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Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Drug Abuse Committee

Chair/ Vice Chair:

Barry MacKnight – retired July 1, 2012

Tom Bucher – retired Sept, 2012

Acting Chair

Randy Franks July 1, 2012

Annual Report of Committee Activities

2011-2012

September 2012**Message from the Acting Chair:**

Once again the Drug Abuse Committee experienced extraordinary loss this year with the retirement of Chief Barry MacKnight, Chair of the DAC, and Thomas Bucher, Vice-Chair of the DAC. Both Barry and Tom brought vast experience and commitment to the committee and their presence will be missed. There will be an election for a new Chair and Vice-Chair at the Fall meeting of the DAC in November.

The past year's activities within the Drug Abuse Committee have focused our efforts on the priorities identified through the committee. There were several important activities and issues for the committee in 2011-2012:

National Scope Report on Canadian Police Experience with Health Canada's (HC) Medical Marijuana Access Regulations (MMAR): This report, and its recommendations was presented to the CACP Board of Directors in December 2010, where it was accepted and endorsed as CACP's official consultation submission to Health Canada on the Marijuana Medical Access Regulations reform project. Members from the Drug Abuse Committee met with Health Canada for targeted consultations as key stakeholders on this issue. Health Canada representatives briefed the DAC at the Montreal meeting in May of 2011 and Fredericton in December of 2011 and Toronto in July of 2012. Our clear focus to have this regulatory process move at an aggressive pace has been met by Health Canada with the new MMAR regulation set to be made available to the public in November of 2012.

Research Project- Drug Endangered Children: The issue of Drug Endangered Children was adopted by DAC as a priority in 2009 and since that time we have reviewed some of the current practices relating to the legal response to the issue in some jurisdictions. The focus of the work has been to determine the area where CACP can best engage on this issue. To that end the committee sought funding through the CACP Research Foundation and was successful in receiving a \$20,000 grant for the conduct on research on this issue. The Students Commission- Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement has been hired for this project and their report is expected to be delivered prior to the DAC meeting in the fall of 2011.

At the DAC meeting in December of 2011 an overview of the report was given by Dr. Susan Reid, Director of the Center for Research on Youth at Risk at St. Thomas University. The report was published on April 6, 2012 and has been forwarded to all members of the Drug Abuse Committee. The report makes four recommendations -

- Public Education and Awareness
- Drug Endangered Children legislation may not provide the best solution with focus on punishing families.
- Training and support for evidence based risk assessment tools in law enforcement and social service work.

- Utilize alternatives to the criminal justice process whenever possible.

The report will be a discussion item for the next DAC meeting in November.

Adoption of New Priority - Synthetic Drugs:

The message was made very clear by several DAC agencies that the issue of synthetic drugs must be addressed as a priority by CACP and so the committee has adopted this issue as a priority.

The illicit use and/or misuse of pharmaceuticals, in particular narcotic opioids, has become an issue of increasing concern with impacts on public safety and community well-being.

Trends indicate rising rates of recreational misuse of prescription drugs by youth, the majority of whom obtain these drugs from family medicine cabinets and from friends. Police in Canada are dealing with an increase in pharmaceutical-related crime including pharmacy robberies, prescription drug diversion and trafficking, and drug-impaired driving.

Members of the DAC attended to discuss this issue in June 2011 at Public Safety Canada's "Illicit Use of Pharmaceuticals" workshop in Vancouver, BC.

There remains a lack of clarity regarding police authorities in relation to prescription drugs, as well as a lack of collaboration and communication with health authorities in addressing prescription drug misuse.

The committee submitted the following resolutions which were adopted at the CACP meeting in Sydney.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police endorses the need for a National Prescription Drug Misuse Strategy and the importance of enforcement specific actions as part of that work;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CACP endorses an annual National Prescription Drug Drop-Off Day, to be held in conjunction with National Police Week, to encourage Canadians to drop-off their unused prescription medication to local police and community partners at specified locations;

BE IT FUTURE RESOLVED that the CACP commit itself to working with health sector partners, including pharmacists and physicians, to develop formal and informal channels of communication on the issue of prescription drug misuse, undertake joint efforts to increase awareness, and to develop and disseminate tools and training aimed at reducing prescription drug misuse and related criminality;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CACP urges all members to undertake data collection on pharmaceutical-related incidents, as well as participate in monitoring and surveillance efforts in partnership with health authorities, in order to track trends in illicit pharmaceutical use.

Disposition of Seized Property Priority: The long standing DAC priority had been a priority within Health Canada because the resolve is primarily reached through amendments to the CDSA. There is a CACP resolution from 2007 seeking the appropriate legislative and regulatory amendments, but the file has been on the back burner with HC for some time, with little or no attention. In late 2010 there was progress as Public Safety agreed to take on the work to advance the amendments, on behalf of Health Canada. In 2011 we were advised that the amendments are continuing to be moved forward.

Conclusion

The success of this committee in moving issues and priorities forward is due to the dedication of our members; and so, in closing, I would like to thank all of the members of the Drug Abuse Committee, past and present, for their devotion to this work. In particular a special thanks must be made to Barry MacKnight and Tom Bucher for their leadership of this committee.

Thank you,

Randy Franks

Drug Abuse Committee Mandate and Profile:

Mission:

Our mission is to promote safer, healthier, and stronger communities through proactive leadership by addressing and influencing prevention, enforcement, and treatment of substance abuse.

Values:

Integrity: The Drug Abuse Committee believes in adherence to the highest ethical standards to ensure that decisions and positions shall be based on knowledge, research, best practices, legislation, and identified community needs.

Collaboration: The Drug Abuse Committee believes that the expertise and perspectives of partners and strategic alliances enhances the effectiveness of the Committee and will lead to successful outcomes.

- Innovation:** The Drug Abuse Committee believes in encouraging, enabling, and exploring creative responses consistent with safer, healthier, and stronger communities, through a unified, reasoned, and nationally coordinated voice.
- Inclusion:** The Drug Abuse Committee believes in a balanced approach to the issues to be examined, the partners with whom we will collaborate, and the strategies to be employed.
- Excellence:** The Drug Abuse Committee believes in excellence in all that we do through professional standards, best practices, internal and external communications, needs-assessment, and evaluation.

Priorities 2011-12

1. Disposition of Seized Property (CDSA): disposition and storage of property seized and managed by police as a result of drug investigations.
 - Deliverable:
 - CDSA Amendment
2. Drug Endangered Children: advocate for federally legislated additional penalty when endangering children in the commission of the substantive offence.
 - Deliverable:
 - National Scope Report
3. Medical Marijuana: Through an examination of the impacts of the Medical Marijuana Access Regulations across Canada, influence Health Canada in the reform of the current regulations.
 - Deliverable:
 - MMAR Reform
4. Synthetic Drugs:
 - Deliverable
 - National Prescription Drug Take-back Day
 - Work on partnerships for strategies

Overview of Meetings Held

Montreal - May 2011

Fredericton - December 2011

Toronto – July 2012