

Regent Park Community Health Centre

Website Statement for CTS Closures

August 30, 2024

Regent Park Community Health Centre (RPCHC) is committed to serving our community, particularly the most vulnerable populations. This includes individuals and families impacted by the ongoing opioid crisis and toxic drug supply. The recent announcement by the Ontario government regarding the closure of most of the Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) sites in downtown Toronto, including our own, is very concerning as these sites play a critical role in supporting individuals and reducing the burden on communities.

At RPCHC we are committed to harm reduction as a critical, evidence-based component of the services needed in our community. Sites like ours are designed to provide a controlled environment to decrease risk of overdoses and save lives. Offering harm reduction programs is not just about preventing overdoses; it's about creating a physically and psychologically safe space where individuals struggling with substance use can access the support they need, including connections to treatment services when they are ready. Harm reduction is one part of a larger integrated care process, not a barrier to recovery.

In addition, harm reduction services provide significant community benefits beyond those directly accessing the programs, including reduced overall healthcare costs, a lower burden on emergency services, and maintaining the safety and cleanliness of our public spaces. Without these services, the impact on the community will be severe, including an increase in public drug use and even more discarded paraphernalia, which poses a danger to everyone, especially children.

RPCHC exists to serve our community, and community safety is one of our core priorities. We provide a wide range of services to families and individuals in and around Regent Park, making it essential that RPCHC remains a safe space where everyone feels comfortable and supported. Our commitment to our community's safety and well-being has not changed and will continue as we navigate this transition.

Our focus is on working closely with our community, staff, and partners, including governments, to ensure that a range of critical services—both treatment and harm reduction—remain available. As the government, RPCHC and our partners explore what new models of substance use and addiction services will include, we will continue to advocate for the integration of harm reduction into any future service models, recognizing that this approach is essential for the health and safety of our clients and the broader community.