

Health and Well-Being Tools

Confidential Resources for Problematic Substance Use



Human resources team member or occupational health and safety representative

Key terms

employee and family assistance program (EFAP): A robust set of resources, generally including counselling and other well-being supports, that organizations provide for employees and their dependants.

Inuit Nunangat: The homeland of Inuit in Canada, encompassing Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik, and Nunatsiavut across Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

problematic substance use: Substance use that has mild to severe negative impacts on a person. This type of use involves craving (a “strong need to use the substance”), difficulty controlling use, compulsion (an urge), and consequences (“continuing to use the substance despite negative outcomes”).¹

self-referral: Referring oneself to, or connecting directly with, a healthcare provider.



Enhancing the services you already have

Consider developing a webpage or printable information sheet specific to resources for problematic substance use. If you already have a web portal, bulletin board, or newsletter for your benefits programs, consider curating information specific to substance use.

See the ***Four Steps to Help a Colleague in Distress*** tool for telephone helplines and other resources you can include. In particular, you can highlight the **Hope for Wellness Help Line**, available 24/7 at 1-855-242-3310 or through the online chat, which has support available in Inuktitut.

If you have extended health benefits

If you provide reimbursement for counselling services, share this information with employees in the context of substance use supports. Ask your benefits providers about additional supports for substance use that could be added to your plan, and whether these are available in Inuktitut. Ensure virtual services are covered, particularly for specialists in other regions. Communicate to employees that these resources are available.

If you have an employee and family assistance program (EFAP)

See if crisis counselling or other value-add services can support this area. Ask your provider whether they have access to counsellors who speak Inuktitut. Make this information readily available to staff.

¹ Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health, “4. Understanding Substance Use Disorders and Problematic Substance Use,” in Reducing Cannabis Harms: A Guide for Ontario Campuses (Toronto: Government of Ontario, 2018), <https://campusmentalhealth.ca/toolkits/cannabis/cannabis-substance-use/understanding-disorders-problematic/>.

If you have a prescription benefit provider

Look into whether your prescription benefits support medications for addictions, such as methadone, buprenorphine, naltrexone, and disulfiram. Having this information readily accessible may make a difference when employees seek help.

Building relationships with local supports

Connect with local substance use and mental health providers

As HR staff, you can build relationships with local providers, building two-way communication between the provider and employees in your organization. Develop relationships with mental health experts who also have knowledge of Inuktitut, including Elders. See our [***Resources for General Mental Health and Problematic Substance Use***](#) tool and begin reaching out.

Research non-insurable health benefits (NIHB) that may be available for Inuit employees

An Inuk recognized by an Inuit land claim organization can receive 22 hours of counselling per 12 month period. Providers may send claims to the program directly, avoiding upfront costs for the employee. Find more on eligibility on [Indigenous Services Canada's website](#).

Go one step further with innovative virtual resources

Not all employees in Inuit Nunangat will have appropriate telecom services for virtual supports. Before engaging with virtual providers, consider whether employees might need you to coordinate a confidential space in the community or workplace for them to access these resources.

The services below are not provided in Inuktitut, so consider these as complementary to the options outlined above. Think about whether language will be a barrier for your staff to use these services.

[ALAViDA](#) has substance use support accessible from your smartphone. It has both self-guided learning and access to healthcare practitioners. It can be accessed by **self-referral** – organizations can provide this as a confidential service to their staff with no referral from HR.

[Breaking Free](#) is a self-guided tool to help individuals aged 16+ reduce or stop substance use with **referral from a healthcare provider**. It's available 24/7.

