

Frequently asked questions about London CARES

What is London CARES?

London CARES is a strategy aimed at improving the health outcomes of homeless individuals in London by addressing addictions. The five year integrated plan will also focus on the effects of poverty, homelessness and mental illness in our downtown core neighbourhoods.

London CARES builds a continuum of care aimed at:

- improving health outcomes for those living with addiction and homelessness
- reducing the incidence of homelessness in London
- enhancing the quality of life in downtown/priority areas

How did London CARES come to be?

Neighbourhood residents, business associations, service providers, London Police Service and the City of London identified the need for support in dealing with the effects of homelessness and street level addiction in London. Concerns included:

- growing number of homeless on the streets
- increased presence of drug dealers, criminal activity and prostitution
- discarded needles left in parks, on streets and private property
- increased fear for public safety and viability of downtown

How does London CARES plan to help?

London CARES is not a new social agency. It is a strategy linking and expanding existing expertise within our community.

London CARES applies the internationally accepted *Four Pillar Strategy* to respond to addictions and incorporates treatment, prevention, enforcement and harm reduction. London CARES created a fifth pillar of collaboration and integration. Neighbourhood residents, agencies, police, businesses and the user community are all part of our strong community partnership and solutions.

What are the next steps?

London CARES will continue to build solutions to reach London's homeless by working together to achieve the outcomes. To succeed, London CARES requires all five pillars to be equitably applied and supported through municipal, provincial and federal funding and initiatives.

A reduction in poverty, appropriate and affordable housing, treatment and recovery options, and expanded policing services are all part of what is needed to create lasting changes, healthier individuals and vibrant neighborhoods.

Call 519 661-CARE (2273)

Together we are stronger

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What is street outreach?

CAREs outreach workers are on the streets reaching out to the street involved and homeless. Outreach workers will:

- Provide “as-needed” services, including referrals to support services
- Contact and develop relationships with the homeless and local community members
- Reduce harm through safe needle clean-up, disposal and safe needle exchange
- Provide after-hours non-emergency response to facilitate alternatives to services such as police, ambulance and hospital

What is a safe haven?

A safe haven is a community centre that offers a temporary alternative to being on the street. Safe havens provide a place to rest, programs and access to support workers, snacks and clothing. The safe havens are operated by The Salvation Army Centre of Hope, Mission Services of London, WOTCH Community Mental Health Services - My Sister's Place, and At^lohsa Native Family Healing Services.

How can I contact London CARES?

Call the London CAREs 24 hour telephone line at 519 661-CARE (2273) for information, connection to service providers and resources.

What is the London CAREs van?

The van provides mobile outreach, transportation and diversion from emergency services.

What is safe syringe recovery?

Used needles have been found in parks, discarded on streets and on private property. The CAREs action plan to safely dispose of needles and syringes includes collecting needles and installing needle bins in selected locations. This is in addition to local Ministry of Health approved programs to encourage needle exchange. Providing clean needles has been proven to support the health of the user and the community by reducing transmittable diseases and other related health impacts and costs.

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Reaching out to London's homeless