

Safe Use Hastings looking for support



By Kristena Schutt-Moore

Safe Use Hastings has created a GoFundMe page at <https://gofund.me/05ba25ef>. The safe consumption site is looking to purchase a mobile unit RV. To do so they need to raise a total of \$35,000 and they hope to do so by June 15.

"We can appreciate that some may feel helpless in the face of this tragedy. We are sympathetic to that feeling. But our town cannot thrive if we do not address the "pandemic within a pandemic" which is that people "with kids, families, jobs, aspirations and potential" are dying of drug overdoses at an alarming rate in 2021. We cannot sustain our economic growth, nor can we attract the professional talent we need, if we do not create a community where we care for each other through tragedy. There is a moral and economic imperative pointing in the same direction," says Dr Ashley White, who is heading up the team organizing Safe Use Hastings.

The Safe Use Hastings team is applying to the federal government to approve a safe injection site so that users have a safe place to use substances. The goal is to create a mobile site that will offer access to sterile supplies to curb infections caused by unsafe use, access to treatment, drugs to prevent overdose, health services, and peer support. The mobile safe consumption site will serve communities in Coe Hill, Maynooth and Bancroft.

Lisa Fiorotto-Bickert who is working lead for this project says, "The locations where the site parks will have QR codes, which will tell users where the next safe injection site will be located. There is no government funding for these sites, which is why we need as much public support as possible."

The RV the volunteer team is looking to purchase is \$22,000. The retrofit and purchasing of equipment will be an estimated additional \$10,000. They are hoping to raise enough funds so that they can move ahead with the program faster and not have to wait on federal funding approval.

"We all benefit when people can use drugs with privacy, safe supplies, and options for reducing infections and overdoses. We have applied for approval for a supervised consumption site. The site will be mobile, and offer health services and drug testing," said Dr. White

Those interested in more information about the project are welcome to visit www.safeusehastings.com.