

Overdose Prevention Support Workers – LAUNCH (RELIEF)

Up to ten (10) Relief Positions, Bargaining Unit - UFCW Local 175

Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (PQWCHC) is a dynamic, community-based health care organization that has historically served mid-west downtown Toronto, and now provides outreach services to across the entire city. Offering a broad range of services, including primary health care, dental care, harm reduction, health promotion, counselling, and community development programming, we are also committed to serving people who face barriers to health care, and we strive to reduce these barriers. PQWCHC is a multi-sited organization.

We are seeking experienced Overdose Prevention Support Workers who shares our passion for making a difference; you see this role as an opportunity to take the next step in your successful career while contributing to a vision of ***Inclusive Communities. Responsive Healthcare. Healthier Lives.***

Striving for excellence in client-centred care and education, you will work as part of the Mobile Covid and Harm Reduction Outreach Services (LAUNCH) team. In the role of a LAUNCH Overdose Prevention Support Worker, you will provide health information and support on safer injection and consumption, monitor clients for adverse reactions, assess, respond to, and support overdose events, and assist in the initiation of emergency responses, as necessary. As a member of the LAUNCH team you will assist in educating team members in areas relating to overdose response, infection prevention and safer drug consumption for purposes of increasing team capacity to support the needs of people who use drugs (PWUD) in sheltering sites.

The role of OPSW includes *in situ* harm reduction support for shelter residents self-isolating as per directions from Toronto Public Health, to prevent COVID transmission within the shelter system. OPSW's will mobilize COVID response should the need to uplift a new isolation site(s) emerge, and will abide and enforce strict infection control measures during overdose response. This position may also require flexibility to work late evenings, overnights, and weekends, as required by the covid isolation support function of the job.

General Responsibilities:

The OPSW works in tandem with Client Support Workers (CSW) and Harm Reduction Coordinators to assess risk factors in sheltering sites for development of effective overdose response strategies. The OPSW leads response to overdoses and facilitates drills and simulations for the LAUNCH team, shelter staff and community members. The OPSW is expected to facilitate prevention and response work in controlled and uncontrolled settings and is responsible for completing quality assurance on all equipment and provides safer injection education and safety planning to clients accessing LAUNCH services. The OPSW is responsible for capturing client encounters within an agency communication database.

OPSW relief shifts will be offered as either: day, evening, overnight, and weekends.

Qualifications:

1. Undergraduate in a relevant discipline from a recognized university or some post-secondary education combined with significant experience in health promotion and/or community development or an equivalent of work/lived experience.
2. 2-4 years working in overdose response capacity with people who use drugs, racialized populations, Indigenous peoples, people who engage in sex work, prisoners/ex-prisoners, people with mental health challenges, and people who have experienced trauma
3. 3-5 years of experience in a community setting should include demonstrated knowledge of community resources, harm reduction, and supportive counselling
4. Excellent written and verbal communication skills
5. Extensive advocacy, crisis intervention and prevention, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills
6. Ability to travel across the City of Toronto
7. Ability to develop and implement harm reduction risk analysis assessments and overdose prevention and response protocols
8. Demonstrated ability to work with multi-disciplinary teams.
9. Experience with overdose prevention and responding to overdose emergencies
10. Proficiency in a language other than English, as well as personal/lived experience of drug use, homelessness and/or street involvement are assets.

Compensation: \$50,561 to \$59,539 per annum, plus 4% paid in lieu of vacation



If you are interested in joining in a creative and dedicated team to, we want to hear from you! Applicants please send your resume and cover letter **in a single document** (MS Word or PDF format only). Please apply using the form at the bottom of the PQWCHC employment page: <https://pqwchc.org/contact/employment/>

Please also note that the successful candidate will be required to provide a police vulnerable sector check as a condition of employment, however strong consideration is made to the type of offense. Employment is conditional upon having had a full series of COVID-19 vaccinations (2 doses, plus booster within 6-12 months) 14 days before starting employment.