|  |
| --- |
| **The impact of recreational cannabis legalization on a Canadian university campus – lessons learned to date** |
| **Setting/problem**  On October 17th 2018, Canada became the 2nd country to fully legalize recreational cannabis. The Government of Canada has put in place the Cannabis Act, a new national framework with one of its objectives being to protect public health and safety. Since the implementation of this Act, the Canadian Government has agreed to fund cannabis public education and awareness activities to inform Canadians, especially youth, of the health and safety risks of cannabis consumption. In light of these new commitments, the role of health promotion in universities is of utmost importance in educating students and future generations on this new legislation and the associated harm reduction of cannabis use. The University of Ottawa, located in the heart of Canada’s capital city, is facing many challenges with this change. Currently, students, faculty and staff can grow and consume cannabis on campus, as regulated by federal and provincial legislation.  **Intervention**  With a student population of 43000, plus 5000 staff, the university launched a community consultation in the Fall of 2018 to hear views from students, faculty and staff on whether the University should have a smoke-free main campus in 2019. The uOttawa Health Services Health Promotion department had the challenging task of creating educational material before knowing what the final regulation would look like, as well as the uncertainty of the university’s stance on the matter.  **Outcomes**  After meeting with the local public health agency and university risk management, Health Promotion opted for a peer to peer harm reduction approach while continuing to take the necessary steps to advocate for a smoke free campus. They provided training, created outreach material and purchased educational tools to better educate the students on safer consumption guidelines. In November, the University participated in a One Day Stand event to raise awareness of the campus smoking policy and to gather feedback about becoming a smoke free campus.  **Implications**  Preliminary results are promising and qualitative statistics show that students are concerned for their wellbeing. By sharing our successes, challenges, results and upcoming projects, our goal is to inspire other health promoting campuses and organizations to consider maintaining or implementing their own smoking policies and practices within their health promotion curriculum.  **Preferred presentation format**  4)Innovation in policy and practice oral |