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Retired Toronto deputy police chief joins Canada's national addictions agency

OTTAWA—The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) today announced that recently retired Toronto deputy police chief Michael Boyd is joining the Centre as part of a new initiative aimed at more effectively tackling drug problems in Canada.

Mr. Boyd, a 35-year veteran of the Toronto police service, will travel across Canada over the coming months networking with senior government and non-government officials in an effort to develop and support coordinated responses to drug problems at the national, provincial and community levels. The focus of Mr. Boyd's work will be on identifying opportunities for collaboration, and on raising awareness of the need to use credible data and best practice evidence as the basis for a problem-solving approach to reducing the harm associated with substance use.

The new initiative builds on the successes of HEP, the Health, Education and Enforcement in Partnership network, which was established in 1994 to promote dialogue between the health and enforcement sectors. Since then, HEP has worked to bridge the gap between these and other key groups. As part of the renewal of Canada's Drug Strategy (CDS), launched in 2003, CCSA will expand the scope and membership of HEP to promote more active and sustainable partnerships across Canada.

"The new CDS provides an opportunity to build on past successes and to make the most of future initiatives by working with many partners on a set of shared objectives," said CCSA's Chief Executive Officer Michel Perron. "To support this effort, we need a forum where research can come together with policy and practice. That is what the HEP network offers and its role will be greatly enhanced by Mike Boyd's expertise, knowledge and deep understanding of successful community partnerships."

"We are very fortunate to have an individual with Mike Boyd's experience, passion and commitment to prevention of substance abuse on the CCSA team," said CCSA's Chair Chief Barry King. "As immediate past chair of the Canadian Chiefs of Police Drug Abuse Committee and previous co-chair of HEP, Mike has certainly brought a wealth of intimate involvement to HEP over the past five years".

"If we are to succeed in reducing the societal and personal devastation associated with illicit drugs, it's essential that we build and maintain a broad, integrated coalition of concerned stakeholders at every level," said RCMP Assistant Commissioner of Federal and International Operations Tim Killam. "All who join will need to work together with single-minded determination, using the best information and methods available. Mike Boyd's experience straddling the supply and demand reduction sides of the illicit drug problem makes him the ideal candidate to help build this new team with the CCSA."

“The misuse of drugs and alcohol by individuals continues to be a big issue in Canadian society,” said John Borody, president of the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions (CECA). “HEP is a good example of how a working partnership can facilitate the development of local plans to address this issue and make a difference. We are pleased to see the appointment of Mike Boyd to CCSA as a 'champion'—someone with the experience and commitment to make this initiative a reality in our communities.”

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA), Canada’s national addictions agency, was established in 1988 by an Act of Parliament. CCSA provides a national focus for efforts to reduce health, social and economic harm associated with substance abuse and addictions.

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Editors: A biography of Deputy Chief (Rtd.) Boyd is available on request.