

Virtual Self-Care & Safety Guide

(Source: With many thanks as the content was prepared by the BC Patient Safety & Quality Council)

About this Resource

We're delighted you are joining us for the BC Substance Use Conference 2022!

We want to make sure you feel as supported and safe during this online event as you would in an in-person event.

We've included suggestions for you to think about as you prepare for the virtual conference days, so you can plan to be comfortable and safe as possible. Below is an overview of virtual resources that will be available to you during the conference.

Self-Care Online

Being online for long periods of time can be draining. Here are some ideas to make yourself comfortable and ready to engage.

Gather Ahead of Time:

- Glass of water. You might also want a coffee, tea or another drink.
- Snacks. Keep some on hand if you get hungry or are feeling low energy.
- Tissues/Kleenex. In case you need to shed some tears, have sniffles or allergies.
- Pens/markers and paper. You may have an idea you want to draw or write down, a question you don't want to forget to ask or a person whose name you want to remember.
- Fidget items. Could be a ball, spinner, cube and some people like to knit, paint or colour during online events. If you find this relaxing and that it helps you focus, bring one or more of these items to the events.
- Pets. Animals can be great support during an event or sometimes a distraction! Think about if you'd like your pet nearby and if they might need something too.

Recordings

If you case you miss sessions you wanted to catch – all sessions will be recorded for later viewing. UBC CPD team will email everyone when the recordings are available after the conference ends.

Technology Considerations

- Your Pheedloop display name. Everyone will be able to see the name you sign-on with. Please make sure it's your preferred name and if comfortable, your pronouns (i.e., she/her/hers).
- Phone, charging cables & internet connections. Internet connections are dropped and sometimes the power can go out. If this happens, don't worry. You can log back into the event once your connection is restored. Before the meeting it's a great idea to have the battery on your phone and computer fully charged and the power cables you might need, close by. Have access to a phone if you want a counsellor or a friend to phone you during the meeting (this is optional but a nice option to have!).

Anonymity

We respect your wish to remain anonymous when accessing any of the resources. Changing your display name will help with anonymity. If you need assistance changing it, feel free to send us an email at CPD.info@ubc.ca.

Harm Reduction Strategies

When you are in a new, potentially stress-inducing environment, it may be helpful to come prepared with some strategies to best support yourself with. Check out below for some supports we can provide during the event as well as virtual resources you can access.

- If possible, *review the agenda/content in advance to be aware of potential triggers.*
- *Attend the event with a person you trust or have someone you can call if needed.* This could be a colleague, friend, family member, support worker, recovery coach, or sponsor – whoever who feel safe with.
- *If you decide to use during the event, make sure you have a safety plan in place, and that someone knows where you are.*
- *Have a buddy on the ready.* Events can mean a lot of connection, ideas and stimulation! Think about how you'll feel after a long conference. Let a friend, partner or family member know you are going to an event and that you might want to talk to them about it later. Sometimes this can be a nice to look forward to after a lot of learning. You can always let them know you might cancel or reschedule if you are feeling tired.
- *Remember to take breaks, move around, and get some air.*
- *If you need someone to talk to, please reach out to a support person.*

Harm Reduction Resources

There are several great online apps that can help you stay safe. If you have one you feel comfortable with, we recommend you stick with that! A buddy is always the best system, and if you don't have one, you're welcome to reach out to one of our SUPPORT people. If you are using, let someone know where you are and that you are safe.

You can also check out the following apps that were made for people using alone:

Brave – Be Safe: <https://www.brave.coop/besafe>

Lifeguard: <https://lifeguarddh.com/>

- Coping Kit: <https://www.bccsu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Coping-Kit.pdf>
- Exhale App: <https://www.exhalesite.com>
- Family & Caregiver Resources: <https://www.bccsu.ca/family-and-caregiver-resources/>
- Insight Timer: <https://insighttimer.com/en-ca>

Meditation Studio: <https://meditationstudioapp.com/collections> Moms Stop the Harm:

<https://www.momsstoptheharm.com/>

- Opioids Survivors Guide: <https://www.bccsu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Opioids-Survivors-Guide.pdf>
- Smart Recovery: <https://www.smartrecovery.org>
- *UBC Student Recovery Community*: <https://students.ubc.ca/health/ubc-student-recovery-community>
- Wellbriety: <https://wellbriety.com/wellbriety-teachings>

Stay Connected

- Virtually network with colleagues via text or video messaging by using the Private Chats tab. You can initiate a private chat by clicking on someone's name, or by searching for someone in the Networking Room.
- We recommend that you add your interests and a photo to your profile to help meet others with similar interests.
- Use the Search and Filter tools to help find specific attendees.
Move your body. Give yourself movement breaks – some people find sitting down for long periods of time uncomfortable. Listen to your body and if you feel the need, stand up, stretch, sit on the floor, shift positions, dance or do any other kind of movement that feels right. Whatever you need to do to keep yourself comfortable and engaged is welcome and encouraged!

Chill Out Room

At an in-person event you're able to get up, move around and grab a snack with other participants. We want to help you have the same kind of access to that space as you would in person! We've set up a virtual "chill out room" you're able to get to if you feel like you want to stay connected but need to step away from the event for any reason. Click CHILL/Support Space in the left-hand menu and you will be redirected to a Zoom room where you can turn on your camera and sound if you want to chat.

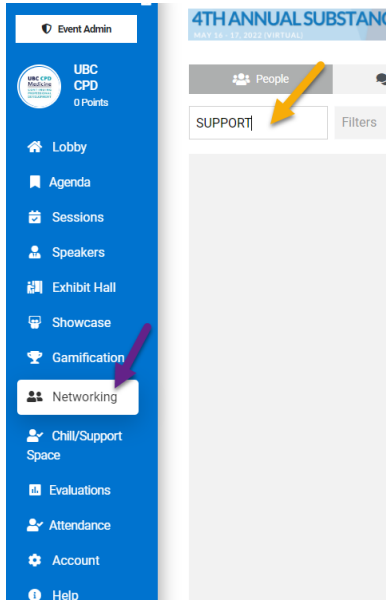
Memorial Art Space

We will be hosting a virtual Memorial Showcase space where participants can share photos and images or art they've created to honour the lives of those who've been lost throughout the toxic drug supply and overdose crisis. We invite you to consider contributing, as a meaning-making activity, if you feel called to do so.

Safety & Supports During the Event

We acknowledge that learning and connecting with other people is hard work, especially in the virtual world. There are people and resources to help you if you need some extra support, want a space to chill out but stay connected or have a 1:1 conversation with someone who can listen. We also want to remind you to stay safe and to use a buddy if you plan to use. The supports below are available to all participants.

Peer Support



To help facilitate and coordinate accessing support services, you can reach out to anyone who has SUPPORT beside their name under the NETWORKING tab – they're a team member who's there to chat and help you access the support and resource(s) you need.

To send a private message to a peer support person:

1. Go to NETWORKING button in the left-hand menu of your screen.
2. Click into SEARCH and enter SUPPORT. Then select who you would like to talk to directly.
3. Click Start Chat.

Virtual Counsellor

We also have a virtual counsellor on call Monday, May 16th from 3:15pm-5:15pm and Tuesday, May 17th between 11:15am-1:15pm. This counsellor has formal training in substance use support and is happy to meet with you 1:1 during the event. Please send a message to a SUPPORT person, and they can help connect you with our counsellor.

Taking Care of Yourself Afterwards

Events can be both exciting and draining, especially in the virtual world. As much as possible, give yourself some time to relax following the event. Unexpected feelings may arise – this is okay. Journaling, talking to someone or accessing additional supports such as the following resources can help you to process and wind down. Moving your body after having intense experiences can be another way to move through the feelings – particularly for people who don't find talking helpful. Consider taking a walk or engaging in a low impact activity you enjoy.

- 24 Hour Crisis Phone Service 1.800.784.2433
- Indigenous Support Line 1.800.588.8717
- Here to Help - Trans Support Line 1-866-999-1514

Take care of yourself and tap into your support system when you need to.