



# SURR WORKING GROUP MEMBERS



**Beth Haywood** is the Island Health Peer Project Coordinator where she supports developing policies, programs and staff learning opportunities. Using her lived experience to promote a culture of harm reduction in the workplace and Vancouver Island community, Beth supports individuals and families touched by the poison drug supply in BC. Her work reaches provincial working groups. She is currently a member of the Peer Engagement and Evaluation Project (PEEP).

Beth lives on the unceded territory of the T'Sou-ke and Scia'new Nations, colonially known as Sooke BC.



**Charlene Burmeister** (she/her) has over 13 years of experience in leadership roles and Peer Lead initiatives, as well she is the acting PWLLE stakeholder engagement lead for the BCCDC, the lead of the PEEP Advisory Committee, Founder and Executive Director of the Coalition of Substance Users of the North, and as a board member of the Canadian Association of People who Use Drugs. Charlene has years of experience in representing the interests of PWLLE in the policy making arena, bringing an understanding of how systems affecting the lives of PWLLE work. As well as an understanding of how to engage with those systems in a constructive and goal-minded manner to achieve effective change for PWUDs.

Charlene has a deep knowledge of the community of people who use drugs throughout British Columbia along with a connection with PWLLE in leadership roles in all health regions. This familiarity extends to service providers, stakeholders, and decision makers within government and other agencies that are connected with the community of PWLLE.

Charlene resides, with gratitude on the unceded, (stolen) territory of the Lhtako Dene Nation which is colonially known as Quesnel BC.



**Cheryl Dowden** is the executive director at ANKORS. She has championed innovative projects and services that break down stigma and address societal conditions and situations that disadvantage people.

ANKORS is an HIV, HCV and harm reduction organization that provides services in the Kootenay/Boundary regions of BC. ANKORS works out of the communities of Nelson and Cranbrook. We provide a range of harm reduction services including OPS, OAT, an adult supported recovery program, sexual health and harm reduction, peer health navigation, Transconnect, a men's health initiative and other services.

Cheryl lives, works, and plays on the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa, the Syilx, and the Sinixt peoples and is home to the Metis and many diverse aboriginal persons otherwise known as Nelson BC.



**Graham Hall** is the Manager of Specialized Community MHSU Programs at Northern Health responsible for supporting daily operations of 11 separate community-based Mental Health and Substance Use Programs in Prince George which includes an overdose prevention and harm reduction site. Graham is also responsible for maintaining connection and relationship with other community support services and providers.

Since taking it on in 2016, his role has evolved dramatically toward focusing on the impacts of the widespread toxic drug crisis and aims to develop and implement harm reduction programming to support Prince George's most vulnerable citizens.

Graham is situated on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, colonially known as Prince George BC.



**Heather Spence** is an Indigenous woman from the Treaty 1 Territory. She has 5 children and 5 grandchildren. Growing up in a First Nations community she experienced resilience living with parents who are residential survivors, and now offers her wisdom and lived and living experience of substance use to communities.

She is the founder of Knowledging of All Nations and Developing Unity (KANDU). Currently Heather is the Executive director of KANDU. And is a member of Parents who Advocating Collectively for Kids (PACK). Heather sits on both community and provincial working groups offering her knowledge of Indigenous ways and strength-based healing. Recently she has developed a curriculum for the REALITY program.

The Sylix territory is her home, colonially known as Kelowna.



**Jennifer Driscoll** is one of Interior Health's Harm Reduction Coordinators. Her career focuses on understanding community needs from a population health perspective. Jen leads work with compassion and respect. She is a strong advocate for equitable resources and capacity building in rural and remote communities. She is passionate about health equity.

Jen lives and works in the East Kootenays on unceded Ktunaxa territory, colonially known as Cranbrook BC.



**Jenny McDougall** is a dynamic leader who is the co-founder and Office Coordinator of the Coalition of Substance Users of the North (CSUN), an alliance of people who use or have used drugs who support substance users by facilitating the development of harm reduction programs, services, and resources.

She is also the founder and lead of The Clean Team that cleans up drug paraphernalia and litter in the city of Quesnel. As an advocate for safer supply/OAT, she does this work in the Northern rural and remote communities finding collaborative ways to ensure people who use substances have access to health care.

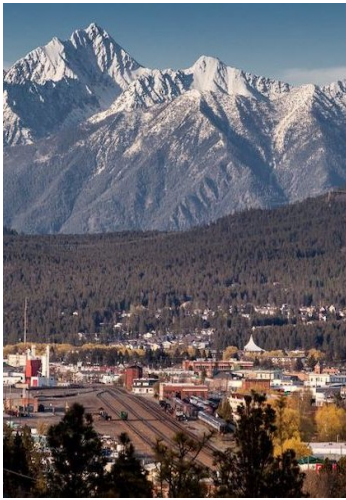
She lives on the ancestral, traditional, unceded territories of Lhtako Dene Nation, colonially known as Quesnel BC.



**Jessica Lamb** comes to harm reduction work with lived and living experience in substance use. She is co-founder and current project coordinator for East Kootenay Network of People who Use Drugs (EKNPUD), as well as the Peer Lead Development Coordinator at ANKORS in Cranbrook, and a member of PEEP (Professionals for the Ethical Engagement of Peers at the BCCDC). When working, Jessica highlights peer engagement, making sure people who use drugs have a voice in drug policy and program development directly impacting their lives. She is also passionate about building community, belonging and safe spaces for people who use substances.

Jessica deeply understands how shame and stigma contribute to deaths by drug poisoning. Creatively, she uses love, and inclusive communities to dismantle attitudes and systems which exclude people using substances.

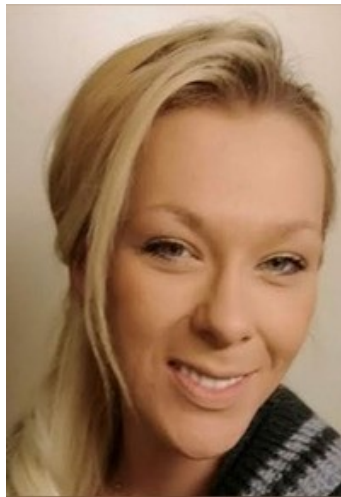
Jessica lives on the unceded territory of the Ktunaxa, colonially known as Kimberley BC.



**Kaiden Benjamin** is a coordinator of the East Kootenay Network of People Who Use Drugs Youth Group. It is one of the first of its kind in the province. He is a champion for youth using substances and works to demystify substance use. His curiosity and desire to keep youth safe in his community drives him to participate in regional and provincial harm reduction working groups.

He recently graduated from high school and is attending the College of the Rockies Human Service Program.

Kaiden lives on the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa Nation, in what is colonially known as Cranbrook BC, where he grew up. You can hear more from Kaiden on the [Interior Health YouTube channel](#).



**Katt Cadieux** is the Executive Director of Uniting Northern Drug Users (UNDU), a grassroots Indigenous-led and peer-focused organization. In addition to providing harm reduction and support to her local community peers through street outreach, Katt aims to “UNDU” the stigma surrounding of drug use by promoting awareness and knowledge to the public. A unique feature about UNDU is that Katt is constantly recruiting fellow peers to work with her on staff.

UNDU believes that a peer-based approach helps build bridges to better access to housing, food security, and medical care for marginalized people who are lacking because of discrimination and judgment arising from a climate of stigma.

Katt lives, works, and plays on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, colonially known as Prince George BC.



**Kenn Quayle (left) and Brian Mackenzie (right)** have partnered together in life and work for 28 years. They operate and manage i2i Peer Support, a peer-led harm reduction project on the Sunshine Coast where they are both advocates for safe supply and provide peer-based education and support for people who use drugs.

Kenn specifically was one of the first people to spearhead peer-based harm reduction in Canada in Toronto which is where they both met. Then together, they both were involved in forming VANDU in Vancouver.

Kenn and Brian’s home and places of work and play lie on the traditional homelands of the Skwxwu7mesh (Squamish) & Shíshálh (Sechelt) First Nations communities, colonially known as the Sunshine Coast BC.



**Laurel White** was born and raised in Williams Lake BC which lies on the Secwepemc traditional territory. Currently, she is the Harm Reduction Coordinator at BGC WL Club for 5 years but also works with Canadian Mental Health Association for 2.5 years leading our Williams Lake Community Action Team.

In her spare time, she volunteers with Central Cariboo Search & Rescue. Laurel is a Captain with the Auto—Extraction team, responding to car accidents. One thing she is very passionate about is helping others and feels very fortunate to be able to do that in all aspects of life. When not working or volunteering you can find Laurel on the ice playing hockey with friends or spending time with her dogs and family!



**Lyric Paddison** is the Peer Lead for SNOW (Society for Narcotic Opioid Wellness). Often working as the one staff in the northern community of Dawson Creek, Lyric builds partnerships with other services providers to build a safe and inclusive community. Advocating for access to harm reduction services and advocating to have an OPS (overdose prevention site) for Northern residences is a priority of his work.

He respectfully lives on the traditional and unceded territory of the Lheidli T’enneh, Haida, Tsimshian, Nisga’a, Haisla, Gitksan, Wet’suwet’en, Tahltan peoples, and on Treaty 8 territory, lands of the Sicannie, Slavey, Dene and Dane-Zaa, Cree, Saulteaux, and Métis, colonially known as Dawson Creek BC.



**Mick Sandy** (he/him) is a drug policy and housing activist living on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc Nation, known colonially and criminally as Kamloops, BC. Formerly a paramedic in rural B.C, Mick saw the toxic drug supply ravage through small communities. He is a graduate of the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies program at Thompson Rivers University, where he wrote a thesis advocating for grassroots food security groups in his community.

Mick does street outreach in his community where he assists individuals experiencing hardships access resources to assist them. Mick works to ensure members of his community have access to harm reduction supplies and drug checking. In his spare time, Mick can be found in nature with his dog, and his daughter.



**Polly Sutherland** is currently the team lead and harm reduction coordinator of ANKORS east. She facilitates the Moving Mountains Community Action Team in Cranbrook. Polly is dedicated to advocating for and supporting vulnerable people in the East Kootenays with a focus on community capacity building and collaborative service provision. Bravely she tackles the hard issues of housing, encampments, harm reduction bringing best practice to the region. Polly is a part of a small group of compassionate staff who work tirelessly to enhance the lives of those living in the East and West Kootenays.

When not engaged in work she enjoys hiking, kayaking, and hunting in the East and West Kootenay region. Living respectfully on the Sinixt and Ktunaxa territory, colonially known as Cranbrook BC.



**Tammy Janzen** is the Executive Director of Quesnel Shelter & Support Society located on the traditional unceded territories of the Lhtako Dene Nation. She was born and raised in Quesnel and the surrounding areas. Tammy has worked for the society, in several roles since the opening of Seasons House Emergency Shelter in May 2008.

Quesnel Shelter & Support Society's mission is to create a place of safety and support for people experiencing homelessness in Quesnel, where they can receive shelter, nourishment and services which foster independence and success. Their services are based on the principles of harm reduction and minimal barriers. This means that there are minimal obstacles and barriers in the way of accessing their services. Quesnel Shelter & Support Society recognizes that the work involves the most high-needs and high-risk members of their community and therefore needs to be creative and flexible in order to meet them where they are at so they can receive much needed services.



**Geoff Bardwell** is an assistant professor at the School of Public Health Sciences, University of Waterloo. He is a community-based researcher who brings many years of direct service experience working with people who use drugs. He has worked as a housing stability worker for a Housing First organization, at a needle and syringe program for an HIV/AIDS organization, and as a harm reduction street outreach worker.

Geoff's research examines a variety of interventions across Canada in various environments such as community health centres, inner-city drug scenes, housing environments, and rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. Geoff is a published author of numerous papers examining how social, structural, and environmental contexts shape substance use, risks and harms, and related public health interventions.

Geoff lives on the Haldimand Tract, land that was granted to the Haudenosaunee of the Six Nations of the Grand River, and are within the territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples, colonially known as Kitchener ON.



**Joanna Mendell** is the Director of Research and Evaluation at PAN. Joanna helps facilitate impact focused research driven by the community. Joanna feels fortunate to work with this powerful team of advocates to move life-saving priorities forward and bring focus to issues faced by small urban, rural, and remote communities in so called BC.

Joanna lives, works, and plays on traditional unceded Wet'suwet'en territory in what is colonially called Smithers BC.



**Evin Jones** is the Executive Director of PAN, a provincially focused organization that aims to strengthen the BC's collective action on HIV, hepatitis C, and harm reduction. PAN's work in advocacy, policy change, capacity building, research, and evaluation is grounded in collaboration to reflect the voices and needs of its member organizations and communities. Evin is an advocate for social justice, harnessing = power within the community to drive policy change.

Evin works from the ancestral and unceded traditional territory of the HUL'Q'UMI'NUM' and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples on what is colonially called Salt Spring Island BC.



**Alison Ko** is a coordinator on the SURR team. She works closely with researchers and communities to improve health care access for all. Sharing the resilience of people affected by the toxic drug supply is a passion of hers. Through stories we can connect and build compassionate communities.

Currently living on the Ktunaxa territory, colonially known as Kimberley BC, where she treads lightly as a visitor to their lands.



**Monte Strong** is the Research and Evaluation Assistant at PAN. His duties include coordination and project administration support for the Small Urban, Rural and Remote (SURR) Harm Reduction Project.

Monte aims to support the voice of people with lived/living experience and the message that safe supply and the innovative work of peer-led organizations & drug user groups reduce drug poisoning deaths in BC.

He lives on the unceded traditional territories of the x̣ṃəθḳẉəỵəm (Musqueam), Ṣḳẉx̣ẉụ́7mesh (Squamish), and ṣə̣ḷiḷẉə̣ṭə̣ł (Tseil-Waututh) Nations, colonially known as Vancouver BC as well as Treaty 7 Blackfoot Territory also known as Lethbridge, AB.

