

UPDATE

Report on
the AFMC
Response
to the
Canadian
Opioid
Crisis



The AFMC's Commitment to the Health Canada Joint Statement of Action was as follows:

- 1) Continuing to ensure that the accreditation standards for Canada's medical schools include instruction in the diagnosis, prevention, appropriate reporting and treatment of the medical consequences of common societal problems, including the opioid crisis.

- 2) By November 2017, having faculty experts: a) Review opioid educational activities currently in use in its 17 faculties of medicine; b) Create and share a repository of educational products that reflect best practice and c) provide them to all faculties.

To fulfill the commitment to Health Canada, the AFMC reviewed the accreditation standards for undergraduate medical education. The AFMC also conducted an environmental scan of offerings across Canadian medical schools and convened three expert panel meetings to review the curricula and teaching currently being provided in undergraduate medical education (UGME), postgraduate medical education (PGME) and continuing professional development (CPD). Responding schools provided some best practices of teaching and evaluating in opioid prescribing and/or pain management, primarily in non-cancer pain. In consequence, a robust repository has been created that will be disseminated widely and shared on the AFMC website. Many of the best practices demonstrate innovative and forward-thinking contributions by medical school curricula to curb the opioid epidemic, by providing physicians in training with a strong foundation in prevention/harm reduction, identifying substance use disorders, and when to refer patients for appropriate treatment. The process also engaged leading experts in pain, addictions and substance abuse as well as thought-leaders in several panel discussions to address the opioid crisis and craft key recommendations to leverage the role of the Faculties of Medicine in medical education across UGME, PGME and CPD.

UPDATE July 2018

A follow up survey of UGME, PGME and CPD leaders about the content and location of their curricula for instruction in the diagnosis, prevention, appropriate reporting and treatment of the medical consequences of the opioid crisis was conducted across the 17 Canadian Faculties of Medicine. The survey was conducted by email to the list of UGME Deans, PGME Deans and CPD Deans. 10/17 Faculties responded to the update request (See Table 1). Of note several new programs have been developed and existing programs across all the domains have been built upon. AT U of T there have been no substantial changes.

Dalhousie University has unique approach with an integrated program for Residents in PGME. This is an excellent Three-Level program that was developed as a result of a Faculty wide Task Force Chaired by DR Geoff Williams. At UBC several new CPD programs including one targeted at Midwives have been launched. A Year 4 clerkship course in pain management and opioid crisis management is being developed at UBC. The University of Calgary has also added several courses in the clerkship year. At Memorial University two additional CPD courses have been added namely the Introduction to Safe Prescribing: Opioids, Benzodiazepines, and Stimulants and the Opioids for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain: Using the Canadian Guideline in Your Practice Courses. At Université de Montréal, a very substantial series entitled "Répertoire enseignement douleur, opioïdes et toxicomanie Faculté de médecine, Université de Montréal" covers the education in pain and opioid use from UGME into PGME and into practice. These examples are listed in the spreadsheet that is updated on the AFMC website.

Table 1 Faculty Response Rates¹ School	Update Responses 9/17
University of British Columbia	√
University of Alberta	√
University of Calgary	√
University of Saskatchewan	
University of Manitoba	
NOSM	√
Western University	
McMaster University	
University of Toronto	√
Queens University	√
University of Ottawa	
McGill University	
University of Montreal	√
Laval University	√
University of Sherbrooke	
Dalhousie University	√
Memorial University	√

CONCLUSION

The AFMC will continue to monitor the progress by the Faculties of Medicine in addressing the opioid crisis from a pedagogical view and highlight exemplars as they are noted. The sharing and dissemination of the updates to all Faculties of Medicine will continue. The AFMC’s original commitment to the Health Canada Joint Statement remains unchanged. The AFMC continues to be involved in the monthly meetings of the Opioid Response Partners, and as a member of the Pan Canadian Physician Opioid Collaborative.