



## **CCSA sets new goals for collaborative substance abuse network with training of provincial and territorial network coordinators**

OTTAWA, Feb. 9—Substance abuse professionals from across Canada are gathering here today for a two-day training session aimed at promoting a collaborative response to alcohol and other drug use problems in Canada. Hosted by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA), Canada's national addictions agency, the training will draw on lessons learned through CCSA's Health, Education and Enforcement in Partnership (HEP) initiative and will launch a new team of HEP coordinators focused specifically on provincial/territorial-level issues.

"HEP began as a deliberate effort to break down the barriers that too often exist among professionals working in public health, education and policing, and between government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector—barriers that can stand in the way of effective solutions to drug and alcohol problems," said CCSA's Chief Executive Officer Michel Perron. "A network of provincially or territorially focused HEP coordinators will fill an essential need to keep the lines of communication open and establish what we call a multi-sectoral approach to substance abuse."

CCSA has so far concluded agreements with lead addictions agencies or health departments in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick to send substance abuse professionals for HEP training. Efforts are also ongoing to recruit coordinators from other provinces and territories and these jurisdictions have been invited to send representatives to the training session. The coordinators' job will be to promote improved information sharing and coordination of activities within their own province or territory and to collaborate wherever possible with other HEP jurisdictions. HEP's ultimate goal is to establish a multi-sectoral focus in each province and territory to more effectively address specific provincial/territorial concerns.

As well, HEP training will highlight the means through which provincial/territorial substance abuse priorities can best be used to guide the development of a broad National Framework for Action on Substance Use and Abuse. The proposed National Framework is widely seen as the best means of leveraging a wealth of Canadian substance abuse expertise into a comprehensive and coordinated national effort. An ongoing consultation on the shape and structure of the National Framework was launched by CCSA and Health Canada last year.

In addition to senior CCSA staff, a number of top professionals from the areas of public health, education and policing will provide HEP training, including Beverley Clarke, CCSA Board member and Chief Executive Officer, St. John's Region Health and Community Services (Newfoundland); Doug McCall, consultant with the new Pan-Canadian School Health Consortium; Michael Boyd, CCSA's National Relations Associate and former Deputy Chief of the Toronto Police Service; and Chief Barry King, CCSA Board Chair and Chief of the Brockville, Ont. Police Service. Representatives of the RCMP's Drug Awareness Service will also participate.

"Establishing a network of provincial/territorial HEP coordinators was the next logical step for us," said Michael Boyd, who became HEP's Senior Advisor on National Relations a year ago. "Signs are pointing to higher levels of alcohol and drug use in Canada in recent years and the growing buy-in to

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effective approaches such as HEP at the most senior levels is just what is required to successfully address these issues together.”

### **About HEP**

Established in 1994 and coordinated by CCSA, the HEP network is rooted in Canada’s balanced approach to eliminating or reducing the harms associated with substance use and abuse. HEP unites key players from health, education and law enforcement and also includes partners in social services, corrections and justice. HEP is funded in part through the Government of Canada’s National Crime Prevention Strategy. The initiative is also strongly endorsed by the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions (CECA), a national, non-governmental organization established in 2002 to influence public policy on substance use and abuse.

### **About CCSA**

CCSA is Canada's national addictions agency. It was established by an Act of Parliament in 1988 to provide a national focus for efforts to reduce the health, social and economic harm associated with substance abuse and addictions. For more information, go to [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)

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EDITORS: A list of provincial HEP coordinators and their contact information is attached.

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