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Canadian Postsecondary Education Partnership – Alcohol Harms launches with mandate to reduce alcohol-related harms on campus

June 14, 2017 – The [Postsecondary Education Partnership – Alcohol Harms \(PEP-AH\)](#) [link] launched today with a strong commitment to taking steps to address collectively alcohol-related harms on Canadian campuses.

PEP-AH is a partnership among Canadian universities and colleges, Universities Canada and the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA, formerly known as the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse). Members of PEP-AH are collaborating to share strategies and best practices specific to alcohol issues on campuses. The group is working with an evidence-based strategic framework for action developed by CCSA to support campus teams, made up of students, staff and faculty, that aim to reduce harms related to alcohol consumption.

“PEP-AH is guided by a vision: that postsecondary campuses are communities where students are able to embrace the opportunity before them to learn and grow, free from serious harms related to alcohol,” said Catherine Paradis, co-chair of PEP-AH and senior research and policy analyst with CCSA. “CCSA is proud to partner in this effort. It’s heartening to see such a strong commitment among students to playing a leadership role in creating a constructive environment where they can learn, socialize and feel safe.”

“Key to PEP-AH’s success is the involvement of students,” said Scott Duguay, co-chair of PEP-AH and Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management, St. Thomas University. “Experience shows us that when students are not only participants, but also champions and leaders at the core of planning and implementation, we see real progress. That’s the model we’re following with PEP-AH.”

PEP-AH works against an alarming backdrop. A survey of 43,780 students from 41 Canadian campuses, conducted by the Canadian Consortium of the American College Health Association in 2016, identified many of the challenges faced by institutions: the prevalence of binge drinking and associated harms, including physical injuries and assault. Over one-third of students (36.7% of respondents) reported drinking five or more drinks the last time they “partied” or socialized. Many report negative consequences from their drinking, most commonly:

- Doing something they later regretted (38%);
- Forgetting where they were or what they did (29.1%);
- Having unprotected sex (24.2%);
- Physically injuring themselves (18.4%); or
- Poor academic performance (4.4%).

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The views of PEP-AH are its own and do not necessarily reflect those of CCSA or Health Canada.

