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**PARKDALE
QUEEN WEST**
Community
Health Centre

Update from the Parkdale Site Neighbourhood Drop-In Meeting



[Image Matt Johnson, SCS Health Promoter, PQWCHC]

On October 1, 2025, **Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (PQWCHC)** reopened the **Gwynne Avenue Parkette** and enacted our collaborative plan with the

City of Toronto to support unsheltered community members and people who use drugs in Parkdale. As always, our goal remains to ensure the parkette and the broader community of Parkdale are welcoming and supportive spaces for everyone. We were happy to host representatives from the City of Toronto at our most recent neighbourhood drop-in meeting, that happened on October 16.

Along with city representatives, we were able to share the significant progress of our efforts following the reopening of the parkette. A particular note of gratitude to the City of Toronto representatives in attendance at the meeting:

- **Monica Waldman**, Project Director, Homelessness Initiatives and Prevention Services, Toronto Shelter & Support Services
- **Joya Mukherjee**, Supervisor, Community Crisis Response Program, Community Safety and Wellbeing Unit | Social Development Division
- **David Lee**, Senior Policy Advisor, Mental Health and Substance Use, Toronto Public Health
- **Kaitlin Wainwright**, Manager, Community Recreation, Parks and Recreation

Thank you to everyone who joined the neighbourhood meeting and the City of Toronto for their steadfast partnership and dedicated collaboration. It was an evening of meaningful dialogue and we're pleased to share some of the key takeaways with you.

Collaborative City Response

Our partners at the City of Toronto outlined their part of the multi-faceted approach to support, in partnership and communication with Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (PQWCHC), this included:

- An opportunity to clarify that washroom access at both PQWCHC and Masaryk-Cowan Community Recreation Centre remains accessible to all community members during their respective operating hours. And to clarify that no supervised consumption services are provided at Masaryk-Cowan Community Recreation Centre. You can find details about this by reading [PQWCHC's statement](#).
- Their ongoing efforts to connect unsheltered community members with access to shelters, permanent housing and the broad spectrum of social services provided by the City to support those experiencing homelessness.
- City-led outreach services, [Streets to Homes \(S2H\)](#) and the City's Harm Reduction Unit, are working to reach unsheltered community members beyond the parkette and amphitheatre. These teams complement PQWCHC's outreach efforts.
- In response to community input as well as insights shared at September's neighbourhood meeting, the **Parkdale Safety Network** was relaunched. With their

first meeting scheduled for November 13 at 6pm at 1303 Queen St.W.

- New information for residents regarding the **MATRAC safety audit** currently underway that includes a component for community consultation, happening November 6 at 6pm at 171 Dunn Ave.
- The safety audit will supplement Parkdale Community Safety Network recommendations.

The Parkdale Safety Network Relaunch

Calling all Parkdalian!

Is the Parkdale Safety Network a good fit for me?

Do you have ideas on how to improve community safety and wellbeing in Parkdale?

Would you like a space to share your thoughts, plan events, and collaborate with your fellow organizations and residents?

Are you looking for ways to get involved in your community?

First Meeting:
Thursday, November 13, 2025
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Parkdale Library Auditorium
1303 Queen St. W

Parkdale Community Consultation

Your insight, ideas, and feedback are needed to inform a community-wide safety audit. Please join us on:

Thursday, November 6, 2025
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Parkdale United Church, Bsmt.
171 Dunn Ave.
Register by Monday, November 3



[Image: Gab Laurence, Director of Harm Reduction, PQWCHC]

PQWCHC's Deepened Commitment

PQWCHC's **Director of Harm Reduction, Gab Laurance**, spoke to provide important context around the growing demand for PQWCHC health services. This surge is largely due to the province's closure of half of its supervised consumption sites, combined with the rising cost of living and worsening housing affordability, which have contributed to increased homelessness across both the city and the province. They shared statistics highlighting an average 50% rise in visits to PQWCHC over the summer months. Gab also shared details about the comprehensive steps the Centre is taking to complement city-wide efforts for unsheltered residents and people who use drugs with critical, life-saving medical care and social supports. The support and outreach matrix we've developed in partnership with the City is designed to be as responsive as possible within our capacity. A detailed schedule of our [collaborative service matrix is currently available](#).

Also, a **special thank you to Matt Johnson**, who moderated the meeting and whose words reminded us of Parkdale's rich and complex history and offered a crucial perspective on the profound impacts of regressive treatment methods for people who use drugs and denied access to services for our most vulnerable community members. It was a poignant call to continue building healthcare that is rooted in evidence-based practice and equity.

During this time of increased demand for our services we have heard real concerns from the community. We view our efforts to support unsheltered community members and address safety concerns in Parkdale as a shared responsibility, one that involves the City, all levels of government, and the broader community. We firmly believe that change can't be achieved through division; it lies in uniting around our shared goals for a safe community.

Join Us

Our community engagement continues! **Please join us for the next meetings on November 20 and December 18 at 6pm ET**. Your voice is essential.

We also invite you to visit [PQWCHC's website](#) and follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [X \(Twitter\)](#) for up-to-date information. Staying connected allows us to also share how we are prioritizing community needs in building a safer, healthier Parkdale.

Please continue to use the following channels for support when needed:

- For immediate emergencies, call 911.
- For non-emergency issues like park maintenance, Street 2 Homes outreach or sharps disposal on public property please contact 311.
- For questions about PQWCHC sharps disposal, other services or outreach, email: communityengagement@pqwchc.ca



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