



Western Regional Symposium

March 29, 2018

Hosted by University of Calgary

Participants: University of Calgary, Alberta Health Services, Health Campus Alberta, MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, University of Victoria, University of Regina, University of Lethbridge (total number of participants: 60)

Symposium Goal

In alignment with the goals of PEP-AH, we are collaborating to build an evidence-based framework for action to reduce the harms related to alcohol consumption on campus. This symposium aimed to open a discussion on the use of online interventions for reducing alcohol-related harm and on the importance of student engagement in changing the culture around alcohol. It also featured two student presentations on effective student-led harm-reduction work.

Discussion Topics

Use of Online/App Interventions to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harm in College Students. Presentation by John Cunningham, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

- Effectiveness of two online tools, "Check Your Drinking" and "Alcohol Help Centre," on long-term differential impact and decrease in drinking.
- Importance of personalized intervention, matching event, student issue and time in life or academic year.

A Cultural Approach to Engaging Students around Relationships with Alcohol. Presentation by Tim Dyck and Catriona Remocker, Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research

- Importance of using campus- and student-based influencers in changing culture.
- Why dramatic stories do not work.
- Why each area and each campus must examine its own context to determine approaches for reducing harmful drinking at harmful events and harmful times.
- Importance of dialogue, which raises intentionality and nurtures relationships that promote collaboration, as the active ingredient in culture change.
- Examples of campus-specific projects can be found on the Healthy Minds, Healthy Campuses website.

Pilot of Post-Alcohol Support Space. Presentation by Kyle Guild and Rene Nutini, Student Medical Response Team, University of Calgary

- The Student Medical Response (SMR) team started in 2014 and includes motivated and skilled students with backgrounds as first responders, paramedics and firefighters, and nursing and medical students.
- SMR offers qualified and skilled pre-hospital emergency medical care to eligible University of Calgary community events.



- Post-Alcohol Support Space (PASS) is a medically supervised, judgment-free place on campus where members of the university community can sleep off the effects of alcohol. It is a harm-reduction program aimed at lowering the risk of alcohol-related injury by monitoring intoxicated individuals, keeping them safe and regularly assessing the need for medical treatment.
- SMR works with registered nurses in the pilot PASS project.

Sharing Student-Led Initiatives. Presentation by Laura Henderson, Madelaine McCracken, Shayla Breen and Samantha Beck, Mount Royal University

- Facilitated discussion that posed questions to students about effective interventions.
- Basis for success is open collaboration and the nurturing of peer-support programming.
- Focus on efforts to promote conversations about alcohol use during orientation, rather than issuing warnings. Orientation leaders can set the tone, normalizing help seeking and promoting harm reduction.

Outcomes

- Share current research in the field of on-campus alcohol use.
- Promote and highlight student-led initiatives and harm-reduction work being done on campus.
- Challenge participants to create supportive communities, with an emphasis on student-to-student engagement, to foster multiple small conversations and dialogues about alcohol use and harm reduction.

Next Steps

- PASS will use the symposium feedback to improve the promotion of its space, including collaboration with orientation leaders.
- Symposium participants will consider contextual projects and initiatives using student-led dialogue about the use of alcohol.
- Individual campuses will discuss the creation of supportive communities using the PEP-AH framework.



Participants at the PEP-AH Western Regional Symposium



Kyle Guild and Rene Nutini, Student Medical Response Team, University of Calgary, present on the Pilot of Post Alcohol Support Space