



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
PARAMEDIC SERVICES

Working to Improve Neighbourhood Safety (WINS) Quarterly summary: October 1 – December 31, 2023

Working to Improve Neighbourhood Safety (WINS) is a project aimed at addressing improper needle disposal in the community. The program is funded by Region of Waterloo and implemented by Sanguen Health Centre in partnership with area municipalities and participating Business Improvement Associations (BIAs). After a successful pilot in Cambridge in 2018, phase two involved further expansion into Kitchener and Waterloo. Cambridge operations began in January 2021 and after a short planning period, the program launched in Kitchener in March and Waterloo in April 2021. WINS aims to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Reduce the number of discarded needles in the community.
2. Increase meaningful employment opportunities for people with barriers to traditional employment.
3. Educate people who use substances of proper disposal options, when opportunities exist.
4. Create a positive community response and increase community engagement related to harm reduction and substance use.

Data summary for Q4 (October 1 – December 31, 2023):

Indicator	Total (Oct 1 – Dec 31)
# of needles collected	5,900
# of glass pipes collected	2,225
# of interactions with community members	2,314
# of referrals to community organizations	96
# of peer workers (as of December 31, 2023):	54
# of peer hours worked	1058

Table 1

Key findings for this period:

- The program saw a steady increase in the number of peer hours worked over 2023, and Q4 peer hours worked remains similar to the previous quarter. In Q3 of 2023, peer workers worked 1068 hours. In Q4 there were 5 new peers hired and 1058 hours worked.
- Compared to Q3 of 2023, the number of needles collected in Q4 decreased by 31.9 per cent and the number of glass pipes collected decreased by 18.5 per cent.
- Interactions with community members have decreased by 12.7 per cent since Q3 of 2023, and the number of referrals to community organizations has decreased by 27.8 per cent.