, nurses, pharmacists, physicians, social workers, case managers, therapists, public health workers, and long term care workers	https://moodle11.camh.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=49	English
Understanding Stigma	CAMH & Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC)	Understanding Stigma is a free online course adapted by the Mental Health Commission of Canada from a workshop created by the Central Local Health Integration Network. The course is designed to help healthcare providers and frontline clinicians develop strategies to improve patient-provider interactions and overall care for people with mental illness including addiction. This training was evaluated using MHCC's OM-PATOS scale. Results showed statistically significant reduction in stigmatizing attitudes and behaviours; effect size was in the small range. Report will be released March, 2021.	Online, self-directed.	Healthcare providers and frontline clinicians	https://www.camh.ca/en/education/continuing-education-programs-and-courses/continuing-education-directory/understanding-stigma	English
<i>Trainings Tailored to the Audience</i>						
Implicit Bias Training	Dr. Javeed Sukhera	Dr. Sukhera is a psychiatrist and researcher who has developed implicit bias training for healthcare professionals that can be adapted to different contexts and audiences including healthcare professionals across disciplines and health leaders and administrators. Dr. Sukhera will engage with organizers in advance to understand the background and needs of the group. He has adapted the training to deal specifically with substance use stigma. The training draws on numerous theoretical frameworks and embeds the principles of trauma-informed practice. The training goes beyond examination of individual attitudes and behaviours to examine broader systems and structures. The training has been evaluated.	In-person or virtual delivery over a three hour timeframe, by request.	Health professionals across disciplines; health leaders and administrators	Dr. Javeed Sukhera (me@javeed.ca)	English
Stigma Ends with Me Workshops: Canadian Centre on Substance Use and	CCSA and Community Addictions Peer Support Association (CAPSA)	CCSA offers tailored anti-stigma training upon request for professional groups such as health and social services workers. A previous iteration of this program was evaluated using the OM-PATOS scale, as well as an adapted measure to capture attitudes towards substance use more generally. Results showed statistically significant improvements in attitudes & behaviours pre-to-post program. Effect size change for OM-PATOS measure was in the small range; effect size change for the adapted measure was in the medium range. The final report will be finalized in early 2021.	In-person/ Virtual (coming soon)	Professional groups, health and social services workers, education staff, etc.	Claire Rykelyk-Huizen (crykelyk-huizen@ccsa.ca) or Alan Martino (amartino@ccsa.ca)	English

Addiction's (CCSA) tailored stigma-reduction training	developed these workshops in partnership.					
Stigma Reduction Training for Professional Groups	CAPSA	CAPSA provides stigma reduction training to health/social service provider professional groups and will tailor the curriculum to meet the needs of the learners. These workshops have been evaluated.	In-person and/or virtual	Training can be tailored to any group: nurses, students, police, policy-focused audience, CSOs, working groups, etc.	https://capsa.ca/ ; ggarner@capsa.ca	English
Training for Law Enforcement						
Drug Stigma Awareness for Law Enforcement	Canadian Police Knowledge Network/Public Safety Canada; Content for this course was developed by CCSA.	This course is designed for the law enforcement community and provides an opportunity to learn about substance use disorder and the impacts of stigma on those who suffer from this medical condition. Tips and examples from Canadian communities demonstrate how small changes can make a difference and how policing practices are changing in response to new knowledge. It is only available to law enforcement agencies through the Canadian Police Knowledge Network. Some police services in Canada are requiring this course be completed by officers.	Online, self-directed.	Sworn Police	https://www.cpkn.ca/en/course/drug-stigma-awareness-for-law-enforcement/	English French
Training for Post-Secondary Education Staff						
Stigma, Substances, and Mental Health 101	CCSA & post-secondary education partners: Algonquin College, Carleton University, and University of Ottawa	This resource was developed to equip post-secondary educators and staff to help eliminate the stigma around mental health and addiction; build confidence in their ability to create a supportive environment; understand the importance of a harm-reduction approach; and direct students to community resources if they need additional supports.	Stigma, Substances, and Mental Health 101 is currently being packaged for dissemination at the national level. It will be available in a virtual format.	Post-secondary educators and staff	CCSA expects the training to be available for dissemination at a national level by early 2022.	English French
Trainings for the General Population						
The Sting of Stigma	Canadian Center on Substance Use and Addiction	CCSA developed an introductory learning module as the first in a planned series of modules on the topic of stigma and substance use. Two additional modules will be released in April, 2021. These modules are developed with the needs of both the general public and professional audiences in mind. The first module, The Sting of Stigma, introduces learners to the concept of stigma, and explains why it is harmful and what its impacts are on people with problematic substance use and substance use disorder. After completing the first module, learners will understand that substance use disorder is a medically diagnosed health condition and that by using person-first language we can begin to change the way we think about people with substance use disorder. The overarching goal of this and future modules is to increase understanding of stigma and equip learners with the tools and knowledge required to address stigma at home, in the workplace and in communities.	Online, self-directed.	General population	https://www.ccsa.ca/module/stigma-learning-module-en/#/	English French
Forthcoming Trainings for Professionals/Service Providers						
Structural Stigma Training in Healthcare (Title TBD – launch date spring 2021)	MHCC	A training for health leaders, managers, champions, and other agents of change on structural stigma related to mental health and substance use within the health system	Online, self-directed.	Health Leaders, Champions, Managers, and other agents of change	Nicholas Watters at the MHCC nwatters@mentalhealthcommission.ca ; we will update this document with the link to the modules/resources when it becomes available	English

<i>Trainings/Resources for Media</i>						
Toward the Heart – Media & Language	BCCDC	Information and materials about De-stigmatizing Language around Substance Use & Harm Reduction Reporting. A rapid evidence literature review was performed and findings discussed by people with lived and living experience of substance use who shared their personal experiences of the impact of stigmatizing language and images in media. No Canadian reporting standards were identified. The report includes the review findings, perceptions of people with lived and living experience, and makes recommendations on how to reduce stigma in the media.	Seminar slides and report, including guiding principals, are available.	Media	https://towardtheheart.com/research-projects;Final Report	English
Mindset Media Guide	Canadian Journalism Forum on Violence and Trauma with financial support from the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Media partner is CBC News.	Media guidelines for reporting on mental health; sections on addiction/substance use. Guide is on its third iteration. Canadian context.	Guide	Media	http://www.mindset-mediaguide.ca/	English French
Changing the Narrative	American – from Northeastern University School of Law	Media guidance for reporting on substance use disorder and the opioid overdose crisis – by journalists for journalists. Includes information about stigmatizing language and images.	Website/Resources/Events/Style Guide	Media	https://www.changingthenarrative.news/about-us	English
<i>Forthcoming Guidelines for Canadian Media</i>						
Media Guide – Title is TBD	CCSA and CAPSA	A guide for Canadian media that is specific to substance use/substance use disorder; will include guidance on stigmatizing language and images.	Guide/resource	Media	TBD – resource is expected in Q1 of 2021	English French

Appendix 1: Important and related concepts and trainings

Trauma-Informed Practice Resources

Trauma is often closely connected to mental illness, substance use, stigma and barriers to accessing quality care, among other challenges. Trauma-informed practice means recognizing this link, making sure that people feel safe and are not re-traumatized by their care. In addition to affecting mental wellness and substance use, trauma can also trigger reactions such as self-harm or aggression that may make someone's health challenges worse, deepen stigma, create barriers to accessing healthcare and employment, and even contribute a conflict with the law. Trauma-informed practice principles can be implemented across systems and organizations, not just at the level of individual treatment. There are many guides available to inform a trauma-informed approach.

A few examples include:

- [SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach](#)
- BC's [Trauma-Informed Practice Guide](#)
- Klinik Community Health Centre's Trauma-Informed: The Trauma Toolkit
- [CCSA's Trauma-Informed Care](#)
- BC's [Healing Families, Helping Systems: A Trauma-Informed Practice Guide for Working with Children, Youth and Families](#)
- [CPHA's Trauma-and Violence-Informed Care Toolkit for reducing stigma related to sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections](#)

Trauma-Informed Practice Trainings

There are numerous trauma-informed practice trainings available across Canada, including many tailored to specific professions and settings. Below we have highlighted a few examples.

Name of Training	Organization(s)	Description/Content & Evaluation Information	Format	Target Audience	Links/Resources	Languages Available
Trauma and Resiliency Informed Practice (TRIP)	Fraser Health	Fraser Health Authority developed a training program for direct service providers designed to address the important connection between stress and patient care —a mental health and resiliency program based on the principles of trauma-informed practice and care. This article reports the results of an evaluation of this program. Findings suggest that embedding resiliency and self-compassion within trauma-informed training programs is a promising approach for cultural change in healthcare practice This piece differentiates TRIP from other trauma-informed practice trainings. Fraser Health and MHCC are currently evaluating it in a variety of clinical settings. They hope to package it for scaling soon. People with lived and living experience were extensively involved in the development of this program. OM-PATOS scale was used as part of ongoing evaluations. The training was also evaluated for improvements in burnout, self compassion, compassion satisfaction, secondary traumatic stress, and resiliency skills. Training has also been evaluated with emergency room staff and now with maternity and baby ICU staff.	One day workshop and post-workshop coaching and support activities. This training has been adapted for virtual delivery. It is currently being packaged for scale-up across settings.	Direct service providers across disciplines and settings	https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0840470420970594	English
Trauma & Addiction (Part of a 'Trauma Certificate' offered by Laurier University).	Wilfred Laurier University	This two-day workshop explores the connection between trauma and addiction with a focus on providing knowledge, tools and resources to effectively serve clients who are dealing with both trauma and addiction issues.	Online	Social Workers; professional development	https://www.wlu.ca/professional-development/fsw-professional-development/certificates/trauma-certificate.html	English
Trauma-Informed Care: For individuals who help those impacted by trauma provide patient care	Alberta Health Services	Many of the people we interact with every day have been affected by overwhelming stress or traumatic experiences. Traumatic experiences change a person and can create turmoil within a person and in their life. This is especially true if events and/or conditions happen in childhood. The consequences of trauma are far reaching and can be directly or indirectly linked to mental illness, addictions, chronic disease, suicide, and overall, a failure to thrive. The purpose of the Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Project is to increase knowledge about trauma and the impact it has by creating connections, sharing knowledge and resources. TIC offers resources for individuals who help those impacted by trauma to provide patient centred care.	Online	For individuals who help those impacted by trauma to provide patient-centered care	https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page15526.aspx	English Alexis Nakota Stoney Amharic Arabic Blackfoot Simplified Chinese/Mandarin Simplified Chinese/Cantonese Cree Dene French Low German Hindi Korean

						Nepali Oromo Porgugese Punjabi Spanish Somali Stoney- Nakoda Tagalong Tigrinya Ukranian Urdu Vietnamese
Trauma- Informed Practice Institute: Level 1 and Level 2	University of British Columbia	This workshop will provide participants with tools, knowledge, and some expertise on how to assist clients with trauma and understand how trauma impacts the healing process. Research supports that knowledge of Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) is critical to helping clients move through barriers to healing. The Level 1 training includes how embodied emotion and trauma memory is stored in the body and ways it can be released. The workshop provides both didactic and experiential exercises to facilitate deeper integration of knowledge.	Online, not free.	Anyone with an interest in Trauma-Informed Practice, both professionally and personally, is invited to attend the training. This program is designed to assist individuals with no, little, or substantive expertise in the content area, as well as graduate students in relevant disciplines.	https://ecps.educ.ubc.ca/trauma-informed-practice-institute-2021-winter-spring-training/	English
<p>Cultural Safety Trainings – Indigenous Perspectives</p> <p>Cultural safety trainings take many forms but generally they aim to enhance self-awareness and strengthen the knowledge and skills of those who work with Indigenous people in order to ensure that Indigenous peoples are respected and services are provided in a safe, equitable way, free from discrimination and prejudice. This is particularly important in the substance use field considering the disproportionate burden of substance use harms experienced by indigenous people in Canada. Trainings typically cover concepts such as culture, stereotyping, discrimination, and the legacies of colonization.</p> <p>We've included two cultural safety training offerings below and welcome recommendations of other resources.</p>						
San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS)Training: Core ISC Health and Core ISC Mental Health	Provincial Health Services Authority in BC	San'yas: Indigenous Cultural Safety Training is a unique, on-line training program designed to enhance self-awareness, and strengthen the skills of those who work both directly and indirectly with Indigenous people. The goal of the Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) training is to develop understanding and promote positive partnerships between service providers and Indigenous people. Skilled facilitators guide and support each learner through interactive course materials. The course participants examine culture, stereotyping, and the consequences and legacies of colonization. Participants will learn about terminology; diversity; aspects of colonial history such as Indian residential schools and Indian Hospitals and a time line of historical events. The ISC Core Mental Health Course is designed for professionals working in mental health and addictions, and/or social service settings. Learning is self-paced over an eight-week window and typically takes between nine and 17 hours to complete. ICS training programs are available in BC, Ontario and Manitoba.	Online, self-directed.	People who work directly or indirectly with Indigenous people.	https://www.sanyas.ca/training	English
Wabano Centre's Mental Health Online Training	Wabano Centre	This online course has been modified for people working in mental health and substance use services, focusing on issues specifically relevant for mental health professionals working with Indigenous people in Ontario. The course examines culture, stereotyping, and the consequences and legacies of colonization. You will learn about racial terminology, diversity, and aspects of colonial history such as Indian Residential Schools and Indian Hospitals. Skilled facilitators guide and support each learning through interactive online.	Online, self-directed.	Mental health and addictions professionals	https://wabano.com/education/professional-development/indigenous-cultural-safety-training/#ics-form	English