

OUR POLITICIANS MUST LEAD CITY OUT OF OPIOID CRISIS

Barrie is in the clutches of a public health crisis that demands an immediate, forceful reaction to match the intensity of its destruction.

We've watched, waited and reported as our city leaders have debated and discussed opioid addiction, only to find ourselves no further ahead and with no plan in sight.

It's not good enough.

Our community wants and deserves more, so we, as a local business, are stepping up today to do more.

In this issue of The Barrie Advance, we have dedicated every story to this crisis. We've provided a barrage of voices from those entrenched in this crisis with a goal to promote understanding and compassion, and to impact change.

Thinking of where Barrie will be next year if we do nothing now is more frightful than admitting we need help.

Council's lack of leadership has led to NIMBYism and a city divided, when it should have resulted in a coming together of hearts and minds.

We know methadone, which is used as a substitute drug in the treatment of opioid addiction, is dispensed at clinics throughout our city. Opioid addiction is not a downtown issue; it is a city-wide crisis.

Let's unite with parents who have lost children to addiction, spouses who have lost partners, and children who have lost parents to attack this crisis with a single focus: we won't lose anyone else.

Opioid addiction is not an issue about "them"; it is an issue about us.

Many can play a role in finding a solution, from the federal government, which regulates drug companies, to the province, which funds health care, but the fight has to start here at the municipal level.

Today, we are asking Mayor Jeff Lehman and all members of city council to declare a health crisis and to demand support from all levels of government to focus solely on the eradication of opioid addiction in Barrie.

Yes, it's a huge undertaking. Yes, many other cities and towns in Canada and across the U.S. are under siege by opioids. But they are not Barrie.

Our city's resumé is second to none. When we identify a lack of care in a specific area of health, we rally. We now have a highly regarded cancer centre, cardiac care closer to home and improved mental health services for our youths.

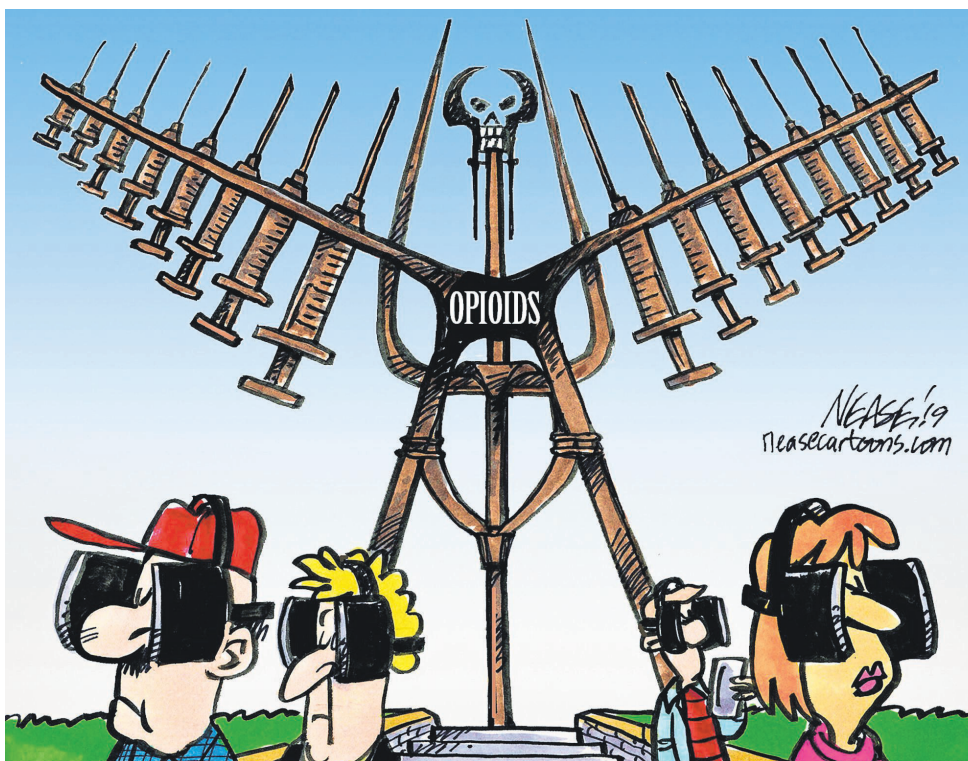
We can and have moved mountains. We can move this one, as well.

We are in this fight together, but someone has to step up and lead the way.

MORE ONLINE

SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AT SIMCOE.COM

TO LEARN HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR OWN CONTENT VISIT SIMCOE.COM



SAYING IT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

YOU READ: 'IN A BETTER PLACE': HOLLAND LANDING MOM'S SON DIED OF FENTANYL OVERDOSE (PUBLISHED JULY 16)

"How horrible for him and his family. Addiction kills. Addicts need help. Not judgment."

KELLY JANE WEEDON,
FACEBOOK

"I knew your son from the street. I was thinking of him lately. Such a waste; Jeremy could be a great guy. I got clean. I wish with all my heart he could have done the same."

BRANDY SHEPPARD,
FACEBOOK

"With or without fentanyl, doing heroin is Russian roulette."

MICHAEL COLE-FITZPATRICK,
FACEBOOK

YOU READ: COUNCIL DEFERS DECISION ON DOWNTOWN BARRIE SUPERVISED CONSUMPTION SITE (PUBLISHED JUNE 3)

"Terrible decision to delay this. They have the right location now and we need to get this done."

GREG R. GROEN,
FACEBOOK

"Disgusting. I really hope those protesting this site gets first-hand experience in how this epidemic is destroying people and our city. Shame on you."

JASON HARRIS,
FACEBOOK

YOU READ: MOTHERS OF OPIOID CRISIS CALL ON BARRIE POLICE TO TRACK DOWN DEALERS (PUBLISHED MAY 22)

"I have always said fentanyl dealers should be charged and convicted of murder, knowing full well their product kills."

BRADLEY MATHEWS,
FACEBOOK

"No, he died because he was doing drugs. Drugs kill people. With fentanyl or not."

COLE WILLIAMS,
FACEBOOK

"All dealers - big and small - should be targeted. If you take away the accessibility of a substance, people may seek help for their addiction rather than fueling it."

MEGAN BAILEY,
FACEBOOK

YOU READ: PUBLIC OPINION SPLIT ON BARRIE'S SUPERVISED

DRUG CONSUMPTION SITE: SURVEY (PUBLISHED MAY 10)

"Look at the neighbourhoods in Toronto where injection sites are located. Ask the citizens in these neighbourhoods how their quality of life has been affected. It is documented through numerous media sources. Putting injection sites near denser residential areas has been a disaster."

PAUL BROWN,
FACEBOOK

"This is very wrong. It sets completely wrong idea about drugs. Instead of saving humans from an addiction, it's promoted as (the) new normal. Insanity at its highest level."

YELENA VAIMAN,
FACEBOOK

YOU READ: ORO-MEDONTE FAMILY CONFRONTS OPIOID CRISIS FOLLOWING SON'S DEATH (PUBLISHED JAN. 11, 2018)

"Such a heartbreaking tragedy. Thank you for sharing your story in an effort to help others."

KATHRIN DYKSTRA-VEENSTRA,
FACEBOOK

ABOUT US

This newspaper, published every Thursday, is a division of the Metroland Media Group Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. The Metroland family of newspapers is comprised of more than 80 community publications across Ontario.

This newspaper is a member of the National NewsMedia Council. Complainants are urged to bring their concerns to the attention of the newspaper and, if not satisfied, write The National NewsMedia Council, Suite 200, 890 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4W 2H2. Phone: 416-340-1981

nnc
National NewsMedia Council

ocna

Web: www.mediacouncil.ca
newsroom@simcoe.com
facebook.com/simcoenews
[@simcoenews](https://twitter.com/simcoenews)

WHO WE ARE

Publisher

Dana Robbins

General Manager

Shaun Sauve

Director of Advertising

Elise Allain

Director of Content

Joanne Burghardt

Editor-in-Chief Simcoe

Lori Martin

Managing Editor

Jeff Bower

Director Distribution

Mike Banville

Director Creative Services

Katherine Porcheron

Advertising Coordinator

Nadine Kennedy

CONTACT US

Barrie Advance

21 Patterson Road
Barrie, ON L4N 7W6
Phone: 705-726-0573
Fax: 705-726-9350
Web: www.simcoe.com

Letters to the editor

All letters must be fewer than 320 words and include your name and telephone number for verification purposes. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject letters. Published letters will appear in print and/or online at simcoe.com

Delivery

For all delivery inquiries, please e-mail customersupport@metroland.com or call 1-855-853-5613.

Accredité
FDSA
Accredited