THE RISE & FALL OF SAFER SUPPLY PROGRAMS

In Canada

2016-2025

A RENTLESS TOXIC OPIOID CRISIS

- Since 2016, Canada has faced a relentless drug toxicity crisis. “Safer Supply” emerged as a harm reduction strategy. Providing pharmaceutical medications to individuals who were at a high risk of overdose.

THE RISE

GRASSROOTS ORGINS & RAPID EXPANSION

- Programs had early success, showing reduced overdose risk and improvement in other conditions related to mental health, housing, employment due to wrap around supports.

THE FALL

CHALLENGES & DE-IMPLEMENTATION

- A lack of real-time quantitative data on polarizing topics such as diversion
- Many clinicians faced tensions between individual stability and public health goals
- Short-term funding impacting staffing capacity and physical space at organizations

MARCH 2025

FUDNING ENDS

- Following intense political polarization surrounding programs and a federal electoral period, funding for safer supply programs is cut **abruptly without the ability to apply agaibn.**

LESSONS

- Building monitoring systems from the beginning
- Develop and implement expert led guidelines
- Support perscribers be decoupling libaility
- Protecting poloicy from politics

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https://cdpe.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/rise-and-fall-of-sos.pdf