

QUEEN/BATHURST COMMUNITY CHECK-IN JUNE 17TH 2026

West Neighbourhood House and Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (Parkdale Queen West CHC) hosted an community check-in online to discuss the concerning situation that has been unfolding in recent months at Queen and Bathurst. We have felt the impacts on our existing operations and we have heard about the impacts on our neighbours. The goal of the meeting was to share updates from our problem-solving efforts.

~~Also presented at the check-in were Deputy Mayor of the City of Toronto and Member of Provincial Parliament Chris Glover~~ were in attendance, along with approximately 14 neighbours.

OVERVIEW:

The Meeting Place drop-in is a program of West Neighbourhood House, a multi-service neighbourhood organization. The Meeting Place is located at 588 Queen Street West, at Queen and Bathurst.

The front of the building is rented to Parkdale Queen West CHC for health promotion and harm reduction work. Parkdale Queen West CHC also operates a new Homelessness and Addictions Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub at their Bathurst location after their Supervised Consumption Site was closed by the provincial government.

Over the last few months, frontline agencies, businesses, and local residents have shared concern about the increase in the number of people in the area who are experiencing homelessness, and often also are hurt by the increased toxicity in the drug supply.

Drugs are not provided or distributed by West Neighbourhood House, nor by Parkdale Queen West CHC.

Parkdale Queen West CHC reported over 50 overdoses in the area in the past 3 months, compared to 31 overdoses in 12 months from April 2025 to March 2026.

Along with increased frequency, overdoses have become more complex events to respond to, often requiring oxygen support or paramedics to assist. This is straining all our resources here, and it is also happening across the city. It is very distressing.

It is our shared priority to stabilize this situation as we respond to increased numbers of people both in our spaces and in the surrounding street-level around us. This has produced a set of new solutions now underway.

NEW SUPPORTS AT QUEEN & BATHURST

As of June:

- 1. Deputy Mayor Malik, the local City Councillor, directed Toronto Shelter Services and Supports Division to respond. As a result, the City has provided new funding for West Neighbourhood House to hire additional staff for the Meeting Place drop-in to help as well as funding for more cameras to monitor the area. Deputy Mayor Malik expressed the situation is not normal and her office will continue working with 14 Division police and 311.**
- 2. Parkdale Queen West CHC has increased health and outreach services to better support people needing substance use care, both indoors and outside at their location at 168 Bathurst and at the West Neighbourhood House site. This includes more drop-in time with food supports to draw people into the HART Hub as well as the deployment of their Overdose Prevention Team to the area.**

3. Parkdale Queen West CHC has engaged Fred Victor Centre to operate a Community Outreach Team to support anyone experiencing crisis here. The trained team will operate from 8 am to 8 pm daily.

The team responds to community concerns, conducts wellness checks, and builds relationships with people who can benefit from our services.

WHAT DOES A COMMUNITY OUTREACH TEAM DO?

- The team is focused on outreach and immediate crisis response. Our staff cannot force people to leave any public space, enforce laws, or force participation in a service.**
- Over half of the interactions in the first few weeks has been requests related to harm reduction support.**
- The Community Outreach Team is focused on routes around the Queen and Bathurst area to provide attention at this hotspot. The team does not have resources to cover a larger area.**
- This partnership will continue until the end of 2026, with the hope this crisis has stabilized or more solutions have been developed in collaboration with all levels of government.**

4. Parkdale Queen West CHC also is working with local hospitals to establish and increase rapid access to medical care, including the Stabilization Centre, operated in partnership with University Health Network (UHN), The Neighbourhood Group, and Parkdale Queen West CHC to divert people from Emergency Department use.

5. City of Toronto Solid Waste division has increased service to the area to remove excess refuse. Contact 311 to report concerns about garbage. Illegal dumping of junk household appliances, electronics, furniture, etc. is a longstanding problem being investigated.

6. Parkdale Queen West CHC can support neighbours who are concerned about what is happening with practical training on how to dispose of sharps (i.e. needles) safely and how to administer naloxone that prevent some overdoses from being fatal. In partnership with Fred Victor's Community Outreach Team, they are also supporting the safe removal and disposal of sharps.

We also answered many questions and comments during the meeting:

- Community social service spaces like the Meeting Place drop-in are set up to support connection, mutual support, basic needs, and case management including referrals to other services. The overdose crisis has taken staff away from these important roles.
- No one is permitted or encouraged to use drugs or alcohol in the Meeting Place drop-in space or public spaces. This is monitored by staff as much as possible during our opening hours but the volume has been difficult to manage in the last few months.
- Not everyone who is unhoused uses drugs. Without enough housing, crisis beds, transitional shelters, supervised-consumption sites, and rapid access to treatment, drug use does become more visible and public. We can address concerns as immediately as we can, while working together to address shortfalls in healthcare and housing systems.
- Providing harm reduction supplies (e.g. pipes, needles) is based on clear evidence that this helps reduce infection and preventable diseases (e.g. Hep C and HIV). Prevention is less expensive than treating in terms of hospital resources in our healthcare system.

Contact your local MPP to share your views and learn about the healthcare decisions that aim to address the opioid crisis in Ontario. Current, evidence-based community strategies include access to voluntary residential treatment, overdose prevention services, and transitional housing.

Email: CGlover-CO@ndp.on.ca
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WHO ELSE TO CONTACT

For someone in distress, call 211 and ask for Toronto Community Crisis Services.

For City services, including waste removal and safe sharps disposal, call 311.

For medical emergencies and situations you do not feel safe, please call 911.

For non-emergency, immediate responses, please reach the Fred Victor Community Outreach team 416-707-4233 (8am to 8pm)

For non-urgent community health concerns please contact PQWCHC at communityengagement@pqwchc.ca.

For questions about this information, other non-urgent community concerns, or just to stay connected to us, contact community@westnh.org.