

Dear WHO  
34 Winner's Ave

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Re: Evaluation proposal:

Dear Mr. WHO,

Thank-you for accepting an evaluation proposal from Unique Critique. In response, we are pleased and excited to offer you a proposed evaluation plan for the Crystal Clear Peer-Based Harm Reduction Project (Crystal Clear). It is our hope that your department finds our evaluation outline to be useful in ensuring the success and high quality of your program.

Enclosed you will find a delineated outline of our evaluation plan for Crystal Clear. We have identified all of the key stakeholders pertaining to the program and recommend the formation of an advisory committee to maintain consistency with your company's values. In addition, we have provided an in depth analysis of the program's goals and expectations, which we have developed into a logic model.

We have formulated a break-down of the methodologies proposed to evaluate the Crystal Clear program. Our methodologies include examination of relevance, success and impact, implementation and design, and cost effectiveness. This is examined through (focus groups, etc). For your convenience, we have combined this information into a comprehensive evaluation matrix.

Unique Critique is an evaluation team with over 30 years of combined evaluation experience. We pride ourselves on upholding the standards of the numerous companies we service and our success is based on our immaculate attention to detail. In addition, Unique Critique remains dedicated to the values of the Canadian Evaluation Society, which include Propriety, Feasibility, Utility, and Accuracy.

We would be more than delighted to address any questions or concerns you or your associates may have. Should you wish to discuss our proposal, please feel free to contact our office. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

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Unique Critique





# **Evaluation of the Crystal Clear Peer-Based Harm Reduction Project (Crystal Clear)**

**Submitted to:  
Methamphetamine Response Committee  
(MARC)**

Prepared by: Unique Critique  
February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011

## 1. Introduction

This is a proposed evaluation for Crystal Clear Peer-Based Harm Reduction Project (Crystal Clear). The purpose of this evaluation is to understand the impact of the training on the targeted youth population, including past and current participants. Unique Critique has enclosed an outline of the evaluation plan for Crystal Clear that outlines key stakeholders of the program, the support of a steering committee, as well as an in depth analysis of the program's goals and expectations in the form of a logic model. In addition, an evaluation matrix has been included to give an overview of the methodologies we have chosen. In our evaluation, we have been cognizant of the diversity and culture of the target population while also addressing challenges we may encounter during our evaluation.

## 2. Program Overview

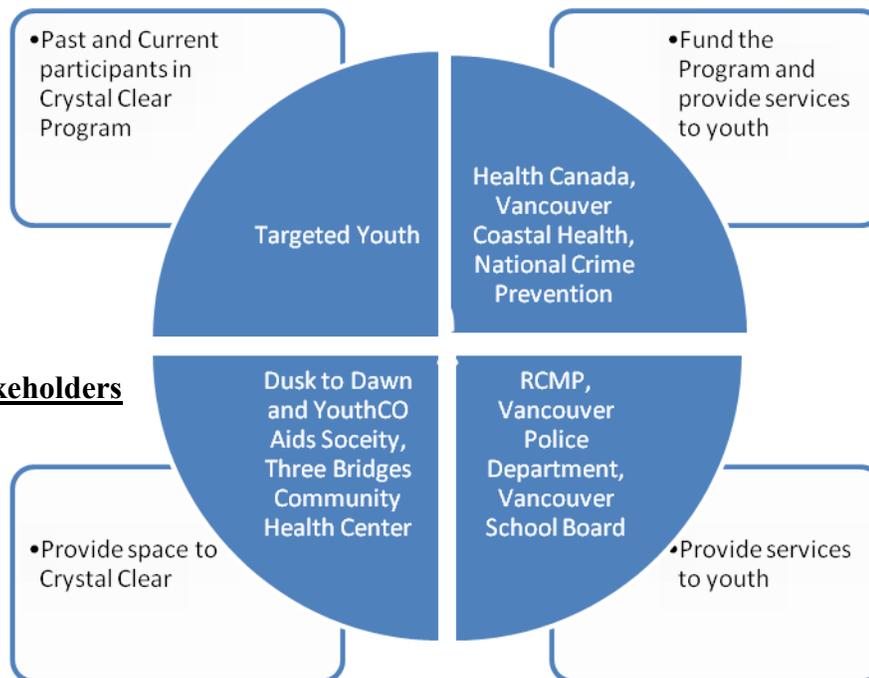
Crystal Clear Peer-Based Harm Reduction Project (Crystal Clear) was developed in 2007 by the Methamphetamine Response Committee (MARC). This program targets current and former users of methamphetamine (crystal meth) in downtown south Vancouver and aims to deliver harm reduction training to youth. The youth that participate in the Crystal Clear program are often poverty stricken, homeless, have some conflict with the law, experienced abuse, and have or are currently struggling with addiction. Through the use of a "peer-based" model, youth have a vital role in the operation and management of the program. Since Crystal Clear's first pilot project in 2007, the project has evolved from providing harm reduction training, to the inclusion of a Needle Exchange/ Outreach element, consistent youth support meetings, opportunity for employment through a weekly newsletter, and speaking opportunities throughout the community. The objectives of the program state:

- to increase the amount of crystal meth related harm reduction information available to street-involved youth in Vancouver;
- to increase access to training for street-involved youth interested in harm reduction, related peer support and outreach;
- to increase capacity to liaise between street-involved youth and the community at large;
- to increase public awareness; and
- to build and maintain partnerships between street-involved youth and relevant service agencies

With funding from Health Canada, National Crime Prevention and Vancouver Coastal Health, Crystal Clear continues to be an important resource for youth in south Vancouver.

### 3. Stakeholder Profile

#### Primary Stakeholders



#### Secondary Stakeholders

### 4. Program Logic Model

To complement our experience, we do recommend that an appropriate representative from the Crystal Clear program verify the logic model. In addition we suggest that the company develop an advisory committee to assist our evaluation to remain consistent with the company's values and program expectations.

While certain particular outcomes were unintentional in the program's purpose, they are still considered significant results. For comprehensive purposes, these unintentional outcomes are included within the logic model (see next page).

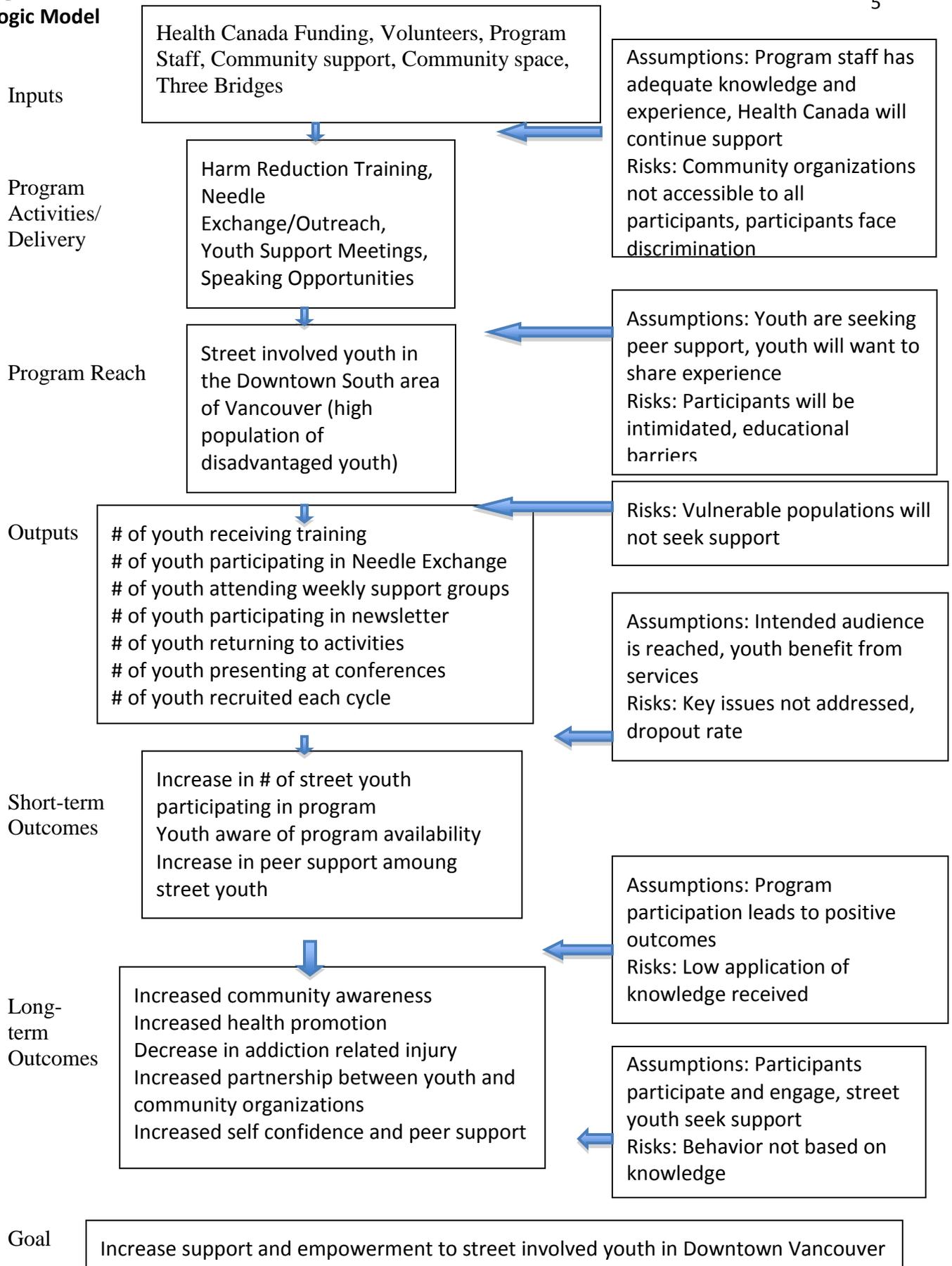
### 5. Advisory Committee

We support the establishment of an advisory committee to oversee the process of evaluation. Ideally, advisory committee members should be: experienced, dedicated, and display a diverse range of skills. We believe that problem solving and strong communication skills would be an asset to such a committee.

We recommend that the advisory committee remain in close contact with our Evaluation Firm. In addition, we propose to add one of our evaluation consultants to the advisory committee to ensure the evaluation plan is consistent with overall objectives and values of Crystal Clear.

The advisory committee will assist with the selection of key informant/focus group members. Unique Critique's evaluation team will regularly connect with the advisory committee via email, teleconference, or face to face meetings.

**Figure. 1**  
**Logic Model**



## **5. Purpose of Evaluation**

The purpose of the evaluation is to understand the impact Crystal Clear's training has had on the targeted youth population; both current 42 participants and new youth partaking in the next cycle. The evaluation will assess the program design and delivery and outcomes while addressing concerns regarding diversity and culture, possible exit strategies, and operational support.

## **6. Proposed Evaluation Methodology**

### **Relevance**

To evaluate the need and relevance of the Crystal Clear program, we propose seeking the input of various key stakeholders, primarily, the 42 participants from the past three training cycles. Initially, we will gather information from these participants who have previously sought the services and resources offered by the Crystal Clear program. Focus groups and group discussions that take place during weekly program meetings, or local community support centres such as shelters. Our consultants also suggest data collection from youth who have not yet participated or received training from Crystal Clear. While it is appreciated that it may be difficult to reach said population, focus groups within community centres and soup kitchens will be attempted. To facilitate the formation of these focus groups, support staff from various centres will be enlisted to assist with recruitment.

### **Project Objectives**

A before/after comparison will be sought to determine whether or not Crystal Clear is contributing to harm reduction among street youth. This comparison will be obtained by key informant interviews with RCMP officers and Health Care Professionals to determine if a decrease in harmful incidents has been noted. In order to determine whether the program is connecting youth with community organizations and services, focus group discussion is again proposed. Focus groups will again be held at weekly meetings. If required to hold groups outside regular meeting times, we propose following the example of the program itself, and offering incentives such as a free meal.

### **Program Administration and Efficiency**

To assess program administration and efficiency, we propose focusing on the key evaluation issues outlined in the Request for Proposals. Primarily, we will identify whether or not the program is accessible to culturally diverse populations and vulnerable persons. In doing this, we propose a series of Key Informant Interviews with experts including Cultural Anthropologists and Sociologists. Their input regarding attracting and accommodating vulnerable populations will be incorporated in the program advertisement and design. We also propose interviewing past participants who would be considered vulnerable and inquiring as to their suggestions to enhance program delivery. We would also attempt to interview vulnerable persons who have not yet participated and ask them about their apprehensions and

reservations in entering the program. These informants would be accessed through other organizations such as the Centre for New Canadians or homeless shelters. To determine the need for an exit strategy, the opinion of past participants and expert opinions, especially those of Health Canada officials would be enlisted. As Health Canada has specifically inquired into the formation of an exit strategy, their opinions and desires must be explored. To determine the preparedness of staff to manage the Crystal Clear program we will consult similar program coordinators and interview Crystal Clear staff.

## 7. Data Collection

To gather information, we will employ a number of data collection methods. It is our hope that by using a number of methods, we will compensate for any shortfalls. As well, we will outline the advantages and disadvantages of each data collection method, and highlight the ways in which we intend to counter each disadvantage. For this report, as we have outlined below, we believe it wise to incorporate data collection forms that collect both qualitative and quantitative data on the program from its stakeholders.

### Surveys

Surveys are a method of data collection that can be used to determine interrelationship and the existence of variables within the population regarding the people's opinions and perceptions. Surveys can retrieve mass amounts of accurate data from a large population, as it is easy to randomly select addresses to send the surveys to and reach a large audience. It is also key to note that with this method, you receive answers selective to your particular interests. The problem, however, is in reaching the target population with surveys because a large part of the 42 participants are homeless with no fixed address. The solution that we propose to solve this is to offer a short 15-minute questionnaire survey to the population following the main event one night on Friday evenings just before dinner is served to reach a maximum population. This survey must be tailored to be at a Grade 7 reading level so that all participants can understand the surveys. We recommend posting letters outside of the Three Bridges building to let participants know that there will be a special dinner served on the evening of the survey, and have cooks prepare something special. We suggest creating surveys to address the issues of current methamphetamine use and attitudes as well as addressing their current quality of life now that they have completed the program modules and participated in the needle exchange program. We also suggest including several simple open-ended questions on the survey to ask about improvements the youth would like to see in the program. We would also survey the general public with regard to the impact the program has had on public awareness. We would achieve this with a mail-out survey. We suggest including an added incentive in the survey such as having a draw from the returned surveys for a small prize, to ensure the maximum return of surveys. We propose taking into consideration the cultural diversity of the population in creation of the surveys so to not offend anyone and to use clear definitions rather than obscure ones that may be race-exclusive.

Table 1. Sample Survey for General Public

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A

You are aware of the issues of street involved youth in Downtown South Vancouver	<input type="checkbox"/>					
You are aware of the programs and services offered through crystal clear	<input type="checkbox"/>					

### Focus Groups

In addition to surveys, we recommend the use of focus groups to gather face-to-face information from key stakeholder groups. A focus group is a group interview/discussion, typically consisting of five to ten participants. A facilitator encourages a guided discussion to gather experienced opinions from participants. The advantage of using such a data collection method includes the ability to detect both verbal and non-verbal communication messages. It is also noted that you are able to build on ideas of others and there is a more personalized approach with this form of collection. However, it should be noted that with focus groups there is only a small group of people and this may lead to data skewing. This downfall is not a prominent one in the case of the Crystal Clear Peer-Based Harm Reduction Project because there are only 42 participants. Through conducting 2-3 focus groups of the program users, it would gather the opinions and experiences of the majority of participants. In addition, it can be intimidating to certain people due to a lack of anonymity.. These focus groups would be used to assess the individual needs of the participants, whether their needs are being met, with regard to methamphetamine support, and whether they have found the program to assist them in increasing their quality of life. We propose that this collection utilize all client subgroups including the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) persons, Metis, First Nations, and those who speak English as a second language (ESL).

#### Sample Focus Group Questions

1. Being here at Crystal Clear, do you find it helpful in staying away from drugs?
2. Have you taken part in any other programs similar to Crystal Clear?
- 3 Have you ever considered making goals to help you reach the end of the program?

### Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews would also be conducted, mainly to assess the administration of MARC's Crystal Clear Peer-Based Harm Reduction Project. These semi-structured interviews would be useful in determining the expert opinions of certain key persons that have a vast array of knowledge that pertains to the success of the program. The advantages of such interviews would be that it could be completed in person, via telephone or through video conferencing, offering many avenues for collection. It is also noted that there is a stronger ability to focus more on one person's thoughts and opinions and there is less of a possible intimidation than in a focus group format of data collection. We intend to collect information on administration improvement within the program To achieve this, we would use key informants such as a cultural anthropologist and a sociologist to assess how to better make the desired impact on and reach the

vulnerable populations and minority groups. We would interview police officers to find out whether or not youths committing crimes regarding methamphetamine use has decreased. We would also utilize the experiences of health professionals such as doctors and nurses to find out if emergencies involving youth and methamphetamine overdose have decreased recently.

## 9. Data Analysis

We recommend use of the program SPSS to process any of the quantitative data described above using a multivariate ANOVA test for statistically significant findings for the program. These findings should be used in order to determine the relative impact of the program on the participants and general public. After this, we recommend use of a post-hoc test to determine which individual factors are significant and a  $\eta^2$  test in order to determine the effect.

For analysis of the qualitative data that would be collected, we suggest use of Ethnograph for analysis of common themes and to analyze the themes that are prevalent between the key informants and focus groups sessions.

## 10. Challenges and Proposed Solutions

Challenges	Solutions
Difficulty of obtaining information about past and current participants due to no fixed address (homelessness) and lack of internet access for tools such as survey monkey	Holding focus groups at weekly Crystal Clear meetings and within community support groups such as food banks.
Low education levels of participants	Tailor surveys and other data collection methods to appropriate education level. Provide adequate explanation of all questions.
Meeting the needs of different cultural/ ethnic groups	Provide cultural sensitivity training to staff members and promote self-education
Consistent attendance to weekly meetings for performing accurate data collection	Providing meals and free transportation (bus tickets) to participants to encourage attendance
Time constraints of training sessions posed complications in data collection	Make surveys short and offer them before incentives (meals).
Management and administration skills of Crystal Clear staff are not well developed	Offer continuing education to program staff and enlist the services of administration experts.

## 11. Ethical and Cultural Considerations

In a densely populated area, such as Downtown South Vancouver, recognition and consideration to cultural diversity is an important consideration to a successful evaluation. Differences in belief systems, religious ideologies, and languages can lead to biased/influenced information. We suggest the use of multi-lingual translators (sought from translating service) to minimize language barriers. We also the formation of focus groups within cultural institutions such as the Centre for New Canadians. In addition, it is suggested that all research assistants undergo sensitivity training to ensure a completely open and non-discriminatory approach to all interviews and focus groups

## 12. Evaluation Matrix

Questions	Indicators	Data Source	Data Collection Techniques	Data Type and Basis for Analysis
<b>Relevance</b>				
1) Does Crystal Clear meet the needs of its stakeholders? Do the objectives need to change?	Stakeholder opinion	Stakeholders (especially past and present participants)	Focus Groups	Qualitative
	Success of past participants	Participation records (numbers of youth participating in project components. i.e. newsletter presentation)	Document Review	Quantitative
	Rates of youth hospitalization/death/arrests related to crystal meth use	Content of presentation/ newsletter Police, health, coroner reports	Literature Review Document Review	Qualitative Quantitative
2) Do other programs with similar objectives exist within the jurisdiction? Is Crystal Clear uniquely competitive in meeting objectives	Opinion of key demographic Experience of multiple program participants	Targeted youth	Focus groups (held within centres such as the Three Bridges, shelters, or food banks)	Qualitative
	Number of like programs available Objectives/ Success of other programs	Vancouver business/program listings Websites/ advertisements/ reports of other program	Document Review	Quantitative
<b>Success in Meeting Project Objectives</b>				
3) Is Crystal Clear increasing the amount of harm reduction information and	Stakeholder opinion	Peer groups/ participants	Discussion and observation of peer groups	Qualitative
	Before/After comparison	RCMP officers Health professionals	Key informant	Qualitative

Questions	Indicators	Data Source	Data Collection Techniques	Data Type and Basis for Analysis
training available to street involved youth in South Downtown Vancouver?		Health/Police records -Shelter Staff volunteers	interviews  Document Review	Quantitative
4) Does Crystal Clear facilitate the connection and partnership of street involved youth with relevant service agencies with the community at large?	Stakeholder opinion  Attendance/utilization rates within community services Employment/Education rates	Targeted youth service agency staff/coordinators Social worker expert on vulnerable population employment Community organization records Employment with Social Assistance Records	Key Informant interviews   Document Review	Qualitative   Quantitative
5) Is there an increase in public awareness attributable to the Crystal Clear program?	Public opinion	Residents/ employees of the South Vancouver area	Randomized mail surveys	Quantitative
<b>Program Administration and Efficiency</b>				
6) Does the delivery mechanism of Crystal Clear facilitate access to the culturally diverse population?	Stakeholder opinion   Retention rate of culturally diverse/vulnerable populations Expert opinion	Diverse and vulnerable populations   Program records Program staff	Focus group with past participants who are considered vulnerable Interviews (based out of shelters addresses key issues with general program delivery) Document review  Key informants	Qualitative   Quantitative  Qualitative

Questions	Indicators	Data Source	Data Collection Techniques	Data Type and Basis for Analysis
		Cultural anthropologists and sociologists		
7) How would an effective exit strategy enhance program delivery?	Stakeholder opinion Comparison of like programs Expert opinion	Health Canada project coordinators Participants (past and current) Psychologist/ Social workers	Key informants Focus groups	Qualitative Qualitative
8) What level of support is required by program staff to enhance program efficiency?	Stakeholder opinion Support offered to professionals in similar environment Availability of applicable workshops within city	Program staff/coordinators Staff of similar programs  College, school and community websites	Interviews  Online Search	Qualitative  Qualitative
9) How can administration processes be improved?	Stakeholder opinions Program experts	Past participants and regional/national health boards Involved social workers	Focus Groups Surveys	Qualitative Quantitative

