

Key Messages

Digital Overdose Response System (DORS)

June 2021

- On March 23, the Government of Alberta [announced](#) the testing of a new Digital Overdose Response System (DORS), a mobile app that will help protect people using opioids and other substances while using alone.
- Testing will begin in Calgary this summer through the Rapid Access Addictions Medicine and Opioid Dependency Program clinics supporting a testing phase, followed by availability and promotion to the City of Calgary. The app is expected to expand to other communities, beginning with Edmonton after the testing phase is complete.
- The app can be downloaded to a smart phone. User's information will be confidential and only information on an individual's address and telephone number is required, which is necessary to support medical response, if required.
- The app uses a timer connected to an alarm system. If an individual does not respond to the alarm when prompted by the app, professional response centre STARS will be notified and will attempt to contact the individual. If the call centre does not receive a response, emergency medical services will be alerted and dispatched to respond to a presumed overdose.
- The app was developed by a local Alberta company, Aware360 Ltd., in close consultation with the Government of Alberta, expert addictions physicians from Alberta Health Services, Emergency Medical Services and other professional and experts from the addictions field.
- Last year, 70 per cent of overdose deaths in Alberta happened in a private residence, which is consistent with data since 2017, highlighting the need for tools to protect people using opioids and other substances while alone.
- The app will also provide information about recovery-oriented supports and services available in the user's area to ensure people have the information they need to support their journey to recovery.
- [The Alberta Substance Use Surveillance System \(ASUSS\)](#) data shows COVID-19 continues to have a serious impact on those struggling with addiction. In 2020, 1,151 people died in Alberta from opioid overdose.
- The DORS app is one of many harm reduction measures that receives provincial funding. This includes [supervised consumption and overdose prevention services](#), as well as the [Opioid Agonist Therapy Gap Coverage program](#) and the [Virtual Opioid Dependency program](#) which currently has no wait list. [Free Naloxone kits](#), which can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose if administered right away, are available at many locations across the province.
- There are different pathways to recovery. Visit [options for care](#) for resources.
- For additional information, visit dorsapp.ca