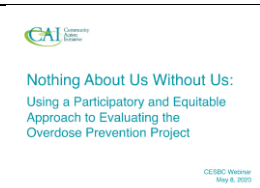
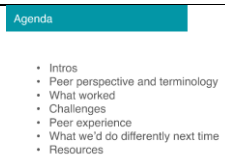
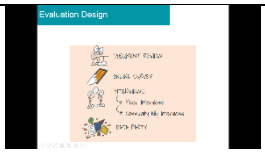
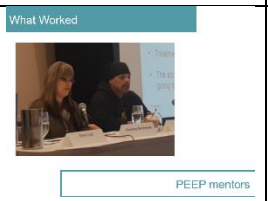
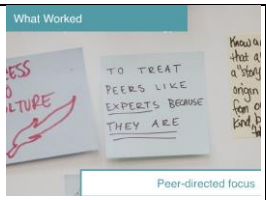
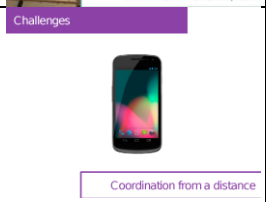
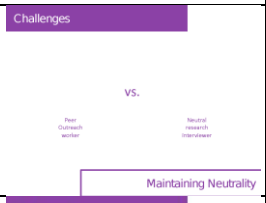
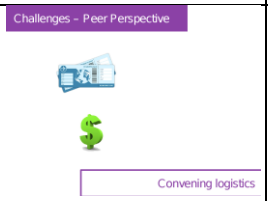
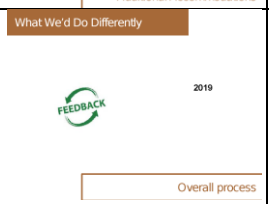
	Slide	Content	Speaker
1		• Welcome webinar participants • Land acknowledgement: We would like to begin by acknowledging that we as settlers, are fortunate to reside on the unceded and ancestral territories of a few different locations, including those of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh people in Vancouver; the Semiahmo, Katzie, Kway-quit-lum, Kwantlen, Keykite and Tsawwassen First Nations in Surrey, the Lahtko Dene in Quesnel, and the Squamish people in Gibsons.	● Jen
2		• Purpose of today's webinar: what we learned in process of participatory evaluation of phase three of Community Action Initiative's (CAI) Overdose Prevention and Education Network (OPEN) • Note that we've uploaded a link to the handouts in the Chat box • Paul will kick it off by speaking about the peer perspective, and the importance of language and terminology. We'll then discuss what worked and challenges from a couple different perspectives, and finally, what we'd do differently next time. At the end, we have a list of resources if you're interested to learn more.	● Jen
3		• CAI is a provincially funded, non-profit organization that provides grant funding and training opportunities designed to strengthen the role and capacity of community partners to improve mental health and address substance use for British Columbians.	● Jen
4		• Would like to take a moment to introduce today's speakers. • Charlene Burmeister and Paul Choisil are members of the BC Centre for Disease Control's Peer Engagement and Evaluation Project. They were both contracted to provide peer engagement, debriefing and emotional support to peer members of the Evaluation Steering Committee throughout the duration of the evaluation. • Prairie Chiu: OPEN Program Manager, supported and coordinated the Evaluation Steering Committee, worked to coordinate peer interviews and organized OPEN's Fall knowledge exchange event. • Jennifer Alsop: CAI's Evaluation manager, guided evaluation design, supported ESC coordination; transcription; analysis; knowledge mobilization strategy; final report and knowledge products • Kylie Hutchison: designed and delivered evaluation training; provided content expertise to peers throughout interview process; co-designed and facilitated data party.	● Jen
5		• Thanks Jen • CAI's Overdose Prevention and Education Project, or OPEN, is a multiphase granting and capacity building project that supports opioid overdose prevention and response efforts directed and led by community coalitions, peer-based groups, and Indigenous organizations. One of the core principles of OPEN is "Nothing About Us Without Us," which guides the project's emphasis on the meaningful engagement of peers, drug user groups, and people with lived and living experience (PWLLE) of substance use within each grantee's project or community strategy. • In addition to grants, each phase of OPEN is also supported by training, knowledge exchange, and capacity building opportunities. Each phase is also evaluated for its impact. In phase 3, we decided to employ a	● Prairie

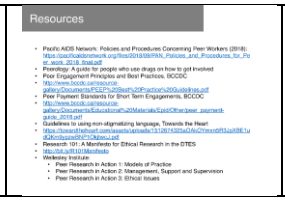
		participatory approach to evaluation in creating the Evaluation Steering Committee.	
6		• OPEN's Evaluation Steering Committee was comprised of 5 peers, and 2 service providers from OPEN funded communities, in addition to 2 peer mentors (Paul and Charlene) from BCCDC's Peer Engagement and Evaluation Team. • CAI staff coordinated and facilitated these meetings on a bi-weekly basis from July of last year to February 2020. • Kylie lead a day-long training session, for the ESC's first in person meeting last July. She also supported the evaluation training needs of peers throughout the process, including data part design and facilitation support.	● Jen
7		• Evaluation began with an in person day long meeting in late June of last year. Kylie provided basic training in interviewing process, and facilitated a discussion about potential interview questions. • Peer members of the ESC interviewed 29 peer workers representing the 18 OPEN-funded projects across the province. The interview guide was largely designed by the ESC. • Before these interviews took place, peers were asked to go online and complete a short demographic survey focused on their location in the province and their role in harm reduction and overdose prevention. This survey also included an informed consent form, and scheduling information regarding the interviews. • A data party was held in late October with the results of the peer interviews. • In addition, interviews were conducted of 'peer allies' defined as those who work closely with peers in community in harm reduction and overdose prevention. This piece was co-designed with the two service providers on the steering committee, and was contracted to a third party evaluator. • Finally, a short document review of OPEN administrative documentation was also undertaken.	● Jen
8		Research and evaluation, when involving PWLLE in a tokenizing / non-participatory way, can be damaging in a number of ways. It can perpetuate stigma against people who use substances, people who are poor or homeless, and sex workers; and it can trigger trauma in participants through the type and content of questions asked by evaluators. Charlene and I worked to provide ongoing peer engagement, debriefing and emotional support to peer members of the Evaluation Steering Committee. Making this peer support available to peer members of the ESC is a crucial part of ensuring a safe and supportive environment for peer evaluators. They were able to reach out to us with any concerns they had in the evaluation process; in addition, we offered over the phone debriefing support on an as needed basis, but specifically after interviews of other peers. From my experience as an evaluator on BCCDC's Peer Engagement and Evaluation Project, the words we use to describe each other are incredibly important. To avoid perpetuating stigma and re-enacting trauma against marginalized populations, its important to avoid stigmatizing language, such as drug addict, crack head etc. Instead, use person-centred language. Instead of 'addicts' use "people who use substances", or more generally, people with lived and living experience.	● Paul

		I'll take a few moments to describe a few other key terms.	
9		• **Harm reduction** encompasses policies, strategies and services which aim to assist people who use substances to live safer and healthier lives. Harm reduction recognizes that people use substances for many reasons; abstinence or reducing use is not required in order to receive respect, compassion or services.	• Paul
10		• **Cultural Safety** focuses on establishing trust with clients by recognizing their knowledge and experiences as valid and valuable, and by empowering them to voice their concerns about the care and services they are receiving. Applying cultural safety in health and social services involves acknowledging and analyzing power imbalances, institutional discrimination, colonization and relationships with colonizers.	• Paul
11		• **Trauma-informed care:** an approach that focuses on creating environments where service users do not experience further traumatization or re-traumatization (events that reflect earlier experiences of powerlessness and loss of control) and where they can make decisions about their treatment needs at a pace that feels safe to them.	• Paul
12		• Thanks Paul. So what worked for us? • The priority of the evaluation for this phase was really to build the capacity of the Evaluation Steering Committee to engage in evaluation and research processes in the future – including skills around qualitative interviewing and facilitation. Having that focus really permitted everyone involved to make mistakes and embrace a learners' approach. It also quashed a lot of anxiety for first time evaluators!	• Prairie
13		• Because of the participatory nature of the Steering Committee, and also the focus of the evaluation, namely on the experience of peer workers, we found it invaluable to weave the concepts that Paul mentioned into our processes. As a project manager with a clinical social work background and experience using trauma informed treatment approaches, I brought my lens to the development of the evaluation plan and support of the project.	• Prairie
14		• To support peer participants who might have challenges attending every meeting consistently due to challenges like housing insecurity, responding to overdoses, and using unsafe substances, frequent ESC meetings allowed them to keep connected and stay engaged if they missed a meeting. • We incorporated peer payment best practices to ensure timely, non-token payment to peer interviewers and interviewees. We did this in the method and frequency that peers preferred as often as possible.	• Prairie
15		• Our engagement of PEEP mentors, Paul and Charlene made a big difference to participants' participation. • Peers reported that it was supportive just to know that they could reach out to talk to Paul and Charlene, and Paul and Charlene's willingness to share their own experiences and opinions allowed them to voice their opinions and thoughts. • Finally, to ensure that everyone was supported, it was crucial to have a dedicated coordinator to the project to answer inquiries, have conversations, etc. This is really time-intensive work. Worth it!	• Prairie

16		• Peers provided list of important questions they wanted answered through the evaluation. One of their questions - "Can you describe tasks or activities you typically do as a peer", was an important focus on the evaluation, as it shed light on the integral frontline role that peers are playing in the overdose response. • Peers also highlighted the question of importance to them of paid vs. volunteer work, a central focus of evaluation findings and recommendations	● Jen
17		• As evaluator - listened to all interviews to hear experiences from the peer POV instead of just sending them out for transcription. Hearing experiences from peers POV emphasized the reality of trauma as a root of substance misuse	● Jen
18		• ESC members located throughout the province & budget limitations – • ESC only able meet in person for first meeting which included training; and during the knowledge exchange event in October. • Videoconferencing also wasn't an option, as the majority of peers either did not have consistent internet access, or computer access, or both. • Most ESC meetings were accomplished over the phone, which proved challenging at times. • Additional tech limitations –any attachments sent in email form needed to be copied and pasted in the body of the email	● Kylie
19		• Peers lead all interviews of other peers. • Challenges in terms of recording phone calls from a distance when you're dealing with marginalized folks. They were provided with basic voice recorders and asked to mail back via courier once interviews were completed. • Background noise – often an issue for transcription • One courier service refused to deliver package to a specific address; took many phone calls and escalating issue to management to get package delivered. Just one small example of the stigma that PWLLE/ PWUS face	● Kylie
20		• Challenges with navigating role of interviewer (objective, neutral) with more familiar role of peer support worker (empathetic, encouraging, etc.) One thing we had to remind peers about was the neutrality required for doing interviews, conflicts with their instincts as peer outreach workers.	● Kylie
21		• Transcription in house: logistical challenges in getting physical recorders sent back to CAI, received at different times; in addition, depth of experience shared in interviews compelled Jen to listen to interviews themselves. Was a point of connection to the peers interviewed; helped solidify/ remember individual experiences and quotes for final report • ESC review of final results - challenges in terms of distinguishing between the results vs. their own personal experience and views. For example, in the discussion about potential recommendations, the ESC discussed a wide variety of suggestions, many of which were drawn from their experiences, rather than the specifics of evaluation findings. • Emergent/ developing organizational infrastructure around peer payment; logistical challenges of providing payment to marginalized individuals (also – tax / benefit implications)	● jen

22		**Hello everyone as mentioned my name is Charlene Burmeister, welcome and thank you all for being here with us today** • Peer Perspectives are vital to equitable engagement; there are multiple models of resources accessible that have been drafted by PWLLE with recommendations of effective engagement. Some that come to mind areResearch 101: a manifesto for ethical research in the DTES, Peerology, Nothing About Us Without Us, Best Practices guidelines to Peer Engagement and the Best Practices Guidelines for Peer Payments with the BCCDC. These resources will be provided for you in the webinar resource section. • Engaging in equity-oriented and participatory forms of evaluation, with PWLLE is essential to the best outcomes of all engagements with peers. • It is vital that evaluators and researchers recognize the value of peer experience and expertise. We are the experts in our lived experiences and must be considered with equitable approaches to the work in which we agree to partner with. • It is also important to be mindful of the inequality / power imbalance between evaluators/ researchers and peers and community members. As evaluators you need to find ways towards creating conditions of actual equality. • As Prairie has mentioned, you need to work from a trauma-informed perspective that anticipates and avoids potential harms. In doing so, you have to recognize your own unconscious bias against people who use substances, are homeless, engage in sex work or who have low incomes. • Lastly, it's important to connect peers to a neutral third party mediator, who canhelp navigate issues of power, disrespect or inequality in the evaluation process, as CAI did through the work that Paul and I led in the evaluation process.	● Charlene
23		From my perspective as a peer, I think all of the in-person events were really important in supporting the participatory inclusion of peer perspectives. Of note, the data party and knowledge exchange event were especially important. ● In terms of the data party peer members of the evaluation steering committee facilitated table discussions, which supported peer networking and also provided a culturally-safe environment for peers and community members to discuss data. ● The data party and broader knowledge exchange event was vital in supporting peer connection, face-to-face opportunities, and mentorship, while also creating the opportunity to hear from other community members in Chilliwack.	● Charlene
24		Yet at the same time, I think from the peer perspective, we definitely encountered some challenges in the evaluation. ● Complicated logistics in convening the evaluation steering committee and knowledge exchange event. ● For example, peers faced many barriers in booking travel for the October knowledge exchange event (lack of ID, unable to pay expenses up front or register a credit card). In addition, some peers were negatively impacted by the stigma they encountered from travel agencies and airport staff.	● Charlene

		• Lastly, we didn't sufficiently support PWLLE in person during Knowledge Exchange in terms of substance use navigation. For future events, we need guaranteed substance navigation and access to substance navigator	
25		• 1.5 days of training at the beginning instead of 1 • Including more time for interview training • More opportunity for actual practice and feedback while we're still in face-to-face training • Include practice with the recording tech while still face to face • One thing we had to remind peers about was the neutrality required for doing interviews, conflicts with their instincts as peer outreach workers.	• Kylie
26		• Consider budgeting more time (and travel funds) for more face-to-face meetings. • I.e. one face-to-face meeting every two months and in advance of important milestones, for example, in advance of data party knowledge exchange. • Purpose of face-to-face meetings: mentorship, and to build relationships, be better connected. • In person session at the end to discuss the final report / results	• Jen
27		• Clearly identifying what parts people want to be involved in at the beginning – while being open to changes to this plan along the way • A few peers expressed interest in transcription, and data analysis – and one peers transcribed their notes for us • Possible peer involvement in data analysis – although this would require additional in person training and support	• Jen
28		• Large font • Mail out materials ahead of time • Email attachments in body of text • Follow-up by phone instead of email • Be available for peers to check in on process or questions	• Jen
29		From the peer perspective, I think there are several things to consider doing differently, next time CAI takes on a similar type evaluation. • Next time, it'd be important to to leave room for peer feedback on entirety of the evaluation process at the beginning, to challenge any assumptions and ensure all pieces make the sense from a peer point of view. • That being said, CAI may want to consider revisiting Evaluation Steering Committee Terms of Reference throughout process to allow room for evolving decisions or processes. • In addition, this evaluation had a quick turnaround. It began in June 2019 and wrapped up, with a final report in January 2020. While CAI had timeline considerations, in the future it might be important to plan for more time overall for the process. • Also, I think CAI staff should take time to explain financial and timeline limitations to Evaluation Steering Committee at the beginning, in terms why this process was decided on (financial, timeline), their intentions, so it's clear and transparent.	• Paul

30		• questions?	• Kylie