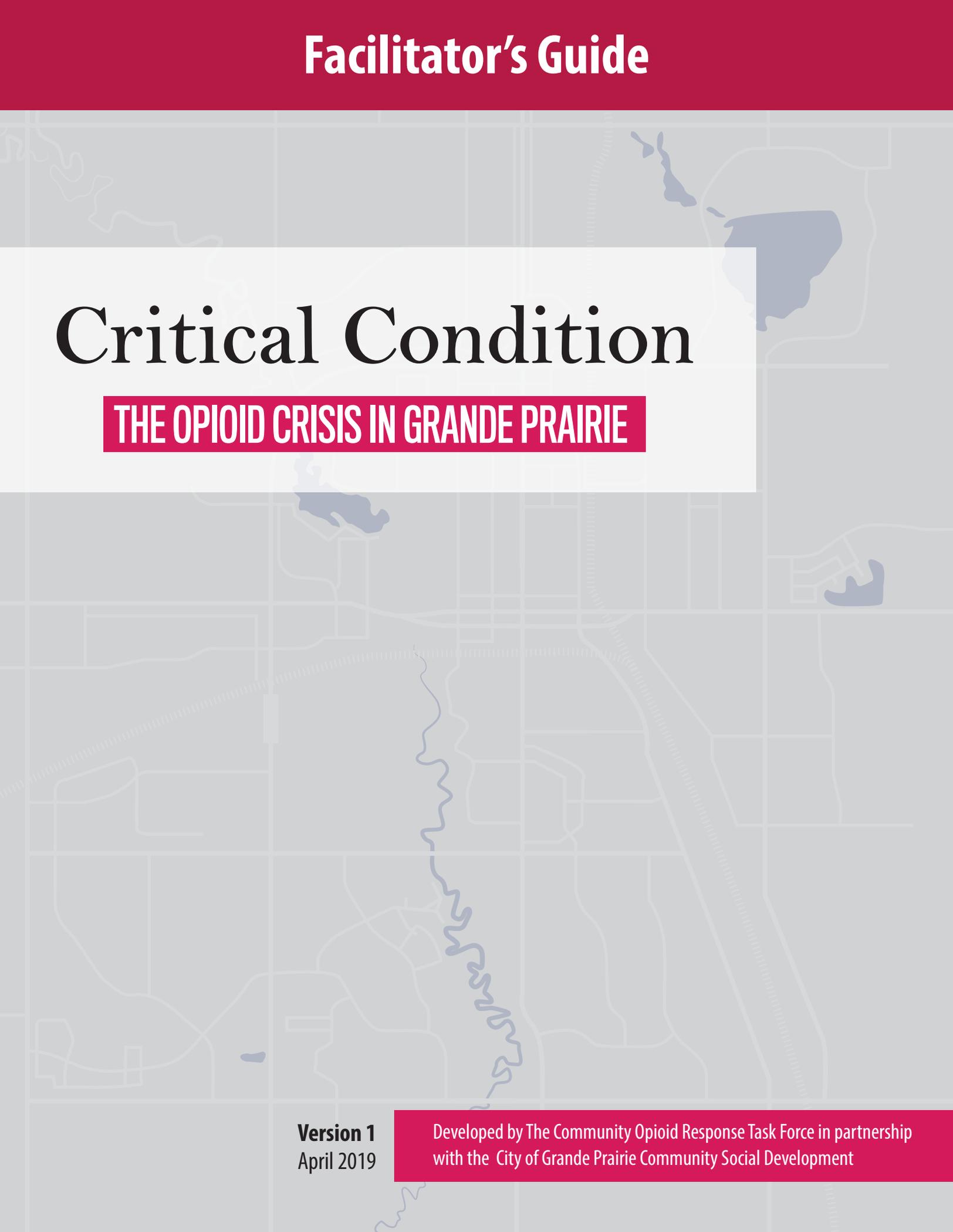


# Facilitator's Guide



# Critical Condition

## THE OPIOID CRISIS IN GRANDE PRAIRIE

**Version 1**  
April 2019

Developed by The Community Opioid Response Task Force in partnership  
with the City of Grande Prairie Community Social Development

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Video Series Conversation Guide</b>	<b>2</b>
Theme topics features in the video series	<b>2</b>
Trigger warning	<b>2</b>
List of videos with run times and descriptions	<b>3</b>
<b>Recommendations for hosting a conversation</b>	<b>5</b>
Getting ready to host a conversation	<b>5</b>
Hosting the conversation	<b>6</b>
Resources	<b>6</b>
<b>Themes for conversation</b>	<b>7-8</b>
<b>1. How the opioid crisis affects individuals, families and community</b>	<b>7</b>
The goal of this session	<b>7</b>
Focus questions to ask participants	<b>7</b>
Educational resources for facilitators	<b>7</b>
<b>2. Ending stigma and how it starts</b>	<b>8</b>
The goal of this session	<b>8</b>
Focus questions to ask participants	<b>8</b>
Educational resources for facilitators	<b>8</b>

# Introduction

In 2017, Grande Prairie had the highest rate of fentanyl overdose related deaths among the largest municipalities in Alberta.<sup>1</sup> Grande Prairie also topped the list of “EMS responses to opioid related events” followed by Red Deer and Lethbridge.<sup>2</sup> 2018 reports thus far indicate that the rate of fentanyl related opioid poisoning deaths in Grande Prairie has decreased, with the highest rates being reported in Red Deer and Lethbridge.<sup>3</sup> Despite these reductions, the impacts of opioid use continue to be felt in the community.

Mayor Bill Given established The Community Opioid Response Task Force in 2017 to facilitate dialogue among municipal government, community social services, health agencies, law enforcement, and community members in response to the opioid crisis. The Community Opioid Task Force was instrumental in the development of the video series, this facilitation guide and the Community Opioid Response Recommendations document which outlines recommendations within four mutually supporting pillars: prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery, and policing.

The prevention pillar recognises the need for a range of education and awareness initiatives to address various elements of opioid use in the community. Since this is a community issue, prevention efforts need to increase access to information, educate about preventing substance use disorders and overdoses and ensure that people in the community know where to turn for information and support.

This guide contains ideas and a framework on how to facilitate a conversation around the video series, **“Critical Condition-The Opioid Crisis in Grande Prairie”**. We recognize that facilitating a conversation about the use of opioids may be difficult, therefore, we developed this guide with the general community in mind. The goal of this guide is to encourage community members, parents, coaches, youth and educators to facilitate and participate in a conversation about opioid use while bring awareness and education to change the conversation and reduce stigma.

The facilitator is not expected to be a content expert, the facilitator is expected to review the video series, educational resources, and research links identified in this guide prior to starting a conversation.

<sup>1</sup>Government of Alberta, “Opioids and Substances of Misuse: Alberta Report, 2018 Q1,”

<sup>2</sup>Alberta Health, Analytics and Performance Reporting Branch (29 May 2018): 9. Ibid. 24.

<sup>3</sup>Government of Alberta, “Alberta Opioid Response Surveillance Report, 2018 Q3,” 12

# Video Series Conversation Guide

**“Critical Condition-The Opioid Crisis in Grande Prairie”** is a video series that captures the reality of opioid use in our community through personal stories and interviews with experts. It includes a 26 minute video that demonstrates how individuals, families, community agencies, and government entities have been struggling with the effects of opioid use for a number of years.

Additionally, it features shorter profiles of seven people sharing their personal stories to help bring awareness of opioid use and the impact to families, individuals and our community.

The Critical Condition video series features several theme topics that can be used to start a meaningful conversation. The supporting videos can be used to enhance the conversation and provide additional awareness around stigma, treatment and recovery, harm reduction, and policing.

## Theme topics featured in the video series

- How opioid addiction starts
- How the opioid crisis affects individuals, families and community
- How stigma influences peoples choice to not seek help
- How harm reduction practices are intended to reduce some elements of harm associated with drug use and how the use of naloxone saves lives
- Treatment and recovery might start in different places for different people. Gain an understanding of why people relapse, know the facts about addiction and treatment options available in your community
- The importance of local enforcement services in addressing opioid use, dependence, and preventing fatal overdose.

The video series which can be found at [www.everyoneisimpacted.com](http://www.everyoneisimpacted.com) can be shown in its entirety or if time is limited, select a couple shorter videos.

## Trigger Warning

The video series contains real life information and or perspectives that is meant to address the effects of the opioid crisis in our community. The video series contains information about misuse of opioids, substance abuse and overdose, grief and loss of family and friends, individual relapse during recovery, course language and suicidal thoughts. By shedding a light on this difficult subject matter, we hope this video series can help participants start a conversation. If you are struggling with these issues yourself, these videos and facilitating a conversation may not be right for you or you may want to watch them with a person you trust.

Facilitators should be aware that participants may respond emotionally to this content. It is recommended that prior to starting a session the trigger warning statement is read out loud so all participants are aware of the content and can make an informed choice about participating or not.

# List of videos with run times and descriptions

## Video Selection

## Description

### Critical Condition

#### THE OPIOID CRISIS IN GRANDE PRAIRIE

#### Critical Condition (26 minutes)

**Captures the reality of opioid use in our community through personal stories and interviews with experts.** Individuals, families, community agencies, and government entities have been grappling with the effects of opioid use for a number of years. Efforts from health, social services, and enforcement providers have been invaluable in keeping the community safe and trying to respond to the needs of residents.

#### Areas of focus:

- Prevention (Stigma)
- Harm Reduction
- Treatment and Recovery
- Policing



#### Lisa (5:23 minutes)

**Lisa is a mother who lost her son to an overdose.** Lisa is also a teacher and now an advocate. Lisa's son Max died alone of an overdose. This video captures the people behind the numbers when we are talking about opioid related deaths and the opioid crisis. Lisa and Max also illustrate that no one is immune from substance use and that we are all vulnerable to addiction.



#### Anonymous (7:29 minutes)

This video addresses a **parent's perspective on supporting a child struggling with addiction**



### **Stephanie (4:22 minutes)**

**Stephanie lost her brother and mother to opioid overdoses.**



### **Nathan (5:25 minutes)**

**Nathan is in recovery.** His story details struggles with mental health and addiction as well as highlighting his strength in addressing these challenges. Nathan's story also illustrates the role that community organizations can play in supporting people struggling with addictions.



### **Jo-Anne (4:36 minutes)**

**Jo-Anne is in recovery** and is active in the community providing supports to people who are struggling with addiction. Her story highlights the challenges and courage that people struggling with addictions face. It also demonstrates how supports in the community help to address some elements of the opioid crisis.



### **Sheldon (6:04 minutes)**

**Sheldon is in recovery.** He has struggled with addiction and is dealing with losing someone he cares about to an overdose. Sheldon's story helps to illustrate the hidden elements of the opioid crisis in our community.

# Recommendations for Hosting a Conversation

Viewing the **“Critical Condition-The Opioid Crisis in Grande Prairie”** video series highlights the impact of the opioid crisis in our community, and is a great tool to provide education and awareness on this serious life changing, misjudged crisis in our community.

This section of the guide is designed for anyone wanting to facilitate a conversation about the opioid crisis in our community. If you are a parent, coach, youth, educator or a community member the procedures below will assist you in starting a conversation.

**There are no right or wrong answers, the role of a facilitator is to:**

- start a conversation around stigma with the hopes of identifying ways to reduce it
- help participants better understand what we mean when we talk about the ‘opioid crisis’ in our community
- reflect on how we as individuals and we as a community feel the impacts of the opioid crisis

## Getting ready to host a conversation

1. View **“Critical Condition-The Opioid Crisis in Grande Prairie”** video series in its entirety or select one or two videos to highlight. It is recommended that you watch the 26 minute video first as this piece captures the reality of opioid use in our community through personal stories and interviews with experts.
2. Review the two themes pulled from the critical conditions video found on pages 8 and 9 which outlines goals, focus questions and educational resources associated with each theme. Pick only the theme(s) you feel comfortable talking about. We recognize that harm reduction, treatment and recovery and policing are talked about throughout the videos and maybe difficult topics. We suggest if your group is interested in those topics, invite guest speakers with knowledge or expertise in the areas of interest.
3. Review PowerPoint (*optional*)

# Recommendations for Hosting a Conversation

## Hosting the conversation

1. Be prepared with:
  - A computer to play video series, and
  - Our accompanying PowerPoint presentation (*optional*)
2. Prior to watching the videos, post focus questions for your participants to think about (*see themes pg. 7-8 for ideas*)
3. Ask participants to watch the video(s) and take notes (**30 minutes**)
4. After watching the videos allow participants time to share and reflect. You could use the following question as an ice breaker to get participants talking:
  - What did you see or hear that impacted you? (**5 Minutes**)
5. Have participants discuss the focus questions based on the theme(s). Allow for conversation with the group, supply the facts (*see educational resources and PowerPoint*) (**15 minutes**)
6. Change the conversation by having participants discuss the following questions:
  - What are some things that you are thinking differently about now than before the videos?
  - What are some of the key takeaways from the videos and today's conversation?
7. Closing comments: Pose a question that helps to solidify that the crisis affects everyone
  - Why do you think that the videos close with the message: "Opioids impact everyone, everywhere, everyday?" (**5 Minutes**)

**Note for facilitator:** The closing line communicates the message that the whole community is affected by the opioid crisis. The videos capture the diversity of the people struggling with substance and opioid use and hopefully helps us to consider that everyone can play a role in helping the community stay safe. Non-judgemental attitudes and non-stigmatizing language can help to ensure that people struggling with opioid addictions are included in the community rather than excluded.

Opioid use is not someone else's problem – it is an issue that affects us all in different ways. If we educate ourselves on available resources and the challenges of opioid use, we can better share information about support to save lives. If you or someone you know is struggling, connect them with resources. Included is a list of resources in the community. The list is not comprehensive but offers some places to start. If a resource does not feel like a fit, try another – we recognize that we are all starting at different places and may need different supports.

## Resources:

Resources for Grande Prairie and area  
**[everyoneisimpacted.com](http://everyoneisimpacted.com)**

**Help Lines (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)**

Alberta Health Services Addictions Help Line: **1-866-332-2322**

Alberta Mental Health Help Line: **1-877-303-2642**

Health Link: **811**

Mental Health Help Line (Suicide Distress Line):  
**1-877-321-2747**

Kids Help Phone: **1-800-668-6868**

**If you only have time to watch a couple of the shorter profile videos and not the full series, start a conversation by asking participants only two questions:**

1. What elements of the person's story can you relate to?
2. How do you think judgement and stigma affects people struggling with addictions?

# Themes for Conversation

## 1. How the opioid crisis affects individuals, families and community

### The goal of this session:

- Understanding the opioid crisis in our community
- Define opioids
- Understanding what an overdose is and how to protect yourself
- Understanding how the crisis affects individuals, families and community

### Focus Questions to ask participant

#### Before watching the video, the facilitator will present the following questions:

- What are opioids?
- Why do you think we call it an opioid crisis?
- When you hear a person overdosed, what is your understanding?
- What are some of the effects that the opioid crisis has on individuals, families and our community?

### Educational resources for Facilitator

- Definition of opioids  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/problematic-prescription-drug-use/opioids/get-the-facts.html>
- Opioids and the opioid crisis facts  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/problematic-prescription-drug-use/opioids/get-the-facts.html>
- Know the signs of an opioid overdose resource card  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/opioid-overdose-wallet-card.html>
- PowerPoint Presentation

# Themes for Conversation

## 2. Ending Stigma and how it starts

### The goal of this session:

- Define stigma
- Identify why stigma can prevent people from accessing treatment and services they need.
- Recognize how they can influence change in ending stigma.

### Focus Questions to ask participants

#### Before watching the video, the facilitator will present the following questions:

- What does stigma mean to you?
- What are barriers to prevent people from accessing treatment and services they need?
- What can you do starting today to influence change in ending stigma about people using opioids?

## Educational Resources for facilitator

- Definition of stigma:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/problematic-prescription-drug-use/opioids/stigma.html>
- <https://everyoneisimpacted.com/glossary/>
- Changing how we talk about substance use resource sheet:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/problematic-prescription-drug-use/opioids/stigma.html>
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Tips on language use: Our words are often informed by popular culture and people around us. Words also change over time. What might have been common in the past is often questioned and replaced when we realize certain words are hurtful or maybe unintentionally perpetuating stereotypes.
- Part of the goal of the conversation today is to try to change the language around opioid use and people struggling with addictions. One of the compounding features of stigma is the language that people use when talking about the use of drugs and people who use drugs. Sometimes the choice of words may intentionally or unintentionally stigmatize people. In general, it useful to think about framing these conversations using language that:
  - Puts people first rather than substance use – for example a person who uses drugs or people who use drugs
  - Is non-judgemental – for example, using the word ‘clean’ to describe someone who is not using drugs implies judgement of people who are using drugs
  - Uses medical language that is not dismissive vocabulary, for example, using “people/person with a substance use disorder” rather than “addiction”