

## THE FOUR PILLARS - ENFORCEMENT

The enforcement pillar of Vancouver's four pillars strategy recognizes the need for peace, public order and safety in the Downtown Eastside and other Vancouver neighbourhoods. History tells us, however, that policing alone is not a solution to Vancouver's drug problem and that an integrated approach including prevention, treatment, harm reduction and policing has proven to be effective. The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) has formally endorsed the four pillars strategy and its principles.

In 2006, the VPD published its drug policy. It says that the VPD's mission, as related to drug policy, is to reduce crime, fear of crime, and street disorder while protecting the vulnerable and preserving and protecting life.

The VPD drug policy sees prevention as the most important of the four pillars, but said there is concern that a lack of resources dedicated to this pillar does not allow for large-scale prevention programs. Success in this pillar, it says, would reduce needs in the other three.

The policy says that the VPD will continue to target street and middle-level drug traffickers and producers. Police will be guided by an individual's behaviour in determining whether or not to lay drug or alcohol possession charges. Police will also target areas frequented by children, such as schools and parks, and other areas where possession or use of drugs could interfere with lawful use of the public areas by members of the community.

The VPD supports the Supervised Injection Site, located on East Hastings Street. It also supports the North American Opiate Medication Initiative, a clinical trial testing whether medically prescribed heroin can successfully attract and retain heroin users who have not benefited from previous repeated attempts at methadone maintenance and abstinence programs. It also supports accessible and immediate treatment for substance abuse on demand, for both adults and youth.

Police officers will continue to work to improve coordination with health services and other agencies that link drug users to immediate medical care, withdrawal management (detox), treatment and other counseling and prevention services. Vancouver police efforts are complemented by Drug Treatment Courts. These provide an alternative to incarceration for non-violent offenders addicted to heroin, cocaine or opiates, to follow treatments such as methadone maintenance.

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