



## TIMING OF INCOME ASSISTANCE PAYMENT AND OVERDOSE PATTERNS AT A CANADIAN SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY

### BACKGROUND & METHOD

- Most people on income assistance in BC get their money through a single monthly cheque, usually on the last Wednesday of the month. This day is known as “cheque day” or “Welfare Wednesday”.
- The study looked at whether cheque day is associated with any health or social harms related to drug use.
- Overdose and drug use data was collected at Insite, Vancouver Coastal’s supervised injection site, between March 2004 and December 2010.
- By identifying overdose incidents on or immediately after cheque day and comparing them to incidents occurring on all other days, researchers were able to see trends in the timing of non fatal overdoses.

### QUICK FACT

*THE RISK OF OVERDOSE WAS OVER TWO TIMES MORE LIKELY ON OR IMMEDIATELY AFTER CHEQUE DAY AMONG PEOPLE INJECTING DRUGS AT INSITE.*

### FINDINGS

- The risk of non-fatal overdose among people injecting drugs at Insite was over two times more likely on or immediately after cheque day.
- This was linked to riskier injections taking place, and was not explained by a simple increase in injecting.

### IMPLICATIONS

- There are clear health risks linked to cheque day.
- There is a need to explore different approaches to how income assistance is given out in BC.

Zlotorzynska M, Milloy MJS, Richardson L, Nguyen P, Montaner JS, Wood E, Kerr T. **Timing of income assistance payment and overdose patterns at a Canadian supervised injection facility.** *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 2014; 25(4): 736-739.

