



## Panel 2:

# Crystal Clear: The Power of Catalyst - an Innovative, Contingency Management Community for Methamphetamine Recovery

### Presenters:

• Meredith Mackenzie	Medical Director	<a href="#">Street Health Centre - Kingston Community Health Centres</a>
• Laurie Barkun	Registered Nurse	<a href="#">Street Health Centre - Kingston Community Health Centres</a>
• Clark Heath	Community Support Workers	<a href="#">Street Health Centre - Kingston Community Health Centres</a>
• Sarah Den Ouden	Community Support Workers	<a href="#">Street Health Centre - Kingston Community Health Centres</a>
• Christina Moeys	Addictions Counselor	<a href="#">Addictions and Mental Health - Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox &amp; Addington</a>
• Meaghan O'Connor	Occupational Therapist	<a href="#">Providence Care</a>

### Description:

People who use crystal methamphetamine are often met with persistent barriers to housing, health care and social services. Join us as we discuss Catalyst, a client-informed, community-building twist on traditional contingency management programs. Catalyst integrates several sectors including nursing, counselling, community support workers, occupational therapy, and stabilization housing.

### Session objectives and learning outcomes:

- Learn about traditional contingency management and how expanding on this model with the help of collaborators from various sectors can improve overall health and well-being.

- Learn about the roles that each of our collaborators play in delivering client-informed, life-changing programming.
- Learn about the successes and challenges in developing and delivering this program.

## **Full description:**

### **CHALLENGE:**

Individuals with substance use disorder are some of the most vulnerable and stigmatized individuals in our communities. Changing political opinions and high-profile media attention are fueling a public debate filled with hatred, disregard and desperation. Evidence suggests there is no one-size-fits-all solution—rather, communities need to collaborate to wrap health and social supports around our most vulnerable to create sustained change.

### **ACTION:**

Catalyst is a program aimed at reducing crystal methamphetamine use and bolstering access to health care and social support. Participants self-refer to the program and attend twice weekly for 16 weeks. Enrollment is open (participants come and go based on their motivation for change) and participants are encouraged to re-enroll to maintain sobriety. The program is based on the evidence-based principles of contingency management (positive reinforcement model) and community integration (in this case, wrap-around supports including peer support, psychoeducation, housing, food, primary care and interdisciplinary mental health support).

The program is staffed with a Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist, addiction counsellor and community support worker. It is truly collaborative, relying on regional partnerships and staff compensation from 3 partnering organizations.

Participants are welcomed with compassion, understanding and warmth. Unlike traditional abstinence-based groups, Catalyst participants feel comfortable discussing the unique experience of crystal methamphetamine addiction with peers and volunteers who have walked in their shoes.

### **IMPACT:**

The Catalyst team has been collecting data since its inception, but we have included some quotes from past participants—their experience is compelling evidence of the program’s impact. “How has Catalyst benefitted you?”

- “I like being able to talk to people who actually understand and being able to openly talk about crystal meth use and not being judged...I feel cared for...I’m really grateful for all of this.” (30-year-old female, mother of 3)
- “Hearing other people talk about their problems and being able to relate to them helps. I don’t feel as alone... [Catalyst] keeps me busy in the right kind of way... [My psychosis] is almost non-existent. I was worried that it was permanent. Now I don’t think that there are people in the trees or people following me all the time.” (56-year-old male. Started using stimulants in his early teens. Homeless at the start of the program. Now housed and volunteering as a mentor in the program)
- “It’s helped keep me clean – I even quit weed!... I’ve gained weight. I was skin and bones. People on the bus don’t even recognize me anymore! I’m on top of my medical needs. Come to appointments...My son [motivates me]. I’m so happy to have a relationship with him now. I can see him without his dad now...This is the first time I’ve ever finished something! I didn’t even finish high school, but I finished this!” (37-year-old female. Mother of 3. Lost custody of her children due to homelessness and substance use. Now housed and reconnecting with her children)

**TRAJECTORY** Catalyst is a program model that is ready for scale and spread. Our next step is to create a program guide so that other organizations can recreate/develop similar programs.