



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Middlesex
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Middlesex
La santé mentale pour tous

November 29, 2018

To City of London Councilors:

I am writing in support of the initiative to establish a supervised consumption and treatment service at 446 York Street in London and the request for rezoning, which will be presented to the City's Planning and Environment Committee on December 10, 2018.

As London is experiencing an opioid crisis, this site presents an opportunity for a community response to assist individuals who have a very real threat to their health and well-being. By locating the service at this site, those already in the neighborhood or those who are currently involved in drug use nearby will have ease of access to evidence-informed approaches to support persons with high risk of physical harm or even death. Providing safe sites has been shown to reduce the incidence of drug injections on the street, as well as needle waste in neighborhoods. In addition, these facilities are often the first step on a path to recovery, especially when they are linked to other services to support these people. London is already a leader in the province in terms of developing integrated services with ease of access at community-based locations.

CMHA Middlesex has provided outreach services to the Temporary Overdose Prevention Site since its opening in February 2018, to ensure that individuals who visit this facility and need access to programs related to their mental health can easily connect with our staff. This site has been a resounding success, with 56 overdoses reversed, over 10,000 injections occurring off the street, and over 150 people referred into drug treatment. Moreover, it has demonstrated the advantages of a wrap-around service that treats individuals with respect and dignity, while offering an opportunity for change. We will continue to provide these services in the new Supervised Consumption Facility, ensuring that support and services are available when and where they are needed.

We urge you to give strong consideration to the request for rezoning and support for supervised consumption and treatment service and look forward to our continued work with the community to bring these plans to life.

Sincerely,

Beth Mitchell, Ph.D., C.Psych.
Chief Executive Officer

Cc Chris Mackie, CEO MLHU; Brian Lester, CEO RHAC