

## UPHNS HUB Video Call Minutes Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup> 2024

**Topic:** **Creating A Safe Warming Space: led by lived and living experience.**

**Attendance:** 65

**Facilitators:** Danielle and Lauren

**Land Acknowledgment:** Clint

### Introduction to UPHNS HUB Call

- **Housekeeping**
  - Audience intros
  - What is the UPHNS HUB + accountability statement
  - No recording, microphones etc....
  - Chat box support
  - Time support
  - Q & A guidelines
- **Statement on Anti-oppression and Inclusion**

### Presenters:

- Angie
- Brandon
- Chinook
- Ophelia
- Sandra
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**Presentation Name/Title:** **Creating A Safe Warming Space: led by lived and living experience.**

**First Question:** How do we keep people who use drugs safe at warming spaces?

### Answers:

- Folks received limited support, an emphasise needs to be put on mental and physical safety.
- OPS warming spaces are capable of meeting unique needs.
- Sterilization is critical for safety due to it being unsanctioned.

- Folks need a space to be heard, no hierarchy around social workers/ doctors etc.,
- There is an inherent power imbalance when being in a medicalized setting that is owned and operated by white settlers.
- Want for a non-judgmental environment, this starts by having PWLLE/PWUD working in these spaces.
- Important to listen to folks and acknowledge that they are the experts in their own experience.
- Acknowledge that there is a need for people to use drugs in warming sites from a safety perspective.
- We need safe inhalation for spaces.

**Second Question:** How do we support volunteers with live and living experience?

**Answers:**

- Access to counselling and culturally safe emotional support for volunteers.
- Access to educational programs and mental support. How to compartmentalize, how to debrief effectively,
- Volunteers to have a place to make decisions, not a suggestion box but let their decisions be of influence, people assume they know what PWLLE/ PWUD's need.
- Important to have access to harm reduction supplies/ food, drug checking strips.
- Good communication, team building, and moving as a collective.
- Emphasis on community aspect and support with outreach.

**Third Question:** Why are all the current resources not being utilized?

**Answers:**

- Needs are not being met at the safe consumption sites, i.e., not using needles etc.
- They are not a safe space to keep stuff, personal belongings often stolen.
- Shelters are typically not safe. There are lots of cultural barriers, and lots of violence.
- Lack of safety and care coming from the staff in these spaces.
- Not able to use spaces without inhalation.
- Shelters can be inaccessible and hard to get to. They are often far from sanctioned consumption sites.
- "Our OPS is quite a walk away from our shelters and our community does not have in-house transportation for folks. Cabs have refused to pick up this populations too."
- Resources need to be made more available.

**Fourth Question:** What should medical professionals and ally's do in warming spaces that is safe and respectful?

**Answers:**

- People with the most privilege being the ones advocate first, especially when confronting the police/ people of power.
- Working alongside versus on top of you is crucial in restoring broken relationship/
- Are PWLLE/ PWUD voices being heard and advocated for or being tagged on as an afterthought.

**Meeting Close:**

- Moment of Silence, honoring those we have lost to the drug war

