

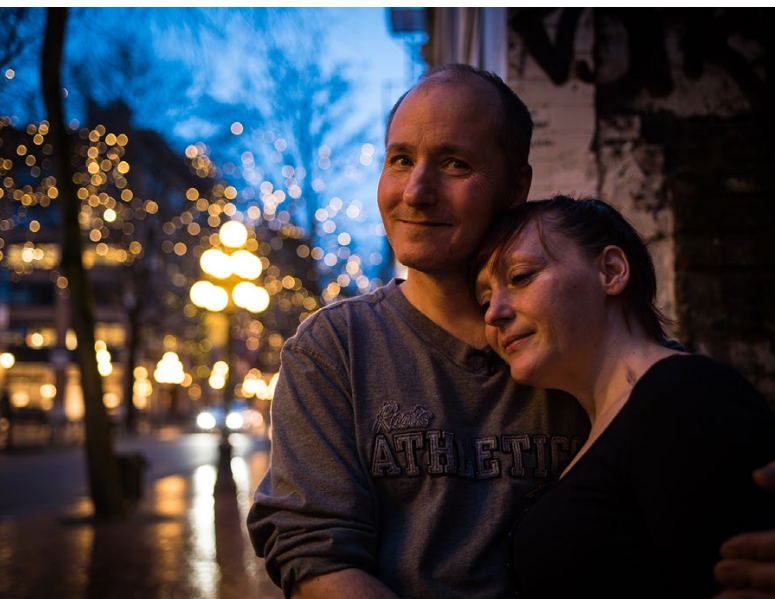


# LETTERS

“To Whom it May Concern”

DISPATCHES FROM SALOME AND THE CROSSTOWN CLINIC

MAY 2017



“To Whom it May Concern”

**DISPATCHES FROM SALOME AND THE CROSSTOWN CLINIC**

Third edition, May 2017

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# Could you imagine?

Nov. 29/16

Being an addict for the past 30 years off and on. Trying different treatments to no avail, the methadone, and so forth. The end is always the same, jails, institutions, and death. Having being involved in Cross Town Clinic for the past three years, it has done what no other place could. Seeing what fentanyl has done I'm glad I was a client at Cross, Town, Clinic since this new drug has been brought around. The chances would be very good that I would just be another statistic. So to have more clinics like Cross, Town, could you imagine how many of our friends would still be alive. Hoping to see more of our Health Care Budget put to good use on this War on the drug Fentanyl. How many more have to die?

An Addict

[NAME REMOVED]

Crosstown Clinic has done "what no other place could."

"To have more clinics like Crosstown, could you imagine how many of our friends would still be alive?"

# Many lives could have been saved

"Addiction does not discriminate as you are probably aware...I come from a very well to do family from the West Island of Montreal."

"Please, I beg of you to open your eyes and have an open mind. I don't want to lose another friend or maybe your son or daughter."

To whom it may concern,  
I don't know what more it will take than losing all the young lives we have lost to overdoses. Some of these homeless and nameless people who died because there was no program for them. I am very fortunate to be in Salome. I have spent 22 years in all in prison because I had to support my addiction. Addiction does not discriminate as you are probably aware. As I come from a very well to do family from the West Island of Montreal. I would for sure be back in Federal prison if not dead if it was not for Salome. I tried methadone and methadose but it was not enough. I was lacking what Salome had to offer. Please I beg of you to open your eyes and have an open mind. I don't want to lose another friend or maybe your son or daughter. Many lives could have been saved. What is it going to take

[NAME REMOVED]

# Imagine the tax dollars saved

Nov 29/16

People, please read these words with a positive, open mind. Also, try to remember that the people in this program have tried other treatment options, to no avail, continued failure, ongoing cycle, jails, institutions, and finally, death.

This program offers people like us, lifelong addicts, a chance to perhaps begin to "MANAGE" our addiction with a degree of success.

The current ~~is~~ "atmosphere" in DTES with all of the overdoses in the last 10 months it is very evident that something has to be done, and done fast! If there were more clinics, like ours, offering an alternative treatment option, for opioid dependence, more people would be alive today.

We've left the best for last. Not only will we be saving lives, but imagine the "TAX DOLLARS" saved. Redirect to more important issues.

[NAME REMOVED]

"Try to remember that the people in this program have tried other treatment options, to no avail, continued failure, ongoing cycle, jails, institutions and finally death."

"The current atmosphere in DTES with all of the overdoses in the last 10 months, it is very evident that something needs to be done fast."

# Given me my dignity back

"If it weren't for this program (study), I would quite simply, not be alive today."

"The drugs on the street are so much stronger and insanely potent that people on the street are overdosing and dropping like flies."

To whom it may Concern;

If it weren't for this program, (study) I would quite simply, not be alive today. Not only has this program saved my life it has given my dignity back, ~~with~~ what with having to hustle for the next fix on the street.

Also, I have made friends in the clinic, those who face the same barriers I have ~~in~~ in maintaining a healthy life style & we support each other through hard times & good.

The drugs on the street are so much stronger & insanely potent that people on the street are overdosing & dropping like flies. It's not even heroin on the street it cartentanyl & fentanyl & W19, all three, 100 times, 200 times & a thousand times stronger than heroin, respectively.

Yours Truly

[NAME REMOVED]

# No longer on the streets

This program has worked for me by  
Saving my life. when I started I was  
over weight, and on 17 different pills for  
a variety of different stuff from Arthritis to  
a heart condition. Plus supporting a habits  
from heroin to crack now I'm off all  
pills I'm no longer on the streets. I have  
got my first home, I'm single for the  
first time in my Adult life. My life is a  
much ~~set~~ shell.

[NAME REMOVED]

"Now I'm off all  
pills. I'm no longer  
on the streets.  
I have got my  
first home."

# SALOME saved me

"My life was a mess and the sooner it was over the better off everyone would be. That was then, but SALOME saved me."

"If SALOME wasn't here, I probably wouldn't be either."

Before coming here my life was very unstable I could not plan anything my future was a big void I didn't know if I'd be sick, in jail, or dead in the back alley. Most of the time I was depressed death seemed far better option than life, my life was a mess and the sooner it was over the better off everyone would be. That was then but Salome saved me. I haven't been sick once I'm even looking for a part-time job. My health has improved I'm taking better care of myself and lots of other pluses in my life and I owe it all to the program if Salome wasn't here I probably wouldn't be either.

[NAME REMOVED]



# I don't have to risk fentanyl!

to POLICY MAKERS

THIS SALOMIE PROGRAM HAS BEEN THE MOST POSITIVE AND WORKS THE BEST FOR ME BECAUSE IVE STAYED OUT OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AND PRISON SINCE I STARTED HERE. PREVIOUS TO THIS I DID EIGHT AND A HALF YEARS IN JAIL, AND WAS ALWAYS IN TROUBLE WITH POLICE. THE STAFF AND STRUCTURE OF THIS PROGRAM I AM VERY THANKFUL FOR, ANY HEALTH PROBLEMS I HAVE THEY ARE ALWAYS RIGHT THERE FOR ME. I TRIED METHADONE ABOUT SEVEN TIMES PREVIOUS TO THIS WHICH WERE AN INEFFECTIVE FOR ME. METHADONE DIDNT WORK FOR ME VERY WELL AN I WOULD KEEP USING. I AM GLAD THAT I KNOW WHAT DRUG IM DOING AND NOT RISKING MY LIFE BY DOING FENTANYL MANY PEOPLE HAVE DIED LATELY AND I DONT WANT TO RISK THAT.

[NAME REMOVED]

"Previous to this I did eight and a half years in jail, and was always in trouble with police."

"I'm glad that I know what drug I'm doing and not risking my life by doing fentanyl."

# Thank you for this program

"Since I've been in this program I've not been in trouble with the law. No more in and out of jail. That cycle door has stopped!"

"Thanks to this study, I have a job and my life back."

~~Spencer~~

To whom

I want to inform who ever needs to know about this program and how its changed and saved my life forever.

I was a total mess in my life. I was homeless and in full blown addiction, Krayon! How many times I tried methadone or other ways to stop or quite using Heroin. But failed! Until this study came into my life.

I was doing all means possible to get my Heroin. Crime!

Since I've begun this program I've not been in trouble with the law, no more in and out of jail. That cycle door has stopped! Thanks to this study. I have a

job and my life back. Thanks to Selene. If I didn't have this program, I ~~was~~ guarantee that I would be a statistic. ~~Meaning~~ Meaning dead because of this big renaissance crisis, that's killing everyone. Thank you!

for this program.

# I feel free

hello my name is [NAME REMOVED]  
and i am apart of salome. before salome i wa  
a thief and a criminal. i was going to jail every ~~the~~  
other week and I was homeless  
now that i am clean (salome) i've been to college  
I work and i like to buy nice things. thing i wa  
out of done if i was on methadon or suboxone.  
I feel free.

[NAME REMOVED]

"Before SALOME  
I was a thief and  
a criminal."

"Now that I am  
clean (SALOME) I've  
been to college."

# Please accept this as an appeal

"I would have to go a great distance on the bus to find methadone that wasn't corrupted, interfered with, or plainly not itself."

Good FIND!

BC. Policy Makers

Q why is heroin assisted treatment far better than methadone

To whom can bring us change to heroin or hydro-morphone treatment in stead of methadone.

I was in treatment for addiction and on methadone for four years here in the east end of Vancouver. While on methadone I continually sought out pain killers, (morphine & diazepam) as well as oxy-codone and sometime when these werent available though any way I would use street heroin.

My methadone was usually over 100 mg a day and about a split dose am and pm. This proved to be unaffctive and dangerous for me. Going to the pharmacy here in the east end isnt without its dangers.

As well at the pharmacy on methadone the strength of the dose seemed to vary as the vessel was always corrupted and whatever they added was not methadone my safety was seriously jepordized, always cost

"The history speaks for itself clearly that DAM is far more effective, safer, and cost-effective as compared to methadose.

Please accept this as an appeal for others in the same situation as myself."

changing pharmacies didn't help. I would have to go a great distance on the bus to find methadose that wasn't corrupted, interfered with or plainly not itself.

I was part of the study salome here in Vancouver and as luck would have it treated with diacetylmorphine for a year - later returning on hydro-morphone then back on DAM.

While part of Crosstown's heroin program we not had any dirty urine samples for street heroin or other opiates, as well since July we not had a increase in the measure or dose of this new treatment with DAM!

The history speaks for itself clearly that DAM is far more effective, safer, and cost effective as compared to methadose.

I thank you, please accept this as an appeal for others in the same situations as myself.

[NAME REMOVED]

"While part of Crosstown's heroin program, we have not had any dirty urine samples for street heroin or other opiates."

# Life with Crosstown Clinic

"In contrast, this is a very different lifestyle I am living compared to pre-Crosstown Clinic. Where I was forced onto methadone, forced out of work, ultimately forced onto assistance and forced to live [in the ] Downtown Eastside."

## Life with Cross town clinic

To whom it may concern; I have been a member since almost day one, I believe I was the fourth client enrolled. I am slightly different than others have in that I am an addict however I also live my life in pain. I was born with spinal bifida so this program allows me to walk and work and be somewhat functional. I was able to go back to college for two years and study community mental health and addictions worker. I am now employed as peer supervisor in the chill at Insight the injection facility. I stay very active in the community fundraising and obtaining grants to host numerous projects around the downtown east side. In contrast this is a very different life style I am living compared to pre Cross town clinic. Where I was forced on to methadone, forced out of work, ultimately forced on to assistance and forced to live downtown eastside.

In short I don't know how anyone could not recognize this program as a recovery based program. What it promotes is being functional sadly many of the abstinent programs have long missed the boat on this one. Having spent ten years in and out of recovery for cocaine addiction coupled with Owning and operating my own recovery houses. I take a different approach, I believe In teaching to be functional first then abstinent if necessary.

[NAME REMOVED]

# SALOME is my life saver

What has Salome done for me?

In a Nut shell Salome has saved my life... I would be in Jail or dead. For me, Salome is my life saver.

I don't have to scheme or do illegal things to obtain my fix

My <sup>HEART</sup> heart goes out to those who are still out there...

those people who have to do what they have to do...

which brings me to ~~gratitude~~  
my sincere thankfulness that I no longer need to do ~~illegal~~ ~~things~~ to get well... what I had to do... [NAME REMOVED]

"My heart goes out to those who are still out there."

# Life with Crosstown Clinic

My oldest brother died over heroin in Kathmandu, Nepal. My second oldest brother died over Cocaine in Ottawa. These events obviously helped me spiral out of control going deeper and deeper into my addiction.

Hi My name is [NAME REMOVED] and I'm 55 yrs old. I grew up in a middle class family in my hometown Ottawa, Ont. I'm the youngest one of 4 Boys <sup>of which</sup> and both parents were hard working people. I am writing this letter because I would like to thank the people of the scheme program, for helping and encouraging me to get my life back on track, after so many years of the same repetitive suffering & turmoil. ~~This~~ was my life prior to this program. Both of my parents were alcoholics, my father, dying from the affects of alcohol in 1990 <sup>causing</sup> from cirrhosis of the liver. My mother <sup>passed</sup> shortly after in 1994 died from bone cancer. I quit school at 16 and began working with my father and brother drilling. Alongside that, I robbed, stole, lied, cheated for what I need. Weed, hash no longer did the trick at this point. I graduated to cocaine. First smoked it, then I moved to the needle, continuing to do like a maniac. For the next 40 yrs was a blur. I was in and out of jail for me it was a revolving door. It was all I knew. Percocet was my first sh drug, then morphine and heroin. However heroin was more scarce as it is not available as here in Montreal or Toronto was were to go so I spent many nights taking this drive. In 1986 my oldest brother died over heroin in Kathmandu Nepal. My second oldest <sup>brother</sup> died over cocaine in Ottawa. These events ~~obv~~ obviously helped me spiral out of control going deeper and deeper into my addiction. My last brother I have not spoken to in over 15 yrs as it's the



is alive I don't know as we do not get along and yes he has an Addiction problem as well Alcohol and Drugs. I have 2 kids a girl <sup>[NAME REMOVED]</sup> ~~she~~ is on the straight and narrow married and had a baby girl so yes I'm a Grand father. Also a Boy named <sup>[NAME REMOVED]</sup> ~~DS~~ and also no Crime drugs, or Boon's plus does not smoke. So maybe the Addiction stops with me. I live with my girl friend <sup>which who</sup> ~~also~~ is <sup>also</sup> wired to Heroin for 10yrs and it's my only obstacle we argue daily about \$ and wonder if she will wake up from her next fix. Anyways Solame has brought me along way from before I started the program all my needs are taken care of Medical, counselling don't have to worry about my next fix plus no looking over my shoulder because of Robbing someone, stealing anything at all. The pressure is off. Anyways I would like to thank everyone who helped get this program started also running it today I can look in the mirror and like what I see so

THANK YOU again  
Solame

it's never  
to late to get  
your life back

[NAME REMOVED]

Today, I can look  
in the mirror and  
like what I see.

So thank you  
again Solame.

It's never too late to  
get your life back.

# Life with Crosstown Clinic

**“My wife was able to reunite with her mom, and she finally found her daughter and was able to talk with her, and I was able to locate my daughter as well.”**

Crosstown Clinic is staffed with some incredible people, whom go out of there way to make sure were ok, both physically and mentally. They go out of there way to ensure we remember our medical appointments, and encourage us on those days we feel most vulnerable. They are truly remarkable people, I just wish some of us clients would remember this when they go about there daily rounds and interacting with staff for the half-hour we share daily with them. The clinic, and program have opened up doors in my life I have forgotten mattered to me. They helped instil a sense of pride in what I did, and it allowed me to advocate for other suffering addicts out there whom are dying needlessly. The deaths amounting to nothing more than lack of action on the part of those who are in a position of power, overcoming previous beliefs, and judgemental misunderstanding of those who are afflicted with addiction and the lifestyle that comes with it. But slowly change is coming about, those in power are starting to realize it make sense to treat addiction in a humane fashion both financially and medically. These new drugs on the market give rise to new hope in the addict. Providing if you will a second chance to live a more manageable and meaningful existence. As a contributing member of society, which ideally, we all want to be.

Being a part of this program allowed my partner and I to get married, go on a honey moon for a week at a bed n breakfast. The ocean right out our window. Something we would not have given it the time or day, if we were out there on the streets having to pay for a habit. My wife was able to reunite with her mom, and she finally found her daughter and was able to talk with her, and I was able to locate my daughter as well. All though my wife passed on we shared 11 years together. Yes, I'm still hear in the program.

Yours truly

[NAME REMOVED]

# Supervised Injectable Opioid Assisted Treatment

Supervised injectable Opioid Assisted Treatment (siOAT) is a lifesaving and life stabilizing treatment option suited for people who continue to regularly inject illicit opioids regardless of the availability of methadone or suboxone. Injecting pharmaceutical grade Diacetylmorphine (Heroin) or Hydromorphone (Dilaudid®) in a clinical setting, in combination with social and health supports, has proven to be a very effective treatment alternative for this population.

## Reasons siOAT should be expanded

(Based on the recently completed SALOME clinical trial studying 202 participants)

- **SAFETY:** Injecting a prescribed dose of pharmaceutical grade heroin (ideally in a supervised setting) is much safer than injecting an illicit version of the same drug whose quality and purity cannot be assured. After 88,451 injections over six months of the SALOME study at the Crosstown Clinic there were only 14 overdoses, all managed without difficulty.
- **DECREASED ILLICIT HEROIN USE:** Treatment on siOAT significantly lowers the incentive to use opioids purchased on the street. Crosstown clinic patients went from using illicit opioids an average of 28 days per month before starting injectable treatment to 4 days a month measured at six months after starting treatment.
- **DECREASED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY:** Clients receiving siOAT allows clients to wake up without feeling the desperation that leads to committing crime in order to survive the day without getting horribly sick. Involvement in criminal activity went from an average of 14 days a month for Crosstown Clinic clients before starting siOAT, to less than 4 days a month after beginning treatment.
- **IMPROVED HEALTH AND WELLBEING:** The SALOME study measured improvements in the physical and psychological health of Crosstown Clients as well as improvements in their social

wellbeing. The stability from siOAT allows clients the freedom to address other needs in life that were previously neglected. With the assistance of healthcare workers and counselors, clients are able to better address pre-existing medical conditions, improve their housing, retain resources for food and clothing, and sleep with significantly less worry. Stability allows clients to organize, set goals, and plan for life in the future with a sense of hope and meaning.

## Connecting and Retaining Clients in Treatment

BY PROVIDING THE VERY DRUG THAT HARDCORE USERS SEEK, siOAT makes it for an effective way to connect with and retain people in treatment who previously may not have been well connected with the health care system or other social services. After six months of treating Crosstown clients (who previously had not responded well to other forms of treatment) over 80% were retained on treatment and were still regularly going to the clinic.

- **COST EFFECTIVENESS:** Access to siOAT will save taxpayers money. The model of comprehensive care at the Crosstown Clinic that includes primary healthcare, adjacent healthcare and counseling services for this particular and vulnerable clientele costs close to \$27,000 annually per patient. Patients from this population not effectively engaged in treatment are estimated to cost society in the range of \$45,000 per year.
- **THE NEED:** There are at least 500 people in Vancouver who are suited to benefit from siOAT. These 500 are made up of some of the most vulnerable, neglected and unfairly stigmatized people in society. This treatment would allow those 500 the opportunity to realize hope and meaning in place of despair and looming death.

In light of the current crisis in British Columbia with a high rate of people dying needlessly of overdose, we must expand siOAT to reach the vulnerable and at risk who do not respond to other forms of treatment.

**“To have more clinics like Crosstown, could you imagine how many of our friends would still be alive?”**

