



# Durham Region Health Department FAX about...

For Health Care Professionals



## National Overdose Response Service (NORS)

The number of deaths due to opioid toxicity in Durham Region residents has been increasing over the past nine years and there has been a general increase in the number of emergency department visits for opioid poisonings in Durham Region residents over the past 10 years.

### Action Requested

Please consider sharing the [The National Overdose Response Service](#) (NORS) with your patients.

The NORS is a virtual overdose prevention hotline. This peer-run, peer-led service was established in December 2020 as a collaboration of existing overdose response hotlines and apps in Canada, and is funded by a contribution from Health Canada's [Substance Use and Addictions Program](#).

The purpose of the NORS hotline is to keep people who use drugs safe from overdose, while upholding their right to dignity and respect. The people who answer the NORS hotline have lived or living experience of drug use, or they have previously worked in the harm reduction sector. They will answer any questions and listen without judgement or shame.

**NORS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.**

### Additional Information

- Individuals can call or text NORS at **1-888-688-NORS (6677)** before they are about to use drugs.
- The caller is connected to a NORS operator who will provide a brief introduction to the service and gather basic information.
- If the caller does not want to provide their name to the NORS operator, a unique code can be created using other information provided by the caller.
- The caller and operator will co-create an emergency response plan to determine what will happen if the caller becomes unresponsive (i.e., call 911 or call emergency contact).
- NORS provides many additional supports to clients beyond overdose prevention, including mental health first-aid, psychosis de-escalation, and linking with local community supports.

To access a PDF of the **NORS wallet card** [click here](#) or visit [durham.ca/hcp](http://durham.ca/hcp) (under Tools and Guidance Documents).

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905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | [durham.ca/health](http://durham.ca/health)

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

