

# “Stigma Ends Here”

## Communications Toolkit

### Contents

Background	.....	2
Community engagement cards	.....	3
Social media messages and creative	.....	4
Twitter	.....	4
Facebook	.....	5
Instagram	.....	5
Posters	.....	5

## Background

There is a need to address the attitudes and outlooks of community related to substance use disorders, in order to eliminate stigmatization within Brant. Substance use disorders are a struggle and can manifest in different ways. Recovery from addiction and substance use can take many forms.

Public education must be provided on the concept of harm reduction, to create an opportunity to provide safe and respectful support to all community members. Bringing a face to the person who uses substances provides opportunities for the Brant community, and beyond, to empathize and work with these individuals in ways that dig into the root causes of substance use that will enhance their well-being.

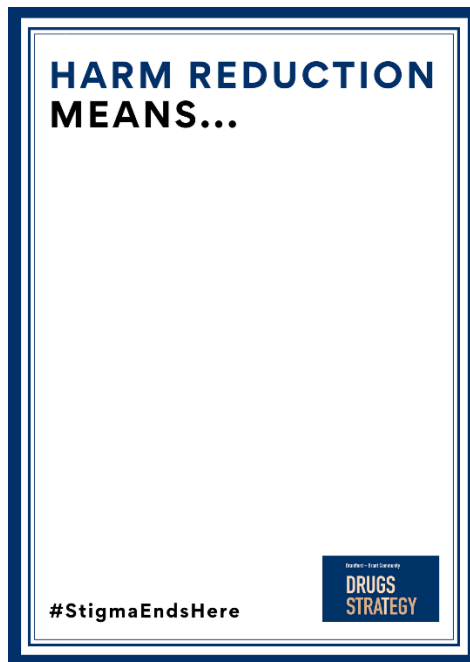
An Anti-Stigma and Harm Reduction Working Group has been planning and implementing activities that address stigma within Brant. The Working Group is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders (e.g., people with lived experience, community members, and community agency representatives). Through the work of this group, efforts will be made to increase public awareness in harm reduction principles and its function in community safety, in addition to an increased understanding of the realities of substance use, addiction, and stigma for the individual and families.

## Community engagement cards

We are encouraging the community to select a card with a statement that best resonates with them and then fill in the blank with their personal message. Once complete, take a picture with the card and share it to social media with the hashtag #StigmaEndsHere.

Statements include:

- Harm reduction means...
- I challenge stigma by...
- Overdose affected me when...
- I love someone who uses substances...
- I can help prevent overdoses by...
- I love someone who has overdosed...
- Overdose prevention is important because...
- Harm reduction is important because...



## Social media messages and creative

### Campaign hashtags

#SaveLivesEndStigma

#StigmaEndsHere

#HarmReduction

#PreventOverdoses

#DontHateEducate

### Campaign weblink

[www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma)

### Twitter

- Our words have power. We reinforce stigma with words like “druggie,” or “junkie”. These words are inaccurate, hurtful, and blameful. Instead, use person-first language to prevent stigma and end the judgement. Learn how to end stigma, visit [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #StigmaEndsHere
- Stigma impacts the welfare of people who use substances. You can help end stigma by being choosing your words carefully and showing compassion. Find out how these make a difference:  
[www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma)  
#StigmaEndsHere #SaveLivesEndStigma
- Addiction can affect anyone, no matter what path you walk in life. Substance use disorders affect parents, children, friends, co-workers, and neighbours. End the blame. End the shame. End the stigma. Learn how to end stigma: [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma)
- There are many reasons that contribute to substance use. This includes trauma, mental health challenges, and lack of support. Remember to be

kind and aware of attitudes and behaviours. We don't always know what someone is going through. [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #StigmaEndsHere

## Facebook and Instagram

- Substance use disorders are only a part of a person's larger picture. It is important for everyone in the Brant community to see the person behind the substance use disorder. There is no typical path to substance use, avoid assumptions or judgements about another person's life. Find out how these make a difference: [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #StigmaEndsHere #HarmReduction
- Access to support and harm reduction services in Brant prevents the cycle of marginalization for people with substance use disorders. The stigmatization of people who use drugs can hinder their access to health services thereby compromising treatment and social reintegration opportunities. Learn how to end stigma in our community: [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #SaveLivesEndStigma #HarmReduction #PreventOverdoses
- Many people with substance use disorders experience social segregation and face discrimination. These judgements and feelings of shame add to the barriers that many experience with accessing the support and services they need. End the blame. End the shame. End the stigma. Be the difference in the Brant community, visit [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #SaveLivesEndStigma #StigmaEndsHere
- Stigma can make it harder for people to get support. Our words and actions matter, together we can end stigma by:
  - Using non-stigmatizing and person-first language
  - Avoiding slang
  - Viewing people who use drugs as community members

Learn how to end stigma in our community: [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma)  
#SaveLivesEndStigma #HarmReduction #PreventOverdoses  
#DontHateEducate

- The continuum of substance use ranges from abstinence to dependence, resulting in changes in the brain that cause cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Developing a substance use disorder is not a choice; it is a chronic health issue. Quitting can be extremely difficult even with the right supports. End the blame. End the shame. End the stigma. Learn more at [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #StigmaEndsHere #DontHateEducate
- People start and continue to use drugs for many reasons, including childhood trauma, sexual abuse, violence, and chronic pain. Those reasons can change over time and people's use can develop into a substance use disorder. Having a substance use disorder is not a moral failure; it is a chronic illness and should be treated as such. End the blame. End the shame. End the stigma. Learn more at [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #StigmaEndsHere #DontHateEducate
- Stopping substance use is simply not a matter of will power or having a desire to stop. Even with support, it can be extremely difficult to quit. Quitting can happen after a single attempt, or 5 attempts. It's about the intent and having the right supports at the right time. End the blame. End the shame. End the stigma. Learn more at [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) #SaveLivesEndStigma #StigmaEndsHere #DontHateEducate



## Posters

Accompanying the social media images are downloadable posters that can be printed and displayed around community organizations and businesses. There are five different images available. They can also be accessed by visiting [www.bchu.org/EndStigma](http://www.bchu.org/EndStigma) in the following sizes:

- 8.5x11"
- 11x17'



\*This initiative has been adapted with permission from the Government of British Columbia – Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions.