

WELCOME TO THE DISTRIBUTED DRUG CHECKING GUIDE

Distributed Drug Checking?

The supply of unregulated drugs is constantly changing and unpredictable. Everyone that uses illicit drugs faces risks. This situation often results in a toxic drug supply, presenting health complications that range from discomfort to death. There is no reliable way to know what is in the substance without using drug checking services.

Drug checking technologies are expensive and it is unfortunately currently not feasible to offer them everywhere they are currently needed. With Distributed Drug Checking, we aim to expand services across the region without the need to implement a lab and dedicated staff at each site.

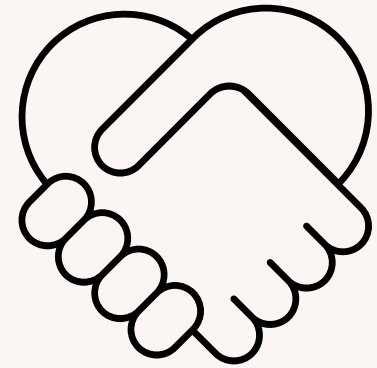
Who is this guide for?

This guide is intended to facilitate agencies and organizations within the Interior Health Region to offer drug checking services at their locations in a context of harm reduction.

Why would one want to participate?

Drug checking helps people who use drugs to be able to make a conscious and informed choice on how to use the substances they have on hand. With this service, you are potentially preventing drug poisonings (overdoses) and empowering people to have control over their personal decisions.

This program is funded by Interior Health and approved by the Provincial government. We can provide advice, training, resources and networking to help you set up a Distributed Drug checking site as part of your current service offerings.



GLOSSARY

UPHNS

Urgent Public Health Needs Site

DDC

Distributed Drug Checking

MHO

Medical Health Officer

Drug Checking

Determining what is the composition of unregulated substances to empower people who use drugs.

Drugs

In the scope of this document, the words drug and substance are using interchangeably.

Sample

A sample refers to a small amount of a drug collected for the purpose of drug checking.

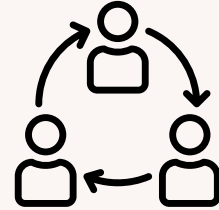
Thank you to our partners



WHY REGISTER FOR BC DISTRIBUTED DRUG CHECKING?

With the new UPHNS designation comes Distributed Drug Checking (DDC). This program enables you to collect, store and transport controlled drugs for the purpose of drug checking.

The DDC helps you and organizations like yours to provide drug checking to service users, by pairing you with a testing site that has access to trained technicians and spectrometry equipment.



WAIT, BUT I WAS DOING THIS ALREADY!?

That is awesome! Now you can actually do it legally, without having to fear repercussions from law enforcement and the ministry.

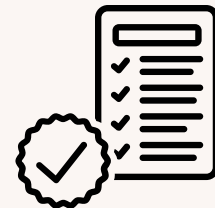


What's more, you get support from Interior Health, in the form of training, advice and supplies.

Interior Health will supply a starting kit that includes all of the supplies needed to collect, store and transport drugs legally!

Ok, Sounds Great, where's the catch?

BC Provincial guidelines require that you keep a chain of custody log to track where drugs are going. In addition, you are expected to follow the guidelines regarding safe-storage, packaging and transportation of drugs. This part is easy with our pre-made kit and some training.



HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Reach out to harmreduction.coordinator@interiorhealth.ca with the following information:

- Name and contact of the planned person to be responsible for the program.
- Name and address of the organization
- Planned start date or if already running
- Name of affiliated testing site. If no site is paired, don't worry, we can help to pair you up!



DISTRIBUTED DRUG CHECKING PROCESS FLOW CHART

For steps 1 to 3, Follow Instructions from infographic: **STEP 1 to 3 - SAMPLE COLLECTION** for more details

1 SAMPLE COLLECTION

Samples are dropped off by service users at designated locations. They fill out the Sample Collection Form and place the sample in a small vial. Both the form and vial are then placed in a letter-sized envelope and sealed.



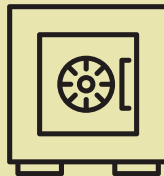
2 CHAIN OF CUSTODY - PART I

This is an important part of this service. All collected samples must be noted on the chain of custody form using a unique 15 digit number. Write this number on the sealed envelope.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY NUMBER
HA#-SITEID-YYYY-MM-DD-SAMPLE#
1-XXX-XXXX-XX-XX-XXX

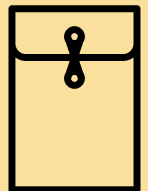
3 SAFE STORAGE

Every sample that is collected must be stored in a locked safe or lock-box. The MHO letter and Chain of Custody forms are also stored here!



4 PACKAGE IT UP!

When ready, put up to 10 packaged samples into a larger Manila envelope (9"x12") for transportation. Make sure you keep a copy of the Chain of Custody Log for yourself and send the original paper copy in the larger envelope along with a copy of the Medical Health Officer letter.



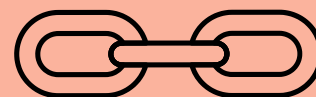
5 PICK UP OR COURIER

All collected samples are either delivered by a staff person from the collection site, picked up by a staff person from the receiving testing service, or couriered from the collection site to testing site/service. Some samples might be tested on site depending on your local service model.



6 CHAIN OF CUSTODY - PART II

The testing site completes the second portion of the Chain of Custody Log. All completed logs are sent to: harmreduction.coordinator@interiorhealth.ca



7 SHARING THE RESULTS

The testing site will send results to the service user as requested on the Sample Collection Form (e.g phone, text, email, or summary to agency).



SUPPLIES

Gloves* 


Communicable Diseases related PPE* 


Stainless Steel Lab Spatula 

Isopropyl Alcohol Wipes 

Kimtech Wipes 

Permanent small point marker* 

Centrifuge Tubes (Snap Cap 1.5-2ml) 

Small zipper-seal type 2"x2" bags and Zip-Lock snack size bags 

Sample Collection Forms 

Letter Size Envelopes - Pre-labeled - Peel to Seal type 

Manila Envelopes (9"x12") with copy of MHO Designation Approval Letter 

Chain of Custody Tracking Sheet 

Safe Storage** 

Desiccant Pouch 

DOCUMENT LIST

Distributed Drug Checking Information Poster

Distributed Drug Checking Process Flow Chart

Step 1 - Sampling Process Infographic

Chain of Custody Form

MHO Letter Of Agreement

Signed UPHNS site application

* = To be Supplied by agency
** = To be supplied by agency or Interior Health, depending on situation
All the rest is part of the Distributed Drug Checking Kit supplied by Interior Health

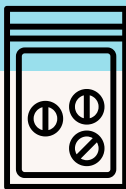
GETTING READY

Make sure you understand all the steps outlined below, as well as the accompanying instruction package. After confirming that you have all the supplies necessary, put on a pair of gloves and let's get sampling.

1 SAMPLING

Only a small amount of substance is necessary. The size of a grain of rice is enough. More will not hurt but please remember that it will not be sent back!

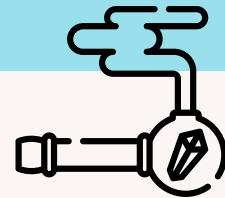
If the sample is already in a small plastic bag, then you may simply insert this bag inside of a new slightly larger bag. This will ensure that the contents do not spill during transportation and minimizes handling of the drugs.



If the sample needs to be taken out of the original container, use a lab spatula to take out a small amount of the drug and place it in a new centrifuge vial. If vials are not available, a new zipper plastic bag will do!



Used cookers and pipes can be sent if they are dry and have obvious, visible residue (enough to be analyzed). These can be placed directly into a new zipper-sealed plastic bag.



3 IDENTIFYING

Write the sample number (the three numbers at the end of the *Chain of Custody Number*: eg. 001) on the vial or zip bag using a permanent marker.

Write the full *Chain of Custody Number* on the letter size envelope and on the *Sample Collection Form*.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY NUMBER
HA#-SITEID-YYYY-MM-DD-SAMPLE#
1-XXX-XXXX-XX-XX-XXX

5 PACKAGING

Verify that you have completed steps 3-4.

Place the sample container in the letter size envelope along with the completed *Sample Collection Form*. Seal the envelope.



2 CLEANING

Clean the tools used for collecting the sample with an alcohol wipe, followed by a second alcohol wipe. Finally, use a Kimtech Wipe to dry off the tool while it is still wet. This will ensure that no contamination occurs between uses.



4 LOGGING

Fill the *Sample Collection Form*.

Take note of the *Chain of Custody Number*, keeping it for further reference until results are returned.



6 STORING

Store envelope in safe until further steps are taken for its transportation or testing.



Make sure the sample collection form is filled completely before the service user leaves, as there is information necessary from them to fill out on there. This will help the technician do their testing and give back relevant results.

DISTRIBUTED DRUG CHECKING SAMPLE COLLECTION

CHAIN OF CUSTODY NUMBER
HA#-SiteID-YYYY-MM-DD-Sample #

<p>EXPECTED SUBSTANCE (Down, Meth, MDMA, Ketamine, Xanax etc.)</p>	<p>STAFF MEMBER RECEIVING SAMPLE</p>	<p>ALTERNATIVE SAMPLE TRACKING # Optional - for in agency tracking</p>
<p>SAMPLE COLLECTED IS FROM PARAPHERNALIA <input type="checkbox"/> YES (Please Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>	<p>HOW WOULD THE PERSON LIKE TO BE NOTIFIED OF RESULTS? (FILL ONLY APPLICABLE CONTACTS)</p> <p>EMAIL</p>	
<p>HAS THE PERSON TRIED THIS SUBSTANCE <input type="checkbox"/> POST USE (YES) <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPLICABLE <input type="checkbox"/> PRE- USE (NO)</p>	<p>PHONE (PLEASE SPECIFY TEXT, CALL, SIGNAL ETC.)</p> <p>THROUGH STAFF MEMBER</p> <p>**If through staff, please consider alternative contacts so not to be delayed by holidays/sick time**</p>	

NOTES/COMMENTS (Write on back if more space needed)

Accessing for routine testing or due to concerning effects or overdose presentation? Please state context.

If post use describe any unusual effects.

Is there specific information or questions on the substance?

Ensure fully informed consent before collecting any contact info, including that the person is okay to receive written results via the selected method if requested. Contact info should only be sent in paper if possible—the paper copy will be destroyed after results are sent, but electronic records of calls and sent texts will likely persist, these records are confidential & protected, and will not be stored with drug checking results, except as necessary (i.e. for email & SMS messaging).



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