

MEDIA RELEASE

Health Committee releases report on drug toxicity and overdose crisis

VICTORIA – The all-party Select Standing Committee on Health released its report today on the drug toxicity and overdose crisis with 37 recommendations aimed at saving lives and moving BC out of the current public health emergency.

“We heard that some British Columbians are not able to access lifesaving supports and services, either because they aren’t available in their community or because of other barriers,” said committee chair Niki Sharma. “The committee’s report makes recommendations to further scale up government’s response to ensure that all British Columbians can access high-quality substance use support and care when they need it.”

Shirley Bond, deputy chair, added, “There is no one-size-fits-all response to this crisis. The committee wants to see significant investments across the entire continuum of care—from prevention and education to treatment and recovery—as well as ongoing evaluation and monitoring to ensure results are achieved.”

In the course of its work, the committee received briefings from federal and provincial government ministries and agencies, health authorities, and other experts. The committee also held public hearings and invited written input to ensure all British Columbians had the opportunity to participate. In total, the committee heard from 118 presenters and received 881 written submissions.

“We were profoundly moved by what we heard from British Columbians, both those who are directly impacted by this crisis and those working on the front lines to save lives,” said Sharma. “On behalf of the committee, I want to thank everyone who took the time to share their thoughts and their stories with us.”

Further information about the committee, including its report, “Closing Gaps, Reducing Barriers: Expanding the response to the toxic drug and overdose crisis,” is available at: www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/health

The members of the committee are:

- Niki Sharma, MLA, Vancouver-Hastings (Chair);
- Shirley Bond, MLA, Prince George-Valemount (Deputy Chair);
- Pam Alexis, MLA, Abbotsford-Mission;
- Susie Chant, MLA, North Vancouver-Seymour;
- Dan Davies, MLA, Peace River North;
- Sonia Furstenu, MLA, Cowichan Valley;
- Trevor Halford, MLA, Surrey-White Rock;
- Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA, Courtenay-Comox;

- Doug Routley, MLA, Nanaimo-North Cowichan; and
- Mike Starchuk, MLA, Surrey-Cloverdale.

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