Alberta Health Services

Safeworks Monthly Report – April 2023
Supervised Consumption Services
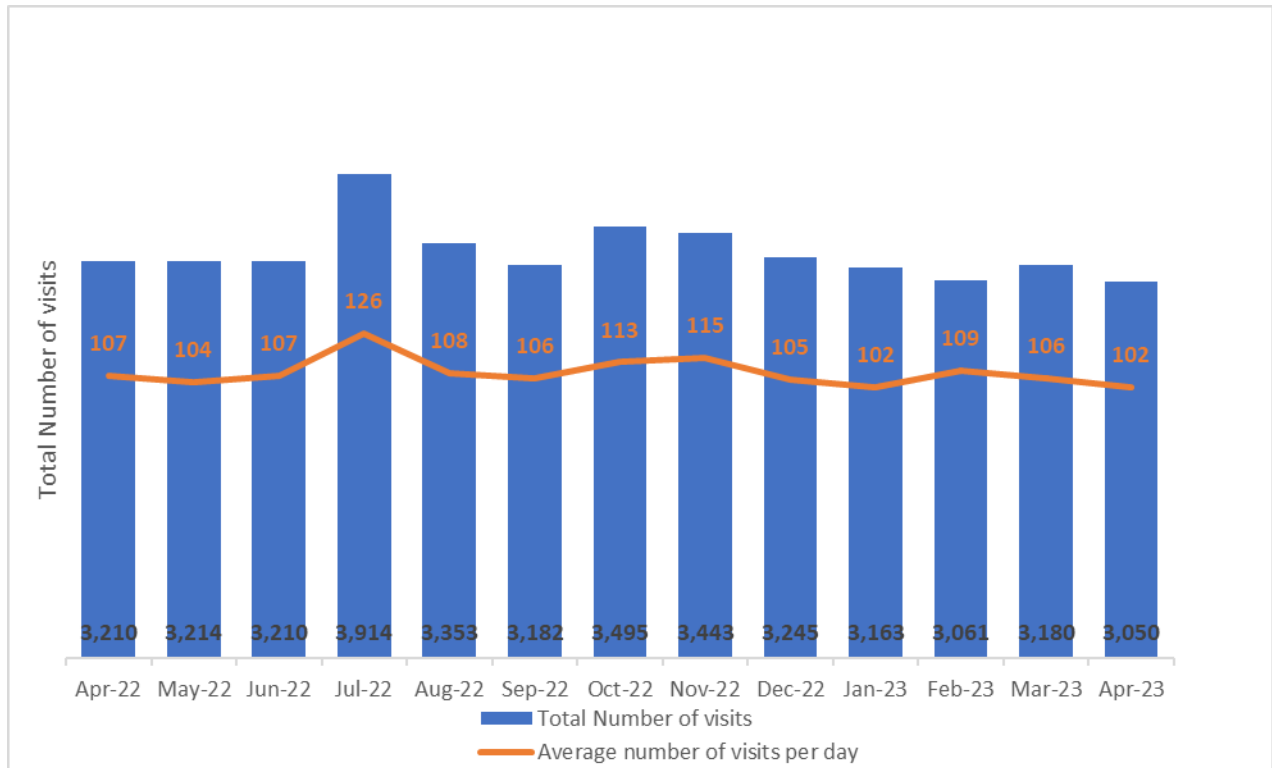
May 1, 2023

Background

Safeworks Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) launched on October 30, 2017 in a temporary facility at the Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre with a federal exemption to the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act from Health Canada. On January 15, 2018, the temporary facility closed, and the permanent facility inside the Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre opened for operations. On April 30, 2018, Safeworks began offering services 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Service Uptake

From the start of operations on October 30, 2017, to April 30, 2023, Safeworks SCS had **271,517 client visits**. In April 2023, the site saw **529 unique individuals** in **3,050 visits** with an average of 102 visits per day.

Uptake of services declined in the spring of 2020, during the COVID-19 response. Safeworks SCS decreased booth capacity from six booths to three booths on March 19, 2020, following public health recommendations. On July 20, 2020, booth capacity was increased to the full complement of six booths with proper infection control measures in place. Due to the rise in COVID-19 cases in the fall of 2020, booth capacity was again reduced to three on November 10, 2020. On July 21, 2021, booth capacity was once again restored to six booths and continues to operate at that capacity.

Fig 1: Safeworks SCS Total Number of Visits and Average Number of Visits per Day, by Month

	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23
Average number of visits per day	107	104	107	126	108	106	113	115	105	102	109	106	102
Total Number of visits	3,210	3,214	3,210	3,914	3,353	3,182	3,495	3,443	3,245	3,163	3,061	3,180	3,050

Drug Use and Overdose Prevention and Response

In March 2023, drugs were consumed on site under the supervision of registered nurses (RNs) or paramedics **2539 times**. With each client who uses drugs by injection, RNs and paramedics are available to provide education on vein care, infection prevention, and injection technique. In March, there was 318 instances of intranasal use (snorting).

The most frequently reported drugs used in March 2023 were methamphetamine (936 times) and fentanyl (876 times).

Overdose response kits (containing Naloxone) and overdose prevention education are offered to all clients accessing Safeworks SCS. In February 2023, SCS staff distributed **160 overdose response kits.**

Since operations began on October 30, 2017, to March 31, 2023, Safeworks staff have responded to a **total of 6,031 overdoses.**

In March 2023, Safeworks staff responded to **210 overdoses**. Of these, 210 required supplemental oxygen, 101 required naloxone and 11 required an EMS response.

Table 1: Safeworks SCS Summary of Visits and Overdoses by Month in the past 12 months

Month	Number of client visits	Number of times drugs consumed	Number of Overdoses	Overdoses per number of times drugs consumed
Apr 2022	3210	2853	101	3.54%
May 2022	3214	2717	90	3.31%

June 2022	3210	2751	103	3.74%
July 2022	3914	3162	87	2.75%
Aug 2022	3353	2758	68	2.47%
Sep 2022	3182	2615	67	2.56%
Oct 2022	3495	3019	119	3.94%
Nov 2022	3443	3014	130	4.31%
Dec 2022	3245	2806	165	5.88%
Jan 2023	3163	2624	137	5.22%
Feb 2023	3061	2548	126	4.95%
Mar 2023	3108	2684	226	8.42%
Apr 2023	3050	2539	210	8.27%

Wrap-Around Care and Referrals

To provide streamlined access to specialized care, Safeworks SCS has partnerships with both AHS programs and external community partners. In March 2023, Safeworks made 133 referrals.

Table 2: Safeworks SCS Summary of Referrals by Month in past 12 months

Month	Social Work Referrals	ODP Referrals	Other * Referrals	Treatment/ Detox	Shelter/ Housing	Urgent Care	Total Referrals
Apr 2022	0	0	38	0	0	10	48
May 2022	0	1	72	2	1	28	104
June 2022	1	4	79	2	2	27	115
July 2022	3	3	116	6	5	38	171
Aug 2022	10	14	181	45	7	25	282
Sep 2022	10	10	250	33	12	22	337
Oct 2022	13	7	107	4	10	18	159
Nov 2022	11	4	134	3	12	16	180
Dec 2022	2	0	116	2	1	15	136
Jan 2023	10	2	133	13	4	12	174
Feb 2023	7	4	104	5	1	12	133
Mar 2023	2	1	87	4	5	12	110
Apr 2023	5	0	116	12	2	7	142

"Other" includes referrals made to a variety of programs, including iOAT, The SORCe, Transportation and Community Paramedics.