



## International Overdose Awareness Day

### A message from Michael Sandler, Executive Director

I would like to recognize the work that is being done by nurses and other healthcare providers across BC, across our country and across international borders, to slow down the relentless devastation that the overdose crisis is inflicting on our families, friends and communities. This is the time when we need to come together and acknowledge all the point of care providers, educators, administrators, researchers and advocates for their invaluable contributions to slowing down this health crisis. However, there is more to be done! The urgency of this work has become more pronounced as the impact of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic has added to overdose crisis in unanticipated ways. As the death toll from an increasingly scarce and toxic illicit drug supply continues to climb, now is the time to double down on our commitments to harm reduction, safe supply and de-stigmatization.



I would like to acknowledge the families and friends of those who have lost their lives to overdose. I would also like to acknowledge the users and their families who are still struggling with substance use today. The suffering and heavy weight of stigma that surrounds substance use does not need to be taken on alone. Nurses are here to help. I encourage members to check out our [resources](#) and learn more.

On behalf of Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of British Columbia, I look forward to further collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other important partners as we develop mechanisms and provide evidence informed solutions to combat this crisis. Together we can positively affect policy by providing evidence-informed recommendations to government, facilitate consultations with subject matter experts and work collaboratively towards finding opportunities to enhance treatment and recovery methods, ultimately leading to the implementation of targeted, effective harm reduction strategies.

In closing, I would like to reach out to the nursing community in BC to ask each one of you to reflect on this International Overdose Awareness Day and share your thoughts on what we can do collectively to help reduce suffering, harm and stigma. Please feel free to send comments to [info@nnpbc.com](mailto:info@nnpbc.com).

Kind regards,

*Michael Sandler* 

Michael Sandler  
Executive Director