2026 CRISM Atlantic Symposium Program

(This program is approximate and may be adjusted on the day of the event)

2026 CRISM Atlantic Symposium
Halifax, November 25-27, 2026
Location: Westin Nova Scotian
1181 Hollis Street, Halifax, NS B3H 2P6

CRISM - ICRIS | ATLANTIC ATLANTIQUE
Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Matters
Initiative Canadienne de Recherche sur les Impacts des Substances psychoactives

Day1 - Wednesday, November 25th Tradewinds Room, Main level, Westin Nova Scotian		
Time	**Event**	**Speaker/Note**
5:30-7:00 PM	**Opening Ceremony** *(light appetizers & beverages)* Networking Event	Elder Chris Brooks, Sitansisk, Wolastoqey Moderator: Sherry Stewart, Dalhousie University
Day 2 - Thursday November 26th Atlantic Ballroom/ Mezzanine/ Boardroom, 2nd level, Westin Nova Scotian		
Time	**Event**	**Speaker/Note**
8:00-9:00 AM	**Registration/light Breakfast**	
9:00-9:05 AM	**Welcome/Agenda review** Chill Space Opens (Boardroom, 2nd level) Moderator: Mark Asbridge, Dalhousie University	
9:05-9:55 AM	**Keynote Address** *Substance Use on the Prairies: Stories of Crisis, Change, and Care* Holly Mathias, University of Alberta	
9:55 –10:25 AM	**CRISM National Updates** *What is Happening with CRISM Nationally?* Sabina Kukurudziak, CRISM Knowledge Transfer Coordinator *National Training Platform* Yanfei Ma, CRISM Training Platform Coordinator	
10:25-10:40 AM	**Break (beverages & snacks)**	
10:40-11:25 AM	**CRISM Node Updates** Fatma Boulouednine, QC CRISM Node Manager Farihah Ali, Ontario CRISM Node Principal Investigator Denise Adams, Prairies CRISM Node Manager Shirley Wong, BC CRISM Node Manager	
11:25-11:40 AM	**Paspinam Update** (*formerly Indigenous Engagement Platform*) Nik Phillips, Tajikeimik First Nations Health Authority Robert Henry, Paspinam Principal Investigator, University of Saskatchewan	
11:40 AM -12:05 PM	**3-Minute Thesis**: Session 1	
12:05-1:30 PM	**Poster Judging + Networking Lunch** **Posters will be in both the Atlantic Ballroom and outside in the Atrium*	
1:30-2:25 PM	**Research Development Program Updates** *ABC: Attentional Bias in Cannabis Users* -Denize Yildirim, Dalhousie University *Identifying and Evaluating Outcomes of the NL Health Services, Primary Care Program, Harm Reduction Team* -Teviah Abman Dowdell, Dalhousie University *Is socioeconomic status associated with increased cannabis use in patients with mental health disorders?* -Candice Crocker, Dalhousie University *Investigation of Cannabis Potency and Products Used in Young Adults with Early Phase Psychosis in NS and NL* -Jennifer Boone, Dalhousie University	
2:25-3:05 PM	**Working Group Updates** *Empowering Vulnerable Youth: A DEI-driven Approach to the DECYDE Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Strategy* -Kathryn Dalton, Memorial University of NL *Exploring Trauma Cue-elicited Cognitions in Cannabis Users with Trauma Histories: Relevance to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder-Cannabis Use Disorder Comorbidity* -Sarah DeGrace, Dalhousie University *Evaluating a Brief Virtual Cognitive Remediation Therapy Intervention for those with Early Phase Psychosis and Substance Misuse in NS/NL: Addressing Challenges in Underserviced Areas* -Amelie Tanner, Dalhousie University	

3:05 – 3:20 PM	**Break (beverages & snacks)**	
3:20-3:45 PM	**3-Minute Thesis**: Session 2	
3:45–4:30 PM	**Panel Discussion**: *Bridging Perspectives: Engaging Rural Communities and Families to Address Substance Use and Related Stigma* Moderator: Jeannine McNeil, Health Canada Panelists: Matt Bonn, ChangeMark Research & Evaluation; Gillian Kolla, Memorial University of NL; Holly Mathias, University of Alberta; Family Support Representative	
4:30 –4:35 PM	**Closing Remarks**	Mark Asbridge, Dalhousie University
Day 3 - Friday November 27th All Symposium events located on 2nd level, Westin Nova Scotian Atlantic Ballroom/ Mezzanine/ Boardroom		
Time	**Event**	**Speaker/Note**
8:30-9:00 AM	**Registration Table Open** (light Breakfast)	
9:00- 9:05 AM	**Welcome/Agenda Review**	Moderator: Sherry Stewart, Dalhousie University
9:05-9:35 AM	**Keynote Address** *Cannabis Use in Context: Distinguishing Medicinal and Nonmedicinal Cannabis Use among Young Adults in the Legal Cannabis Environment* Jeffrey Wardell, York University	
9:35-10:20 AM	**Panel Discussion:** *Cannabis Use* Moderator: Sherry Stewart, Dalhousie University Panelists: Jeffrey Wardell, York University; Sarah DeGrace, Dalhousie University; Phil Tibbo, Dalhousie University; Lisa Bishop, Memorial University of NL	
10:20-10:35 AM	**Break (beverages & snacks)**	
10:35-10:45 AM	**3-Minute Thesis and Poster awards** Renato Molina, CRISM Atlantic	
10:45-11:15 AM	**Walking Together: *Relationship, Indigenous Community Engagement and Research*** Renee Masching, Dalhousie University, Nik Phillips, Tajikeimik, and Phil Tibbo, Dalhousie University	
11:15AM-Noon	**Concurrent Sessions** **A.** *Bridging Evidence and Experience: Applying Lived Expertise and Implementation Science to Improve Health Services for People Who Use Drugs and Alcohol* Tommy Brothers, Dalhousie University and Nova Scotia Health (NSH); Jess West; Will Nevers, Dalhousie University **B.** *Drug Checking as a Harm Reduction Service and Public Health Response to Navigate the Illicit and Unregulated Drug Supply* Eric Poarch, CRISM Atlantic/NSH; Jo Parker, Mainline Needle Exchange; Matt Bonn, ChangeMark Research & Evaluation	
Noon-12:05 PM	**Closing Remarks**	Sherry Stewart, Dalhousie University
12:05-12:20 PM	**Closing Ceremony**	Elder Chris Brooks, Sitansisk, Wolastoqey
Pick-up lunch to go . . . Mezzanine!		

Thank you for your participation!