

CENTRAL OKANAGAN FOUR PILLARS
SUMMARY INFORMATION FOR REPORT TO COUNCIL – NOVEMBER 22, 2004

EXECUTIVE

- ♦ Shelley Cook Chair, Treatment
- ♦ Carmen Lenihan Chair, Harm Reduction
- ♦ Rand Zacharias Chair, Enforcement
- ♦ Gwen Dombrosky Chair, Prevention
- ♦ Brian Mairs Secretary
- ♦ Carla Lundy Support

CONSULTANT/COORDINATOR

- ♦ Robert James

AGENCY OF RECORD

- ♦ Living Positive Resource Centre – Daryle Roberts, Executive Director

STEERING COMMITTEE

- ♦ Community members, representatives of 28 plus associations and the Executive

WEBSITE

- ♦ www.4pillars.livingpositive.ca
-

OVERVIEW OF FOUR PILLARS

On November 26th 2003 Mayor Gray hosted a forum on Community Safety and Harm Reduction, at which over 200 concerned residents, representatives of community organizations, service providers, local politicians, police and members of the drug involved community recognized the need to develop an approach to problematic drug use that would reflect the needs and realities of the community.

To that end a Task Force was struck, meeting for the first time on January 7th, 2004. Using the document Framework for Action – A Four Pillar Approach to Drug Problems in Vancouver as a working model, the Task Force established a Steering Committee and four working groups – Prevention, Treatment, Enforcement and Harm Reduction. Since then, these groups have been working steadily to canvass public opinion, consult with key stakeholders and area service providers, and perform the external research needed to lay the foundations for a safer community. In the City of Vancouver, this process was a city initiated, whereas in the Central Okanagan this has been community driven.

The Four Pillars approach is based on the belief that an effective response to problematic drug use must include a balance of Prevention, Treatment, Harm Reduction and Enforcement initiatives and programs, contained within a coordinated strategy. To succeed, a community strategy requires the support and active participation of service providers, members of the public and all levels of government, and must reflect the community's specific needs.

Those needs have been assessed through a series of eight public forums held in various community centers, an online questionnaire for members of the public, a web-based youth survey, interviews and focus groups involving active drug users, and in-depth consultations with area service providers and business groups. A Consultant/Coordinator was hired in June, to facilitate these activities, to support the working groups as they gather relevant information, and to produce a Framework for Action. The document is currently being drafted, and is will be available for public and Council input in December.

Once the Framework document is complete, the final stage can begin. Recently the City has received approval for additional funding from Health Canada that will enable the Coalition to establish a final planning and implementation strategy, and to broker an agreement between all levels of government that will assure stable funding for Four Pillars initiatives and programs into the future. Among the key goals of this final stage will be to ensure that the Framework for Action is properly implemented, and that community-based research and stakeholder consultations continue, so that emerging problems can be identified and responded to in a timely manner. Problematic drug use in the Central Okanagan will continue to evolve and adapt over time – the Framework for Action must evolve and adapt as well, in order to ensure the safety and security of our community and its residents.

TREATMENT PILLAR

Treatment consists of a continuum of interventions and support programs that allow individuals to deal with addiction problems, make healthier life decisions and eventually become productive members of society. The Treatment Working Committee includes representatives from treatment service providers, social service organizations, OUC researchers and students, representatives of 12 step programs and concerned citizens.

HARM REDUCTION PILLAR

Harm reduction is a pragmatic approach that focuses on reducing the negative consequences of drug use for communities and individuals. The Harm Reduction pillar includes representatives from social service providers, OUC nursing students, Parks department staff and private citizens.

ENFORCEMENT PILLAR

Enforcement is primarily concerned with the maintenance and enhancement of public order and safety. The Enforcement pillar includes representatives from RCMP, community policing representatives and social service providers.

PREVENTION PILLAR

Prevention involves education about the dangers of drug use and builds awareness about why people misuse alcohol and drugs and what can be done to avoid addiction. The Prevention pillar includes representatives from City, RCMP, Social Service Agencies, OUC instructor and students, SD23 instructors and administrators.

The Coalition wishes to acknowledge the support of the City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country, HRDSC, Interior Health and Health Canada and the volunteers who have worked on this project to date.