

RESEARCH TO COMMUNITY

## A summary of the drug situation in Vancouver

### What is the study **about**?

- The report covers drug use patterns, risk behaviours, harm reduction service use, and HIV and hepatitis C (HCV) rates among people who use illicit drugs (PWUD) in Vancouver.

#### QUICK FACT:

Since 2007, illicit drug use for all drug types has fallen slowly.

### How was the study **done**?

- We collected and reviewed information from the past 15 years about drug use, behaviours, and experiences among PWUD in Vancouver, including HIV-positive PWUD, HIV-negative people who inject drugs, and street-involved youth.

### What did the study **find**?

- Fewer PWUD are injecting illicit drugs.
- Although crack cocaine smoking has fallen since 2007, it remains the most commonly used drug.
- It is becoming easier to access harm reduction services.
- New infections of HIV and HCV are declining.
- More people are accessing addiction treatment.
- The price and availability of illicit drugs has remained stable.

*Programs and services should adjust to changing trends in drug use patterns and behaviours of PWUD in Vancouver.*

### Why is the study **important**?

- **Progress has been made** to lower health-related problems among PWUD in Vancouver.
- **Continued support for** harm reduction, addiction, and HIV/AIDS programs are needed to improve the health of PWUD.

Urban Health Research Initiative of the British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS. **Drug situation in Vancouver.** June 2013.