

Dear HAMSMaRT and Keeping Six Supporters,

Apologies for the delayed newsletter - we have been having technical difficulties that prevented this newsletter from going out this past summer! We unfortunately had our whole newsletter email list deleted and have worked hard to build it back up. **If you know someone who usually receives this newsletter and has not received this one - please encourage them to resubscribe to us as they may have been removed from the email list.** Thank you for your patience with us as we navigate newsletter difficulties.

Regardless, we are back and better than ever. This summer saw the addition of a new partnership with Hamilton Public Health, as well as the renewal of of an original Keeping Six program: Sunday Outreach! This fall saw the addition of a new team member (Gord!) who we will spotlight in this newsletter. We will also highlight the phenomenal work of our Keeping Six kitchen team and introduce you to two new staff members at HAMSMaRT and Keeping Six.

We hope everyone is enjoying the crisp breeze and fall air. As we prepare for winter, we invite you to donate winter clothes and other necessities for our neighbours who are unhoused. More details below!

In solidarity,
HAMSMaRT & K6

November Point Of Care Testing Dates

This month the Shelter Health Hep C Team will be onsite to test for Hep C, Syphilis, and HIV on:

Nov 3rd 1-3pm
Nov 20th 1-3pm



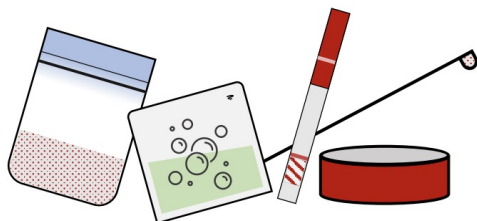
1 Line = Positive (xylazine found) ⚠️



2 Lines = Negative (xylazine not found)



No Control Line **OR** 0 Lines = Inconclusive
(Test again)



Fentanyl and Xylazine Testing Strips

We are excited to announce that we are now receiving both fentanyl and xylazine testing kits from **Hamilton Public Health**.

The drug testing kit comes with:

- 5 Soap wipes
- 5 Clean cookers
- 5 Sterile water (5ml each)
- 5 Micro-scoops
- 5 BTNX test strip for either fentanyl or xylazine
- And one set of instructions for testing

To grab fentanyl or xylazine test strips come by our clinic during our opening hours on **Tuesday or Thursday 10-4pm**.

The Keeping Six Kitchen

This month we would like to highlight the amazing work that our Keeping Six Kitchen staff does every week. For those who do not know, **Aaron Simkin & Savo Djukanovic** feed our clients and community members every Tuesday and Thursday for lunch. You'll get to know them more when they are featured in our staff

highlight! With Aaron leading the Tuesday meals and Savo leading the Thursday meals, we here at HAMSMaRT/K6 are able to feed more than 100 people with a soup and lunch every week. **In fact, below you can find our kitchen team's Sept stats!**

Sept 2nd: 100 meals
Sept 4th: 130 meals
Sept 9th: 96 meals, 46 soups
Sept 11th: 126 meals
Sept 16th: 149 meals, 123 soups
Sept 18th: 163 meals
Sept 23rd: 174 meals (a new record!)
Sept 25th: 154 meals
Sept 30th: 128 meals
Sept TOTAL: 169 soups, 1220 meals

Oct 2nd: 134 meals
Oct 7th: 146 meals, 118 soups
Oct 9th: 155 meals
Oct 14th: 168 meals
Oct 16th: 163 meals, 92 soups
Oct 21st: 174 meals
Oct 23rd: 171 meals
Oct 28th: 205 meals, 92 soups (a new record!)
Oct 30th: 114 meals, 84 soups
Oct TOTAL: 294 soups, 1430 meals



Left: At all times, clients have access to fresh water, hot and iced coffee, and iced tea!

Above: Savo holding freshly baked goodies for the day's lunch!

Above: A spread of lunch boxes and assorted condiments for clients to enjoy as they wait or take with them after their appointments.

A New Addition to the Team: Gord Mooney

A founder and champion of the Social Navigation (SoNav) program, Paramedic Gordon Mooney has recently joined our team! Now retired, Gord just could not stay away from Hamilton and the clients he knows so well!

Gord's new role at our clinic consists of helping with housing efforts, tax filings, and connecting clients to other services in the city as our Community Liaison. We at HAMSMaRT recognize that the social determinants of health, like housing, strongly impact health. Addressing some of these determinants has been a gap in our care



for a long time - a gap that Gord has now filled! Gord's new role is flexible and will change as different needs arise. We are incredibly lucky to have him as he is already well known and trusted among our clients due to his previous role as a SoNav Paramedic. Thank you for joining our team, Gord!

Keeping Six Update

The K6 Team, led by **Savo Djukanovic and Kelly Rattray**, has restarted **Sunday Outreach this summer!** These services shined during the COVID-19 pandemic and were unfortunately discontinued soon after. Outreach services were an original part of Keeping Six and the return of Sunday Outreach was much anticipated and planned for. Distributing necessary clothing items, harm reduction supplies, and food, the Keeping Six team goes out into the community every other Sunday to connect with people who are experiencing homelessness. This not only allows us to **meet the basic needs** of our neighbours but also **form relationships** with people and encourage them to visit us in clinic for a hot meal and friendly healthcare.

On their first outing the Keeping Six peers distributed:

- 60 pairs of socks
- 15 men's underwear
- 20 women's underwear
- 200 sandwiches
- 170 juice boxes
- 450 packets of snacks

And that was all just in one day! This summer and fall was incredibly successful for our outreach team and we cannot wait to see what they do as the seasons change!

Staff Spotlight

Each month do a staff spotlight! We would like to recognize the folks in both HAMSMaRT and K6 that do hard work for our Hamilton community everyday. **We have asked them about why they joined HAMSMaRT/K6, what other work they do outside of here, and any hobbies they may have!** Every month you can find a new spotlight on a HAMSMaRT and K6 staff member or volunteer. We hope you enjoy getting to know the people behind the scenes here at our partnered organizations!

K6 | Nikki Guarasci

Nikki joined Keeping Six five years ago. A dear friend of hers was already well established within the organization and this inspired her to join! Nikki currently works at as a Peer Support Worker at the YWCA Safer Use Space (SUS). Nikki is an advocate for people who have experienced or are experiencing homelessness



In lieu of a picture, we have included some SUS paraphernalia. This is a space Nikki is loved and valued. Thank you for your work, Nikki!

In her spare time, Nikki is a creative! She paints, colours, and sketches. She finds herself wanting to learn as much as she can about everything. "Knowledge is power," she says - and she's so right (as always)!

When staff at the Safer Use Space found out that Nikki would be featured in this newsletter, they decided that they wanted to highlight the work Nikki has done in the space. Here are some quotes from Nikki's colleagues:

- "Nikki has been with the Safer Use Space since before we opened. She helped design the space and has worked every day since to make sure that SUS is a meaningful place for the community. SUS wouldn't be what it is without Nikki - and we are so grateful to have her leadership on the SUS team for all these years."
- "I cannot emphasize enough how Nikki is very much the heart and soul of SUS."
- "Nikki is incredibly personable and generous with her knowledge and expertise to team members and service users alike!"
- "Nikki will quite literally give you the shirt off her back (I have seen her do so on many occasions)!"
- "You can tell its going to be a good shift when Nikki walks in. From playful banter to heartfelt conversations, Nikki has a natural way of holding space for whatever comes up. Her authenticity has been a powerful shift in the way we provide service."

#loveNikki4eva - The SUS Team ♡

HAMSMaRT | Dr. Amanda Lee

Amanda has been working at HAMSMaRT since 2023 when Dr. Claire Bodkin offered Amanda the opportunity to cover her practice. Amanda hasn't looked back since! She was drawn to the social medicine side of HAMSMaRT and recognized the importance of meeting folks where they are at.

Amanda is also part of the Hamilton hospitals' Substance Use Service team and doing additional locum work in full scope family medicine. She describes full scope family medicine as seeing folks literally from cradle to grave! Amanda provides newborn care, assesses inpatient in hospital, and provides palliative end of life care. She is multi-talented and has knowledge coming out the wazoo!

When Amanda has free time, she loves being outdoors and backcountry camping. Her family even dehydrates some food to lighten the load! "There's just a sense of peace and calm when you're unplugged in the middle of a forest or a lake communing with nature that I can't seem to find anywhere else."

and addiction and the stigma that comes with it. Her first job at Keeping Six was outreach - every Sunday a group of peers would head into the community with lunches, harm reduction supplies, and first aid. Outreach gave her a great foundation to start with before moving on to work at the Safer Use Space.



Donate Now!

We encourage you to donate to HAMSMaRT and make a difference in your community. Your donations will be used to purchase food, medical supplies, hygiene products and toiletries, and other outreach and clinic supplies. **You can donate by clicking the button below and choosing the donate option on our website.** You can sign up for a

one time donation or a monthly donation. All donations to HAMSMaRT are tax deductible and you can request a donation letter from us for large amounts. We look forward to working with you to provide those in need with the great healthcare and daily living essentials that we all deserve!

[Donate Here](#)

We would like to acknowledge and thank our current primary funders: the Hamilton Community Foundation, Ontario HIV Treatment Network, the Karen & Peter Turkstra Family Foundation, Incite Foundation for the Arts, the Canadian Mental Health Association, James A. Burton & Family Foundation, and The Hainsworth Trust. Thank you and we hope to continue to nurture our partnerships together! Additionally, we would like to thank the everyday folks who donate \$5, \$10, or \$15 through our website as a one time donation or a monthly donation. We know that making ends meet can be hard and we appreciate you giving back to your community through us - in whatever way you can! However large or small, your continued donations have allowed us to keep supporting our clients and community members. It is because of you all that we are able to give people a safe place for their medical care and wrap-around needs. Thank you to all of our amazing donors!

Winter Clothing Drive!

As the cold weather approaches, we are preparing once again for what the winter will look like for our clients and neighbours who are unhoused. As you refresh your winter wardrobe this year, keep us in mind. **Around 2,000 people** in our city will be sleeping rough this winter as shelters are consistently full and the cost of living keeps rising. Every year, the winter results in people suffering from hypothermia, frostbite, trenchfoot, and sometimes even death. Help us help those who are outside this winter by donating your used warm winter clothing! They will be distributed both in clinic and during outreach services. Thank you!

HAMSMaRT/K6 Winter Clothing Drive

We are looking for clothing donations for our clients!

We are especially looking for:

- Jackets
- Hats
- Gloves/Mitts
- Scarves
- Sweaters
- Sweatpants
- Weather/waterproof clothing
- Boots and Socks



Drop off Tuesday or Thursday
@ 660 Main St E
10am - 4pm

Questions? Email clinics@hamsmart.ca

December Newsletter - What's Next?

On next month's newsletter you can expect from us:

- Annual General Meeting - when and where?

- meet our board members - who are they?
- dates for December Hep C Testing - new month, new opportunities to test!
- meet two new staff members!

The Hamilton Social Medicine Response Team (HAMSMaRT) is a nonprofit organization of health providers and community organizers working to integrate clinical practice, critical analysis and political action. We work to advance the idea and practice that health is inherently political and health care providers must play a role in bringing about change in the social and material conditions which determine health.

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