

Media release

For immediate release

Symposium Delivers Alberta-Made Solutions to Prescription Drug Misuse

Leaders work together to positively approach an issue that affects every Alberta community

NISKU, March 23, 2010 – Addressing the increasing misuse of prescription drugs in Alberta is the driving force behind the Coalition on Prescription Drug Misuse Symposium, held today at the Executive Royal Inn in Nisku. More than 140 leaders in several healthcare disciplines, law enforcement, treatment, policy development and those affected by prescription drug misuse are gathering to discuss possible actions and solutions to this issue.

"Canadians are amongst the highest consumers of prescription drugs in the world, and prescription drug misuse is an increasing problem in Alberta and elsewhere," said Clarence Wepler, Co-Chair of the Coalition on Prescription Drug Misuse (CoOPDM). "This is a complex issue. There is no magic bullet solution or any one area to blame. The Symposium was designed to bring together many different perspectives and professions because everyone has a responsibility in addressing prescription drug misuse."

The Addiction and Mental Health Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta conducted an assessment of the issue in Alberta and is presenting data at the Symposium showing the scope and severity of misuse in Alberta.

"The research shows that no population or community is immune to prescription drug misuse," states Wepler. "It exists in every community and affects people of all ages, demographics and backgrounds. It is a serious issue that requires a committed and collaborative response."

At the event, participants will learn more about the different perspectives on prescription drug misuse. Developing short and long term actions that individuals, organizations and communities can take is the key outcome for the event.

The Coalition on Prescription Drug Misuse (CoOPDM) was formed in May 2008 to positively impact prescription drug misuse in Alberta. Acting as a catalyst and a facilitator, the CoOPDM brings together organizations, stakeholders and communities to foster information sharing, education, enlightenment and cooperation on the issue of prescription drug misuse.

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For more information or to arrange a media interview with CoOPDM members, Symposium speakers or others, contact:

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