



Cannabis use and the Public Health approach to reducing harms

City of Hamilton Board of Health
September 17, 2018

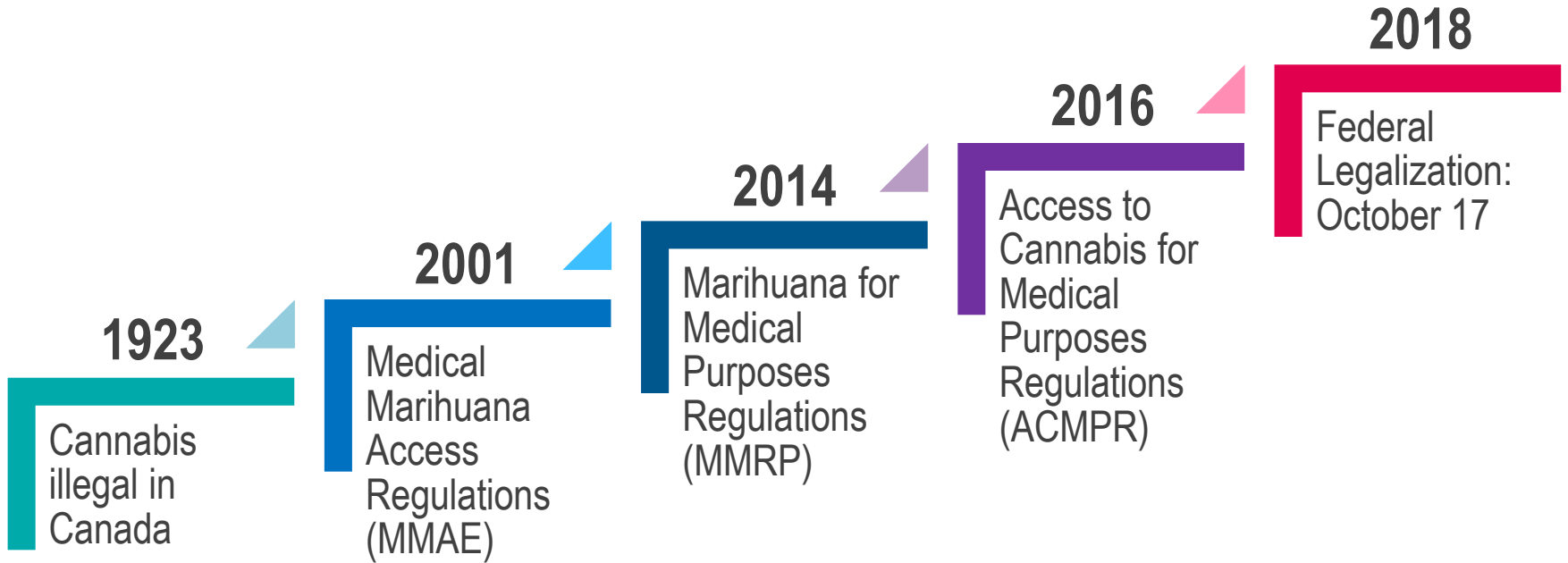
Prohibition has not

- Prevented use
- Limited youth access
- Deterred crime

Legalization can

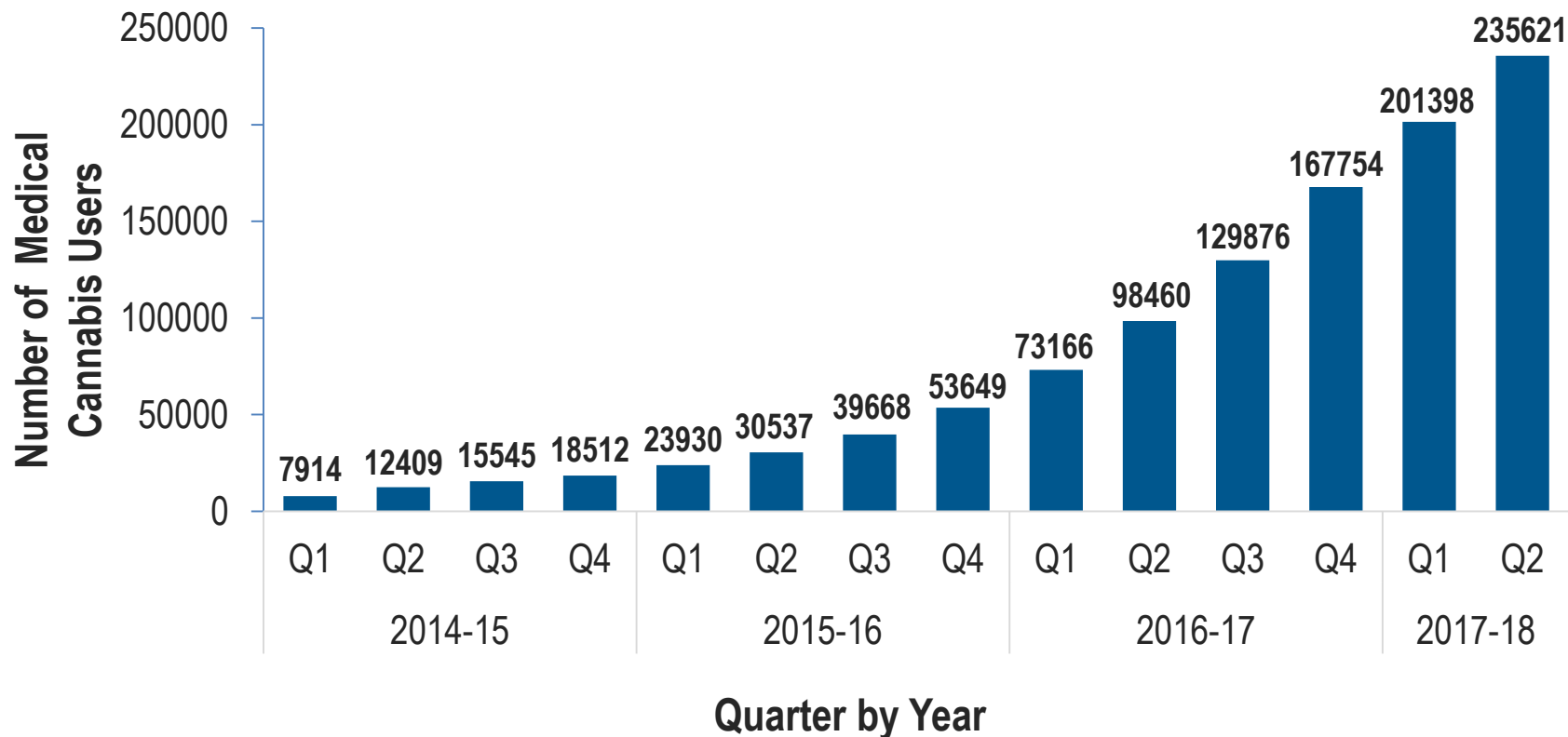
- Limit youth access
- Deter crime
- Protect public health and safety with product quality and safety requirements

Background: Legal Status in Canada



Background: Medical use in Canada

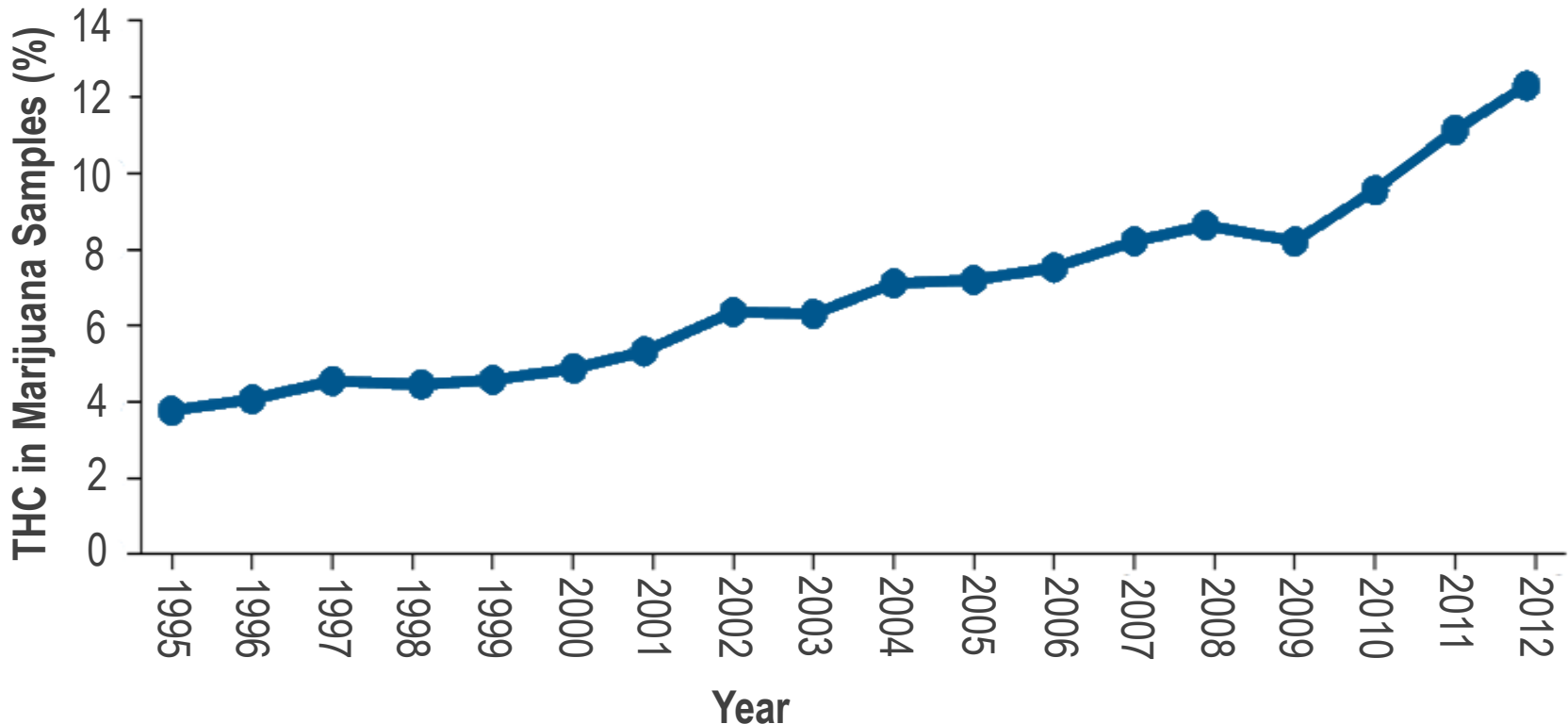
Figure 1: Number of Medical Cannabis Users in Canada by Fiscal Quarter and Year, Health Canada, 2014-2017



Source: Health Canada. Licensed Producers Market Data. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medications/cannabis/licensed-producers/market-data.html>

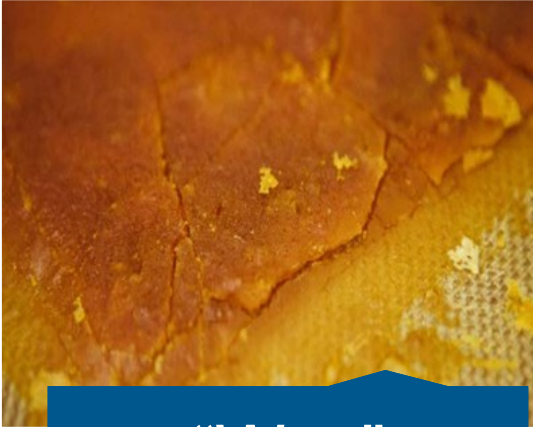
Background: Risks

Figure 2: Average THC concentration of Drug Enforcement Administration specimens by year, United States, 1995-2012



Source: El-Sohly, MA, et. al. (2016). Changes in Cannabis Potency over the Last Two Decades (1995-2014) – Analysis of Current Data in the United States. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4987131/>

Background: New Formulations



“Wax”



“Shatter”



“Budder”

“Concentrates”: Butane Hash Oil Extractions (up to 90% THC)

Background: Harms

Potential cannabis harms

Acute

- Increased motor vehicle accident risk
- Cannabinoid-induced delirium/psychosis
- Adverse effects on cognition

Chronic

- Cannabis use disorder
- Cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome
- Chronic bronchitis
- Increased risk of psychotic disorders
- Reduced educational attainment

Background: At-Risk Populations



Youth



Frequent users



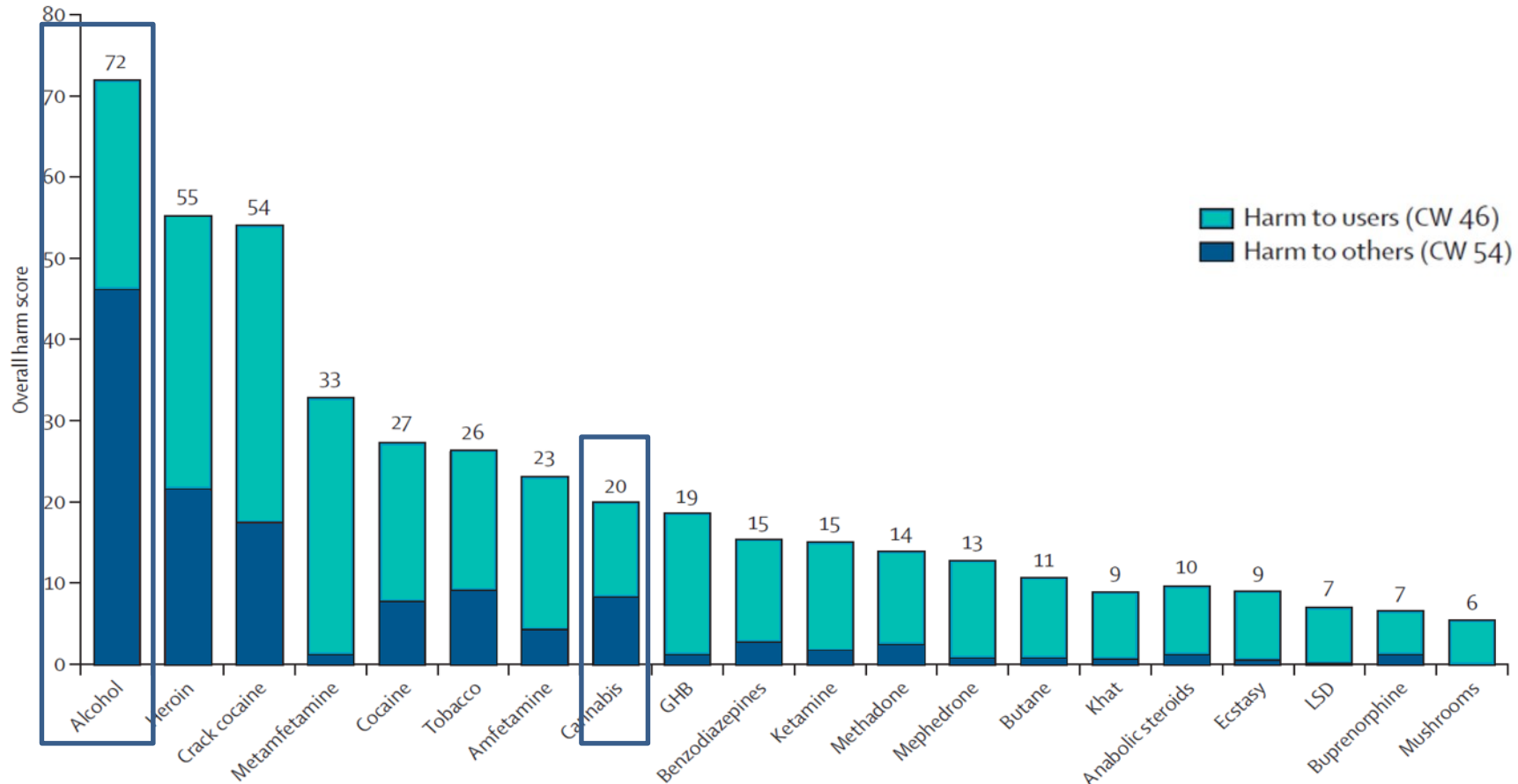
Pregnant women/women who are breastfeeding



Individuals with mental health/substance use vulnerabilities

Background: Contextualizing Risks & Harm

Figure 3: Drugs ordered by their overall harm scores, showing the separate contributions to the overall scores of harms to users and harm to others



Source: Nutt, DJ, King, LA, & Phillips, LD (2010). Drug harms in the UK: a multicriteria decision analysis. Available from: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(10\)61462-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(10)61462-6)

Past-year Substance Use Among Secondary Students (2017)

Cannabis

- 30.1%
- 24.0% (Cannabis & Alcohol)

Note: Combined estimates for Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant & Waterloo Wellington LHINs.

Source: CAMH, 2017 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS),

http://www.camh.ca/en/research/news_and_publications/ontario-student-drug-use-and-health-survey/Documents/2017%20OSDUHS%20Documents/Detailed_DrugUseReport_2017OSDUHS.pdf

Past-year Substance Use Among Adults (2015/16)

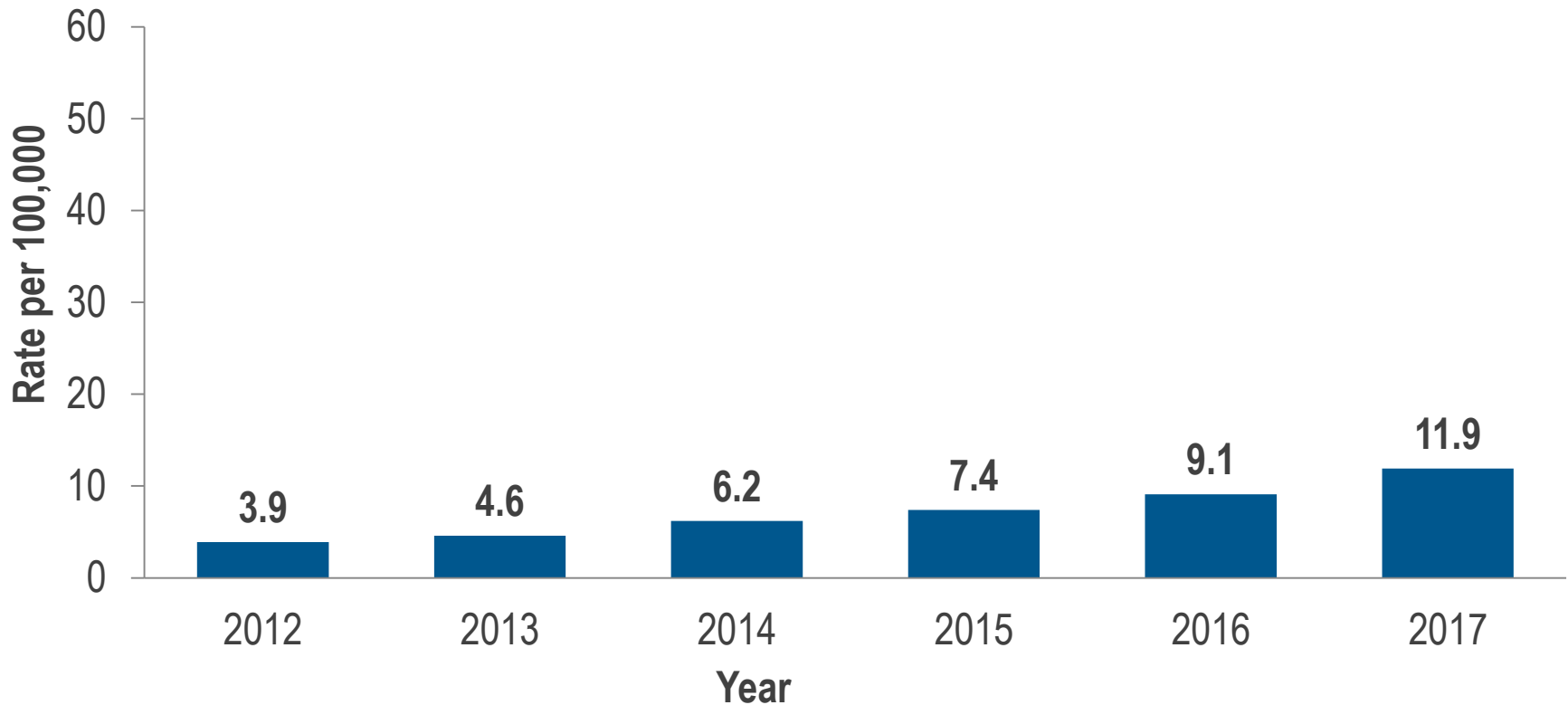
Cannabis

- ~13% reported past-year use

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2015/16, Share File, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Hamilton: Emergency Department & Cannabis Use

Figure 4: Rate of ED visits (per 100,000) for acute cannabis poisoning, City of Hamilton*, 2012-2017

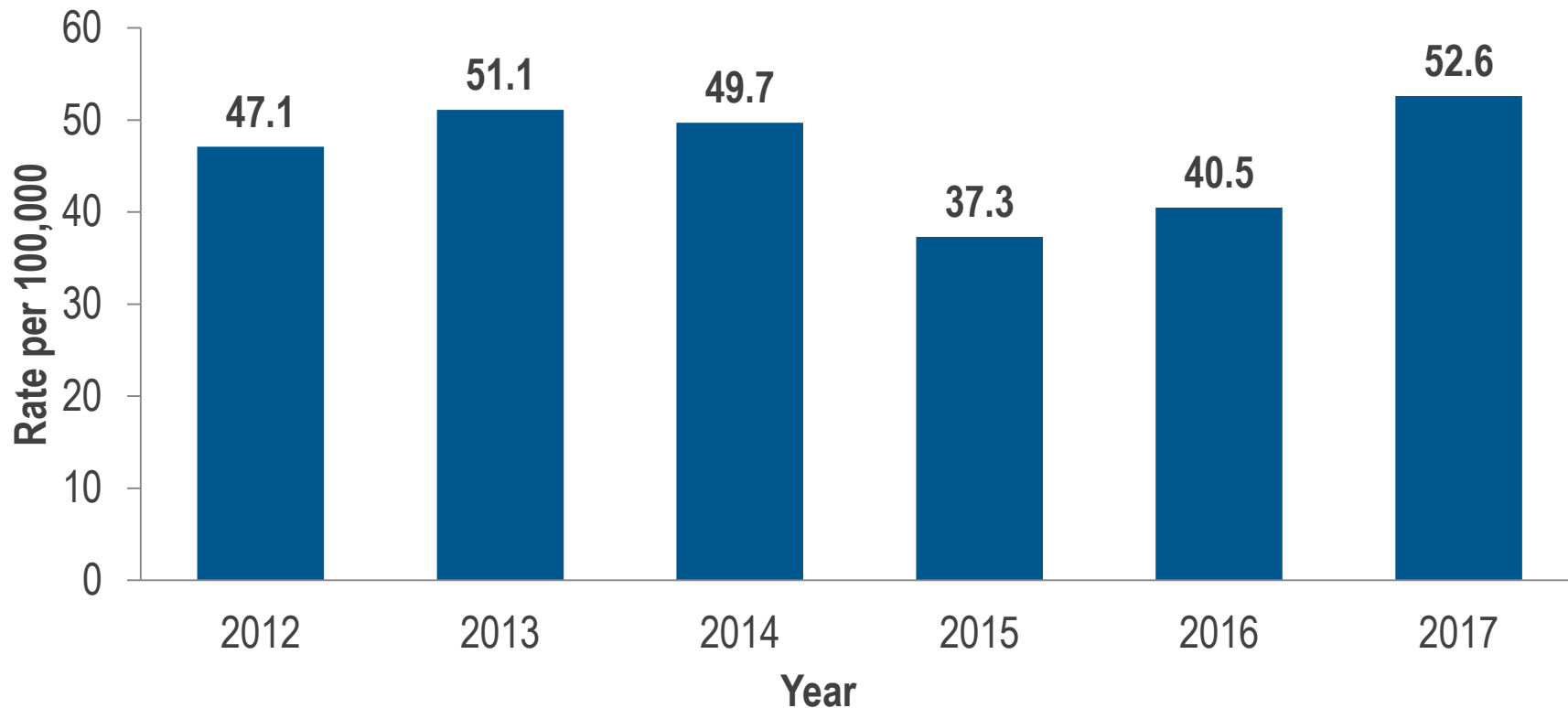


* Individuals who reside in Hamilton even if seen in an ED outside of Hamilton

Source: Emergency Department Visits, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, June 2018

Hamilton: Emergency Department & Cannabis Use

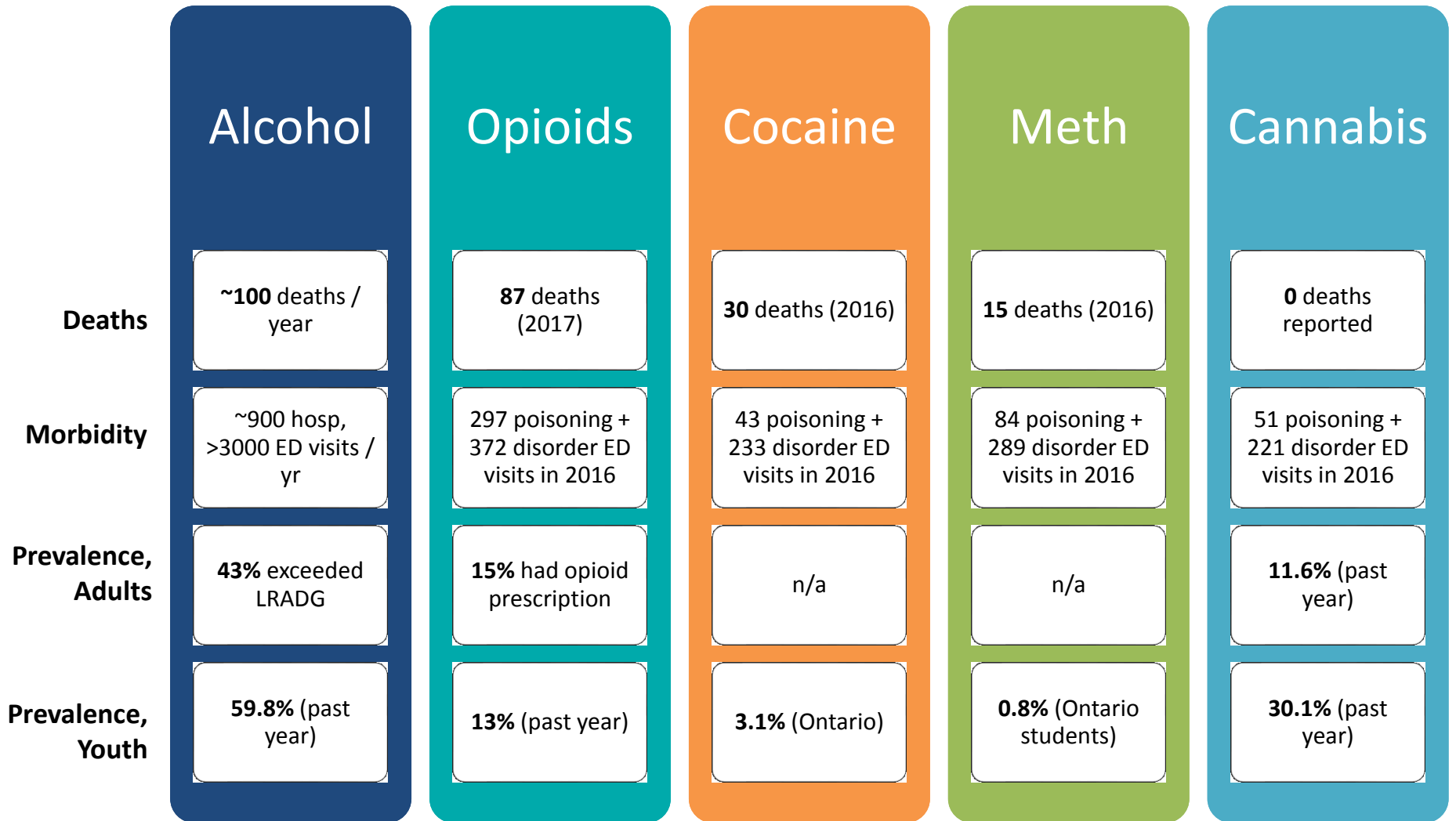
Figure 5: Rate of ED visits (per 100,000) for mental & behavioural disorders due to the use of cannabis, City of Hamilton*, 2012-2017



* Individuals who reside in Hamilton even if seen in an ED outside of Hamilton

Source: Emergency Department Visits, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, June 2018

Cannabis in Context of Other Substances



Health impacts of cannabis legalization



Changes in prevalence and location of use

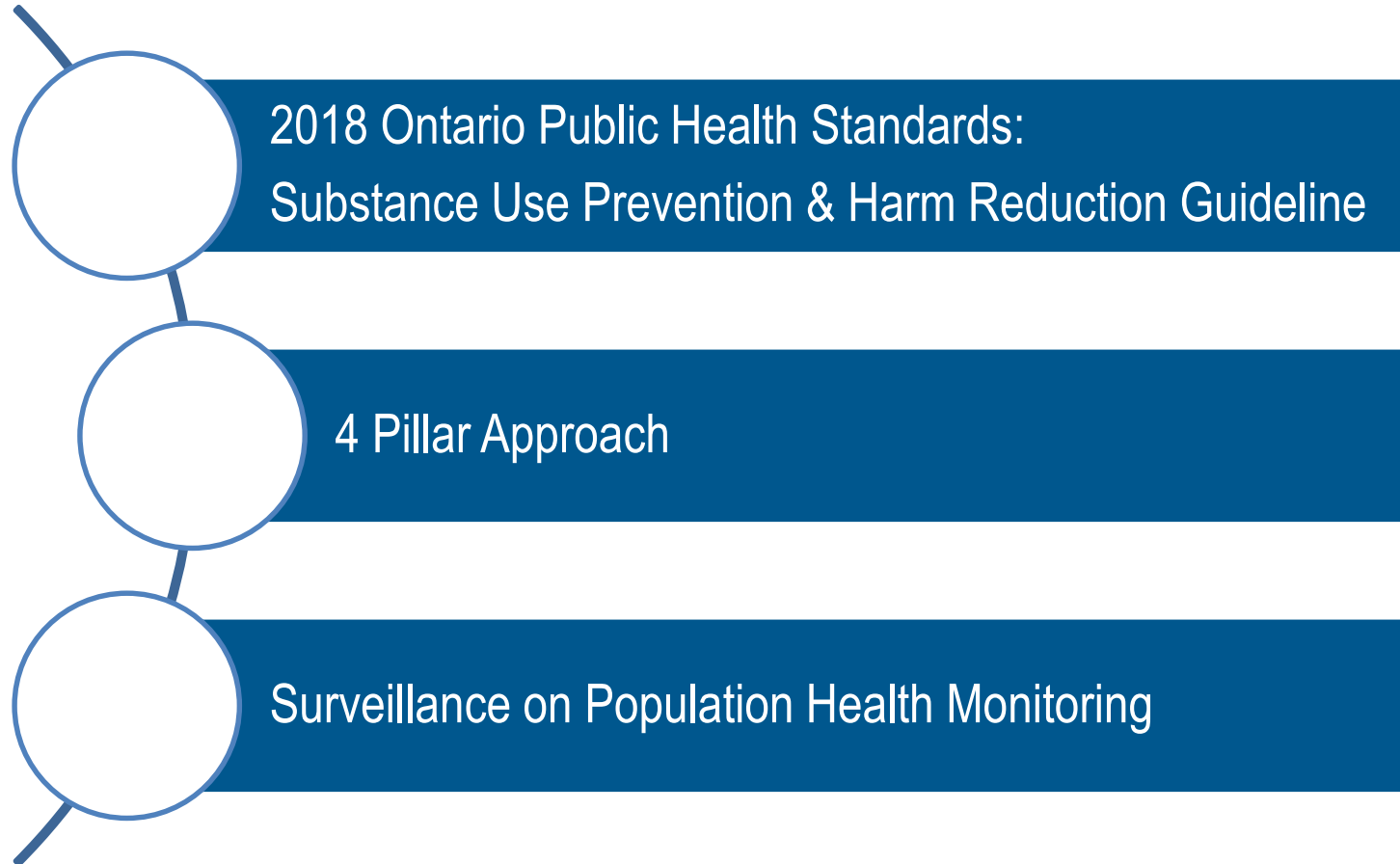


Unknown implications for different demographics and geographic locations

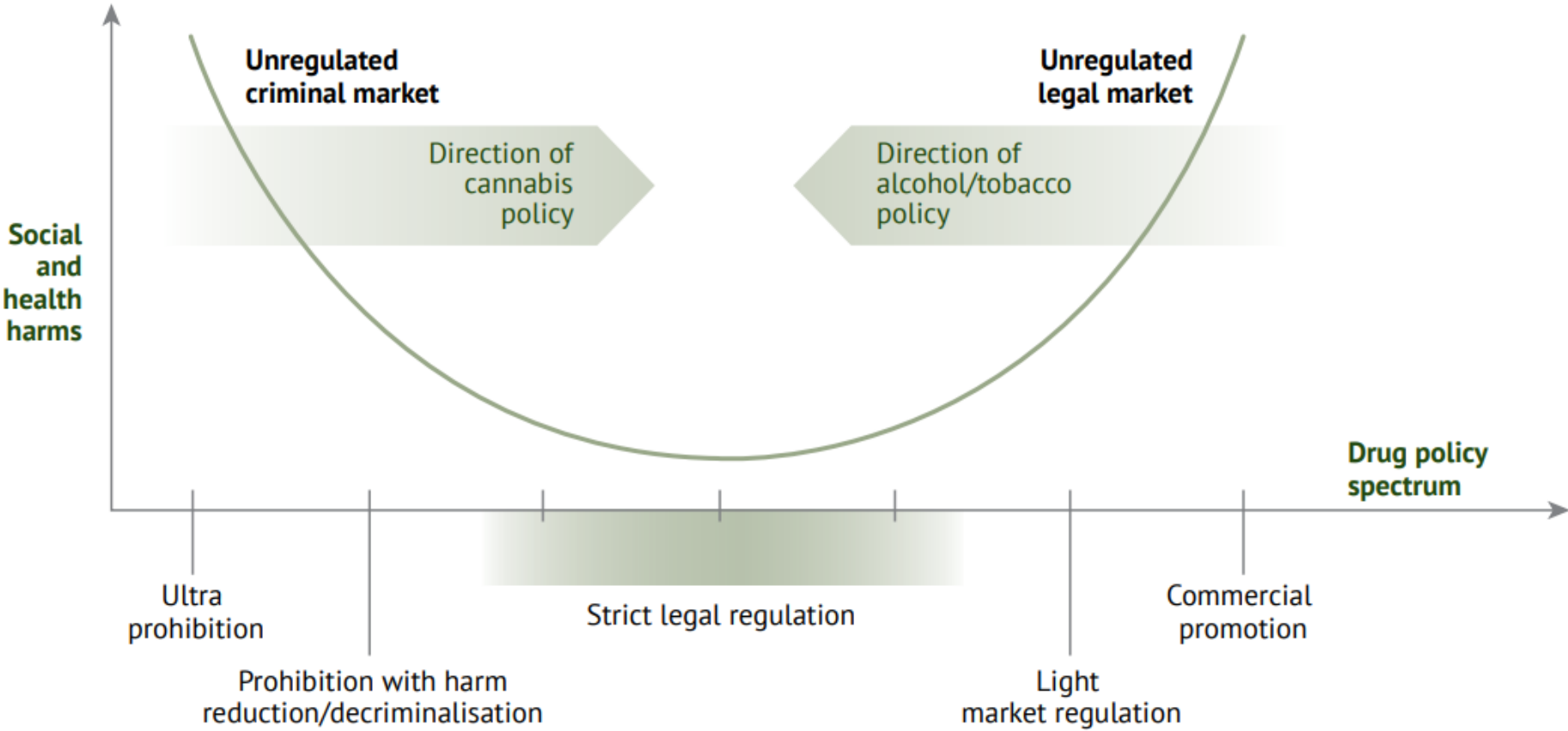


Public Health to monitor the effects of this change locally

Background: What drives the Public Health Approach?

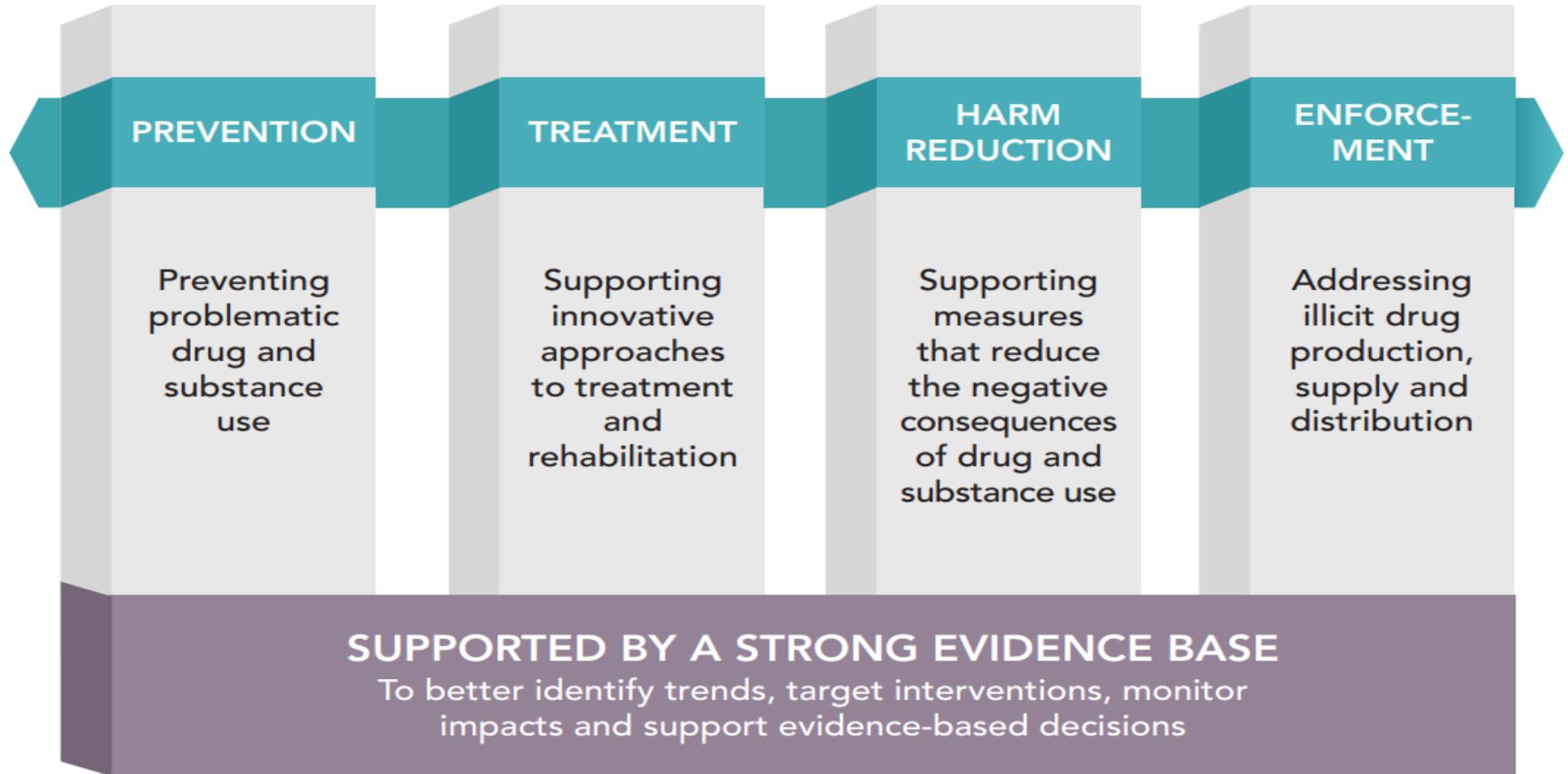


Prohibition Paradox



Source: Government of Canada. A Framework for the Legalization and Regulation of Cannabis in Canada. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-medication/cannabis/laws-regulations/task-force-cannabis-legalization-regulation/framework-legalization-regulation-cannabis-in-canada.html>

Public Health Approach to Psychoactive Substance Use



Source: Health Canada. Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/pillars-canadian-drugs-substances-strategy.html>

Overview of Hamilton Public Health Strategy: Strategy Goals



To **educate** the public on safe, legal and responsible use of cannabis



To **prevent** or delay the onset of cannabis use and to reduce the likelihood of harm from use, problematic use and/or overdose



To **promote** a culture of safer use



To **increase knowledge** of the impacts of consuming cannabis while parenting or pregnant



To **equip trusted adults** with the knowledge and resources to 'start the conversation' about cannabis with youth

Prevention: Targeted Populations



Youth



Frequent users



Pregnant women/women who are breastfeeding



Individuals with mental health/substance use vulnerabilities

Prevention: Education Campaigns

First campaign to focus on youth & young adults. Key objectives:

- Be first, be right, be credible.
- Use simple, plain, appropriate language.
- Target audiences for information and education.
- Get the terminology right.
- Understand the limits of evidence and use wisely.
- Don't stigmatize or normalize.
- Ensure that all individuals understand legal responsibilities and new criminal offenses.

Source: Eykelbosh A, Nicol AM. (2017). How we talk about “pot” matters: Risk messaging around cannabis legalization. CIPHI Annual Education Conference. National Collaborating Centre For Environmental Health.

Prevention: Federal Initiatives

Health Canada & public health education campaigns

HEALTH



TRAVEL



WORKPLACE



IMPAIRMENT



- Funded organizations to relay prevention and safer use messaging
- Social Media campaigns (i.e. Healthy Canadians)

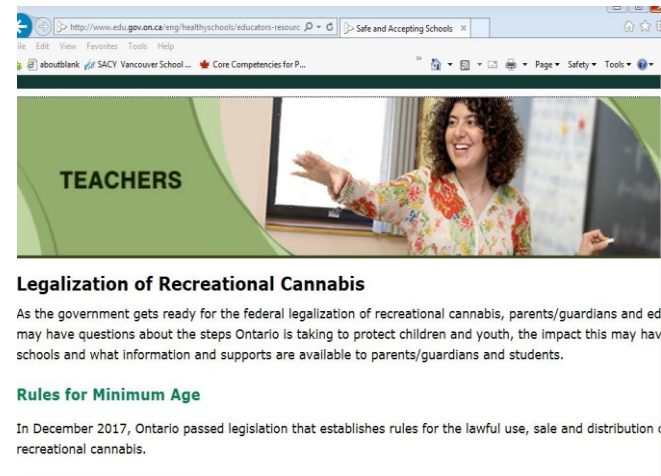
Prevention – Provincial Initiatives

Youth and young adult **awareness campaigns**

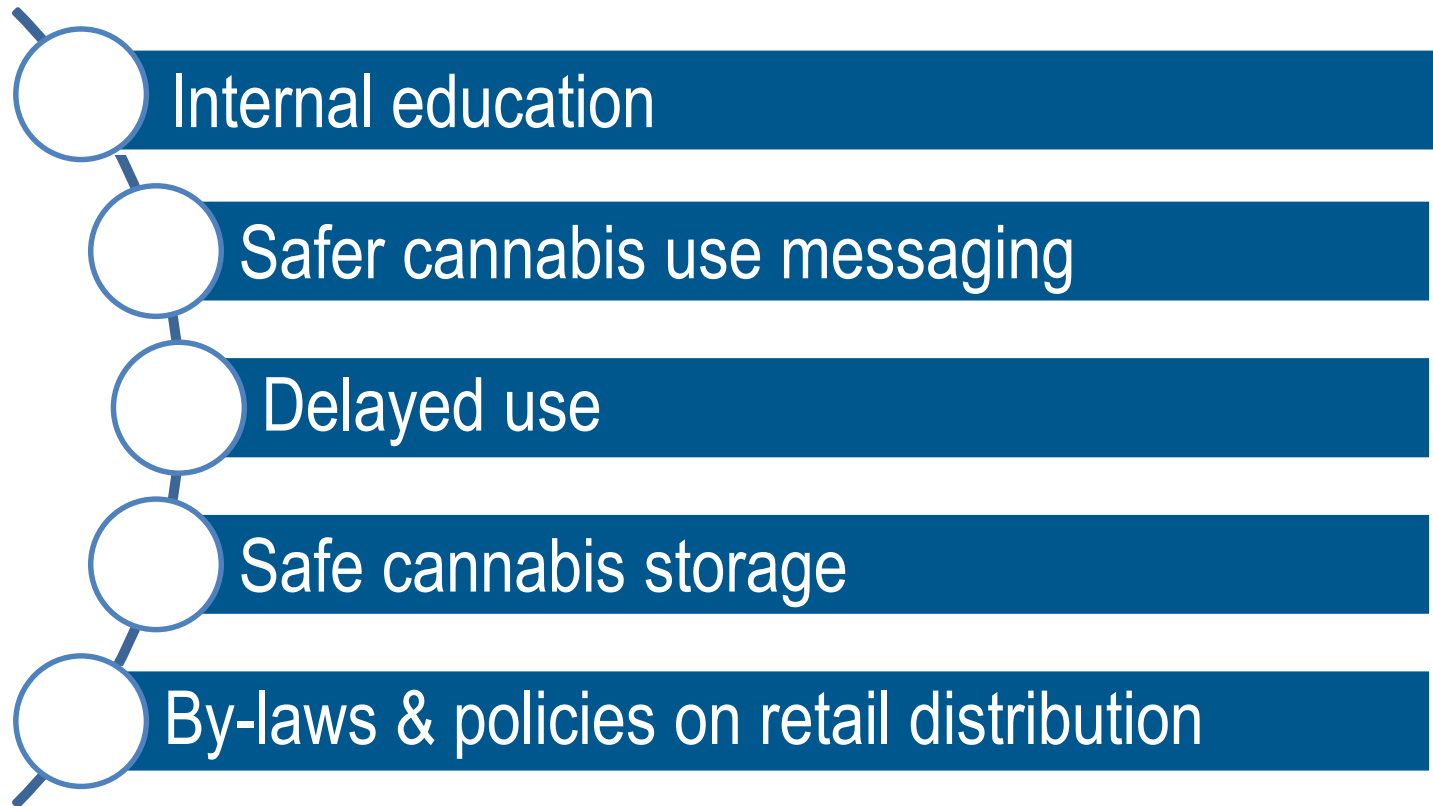
- Ontario-specific rules related to cannabis and road safety

The Ontario Ministry of Education:

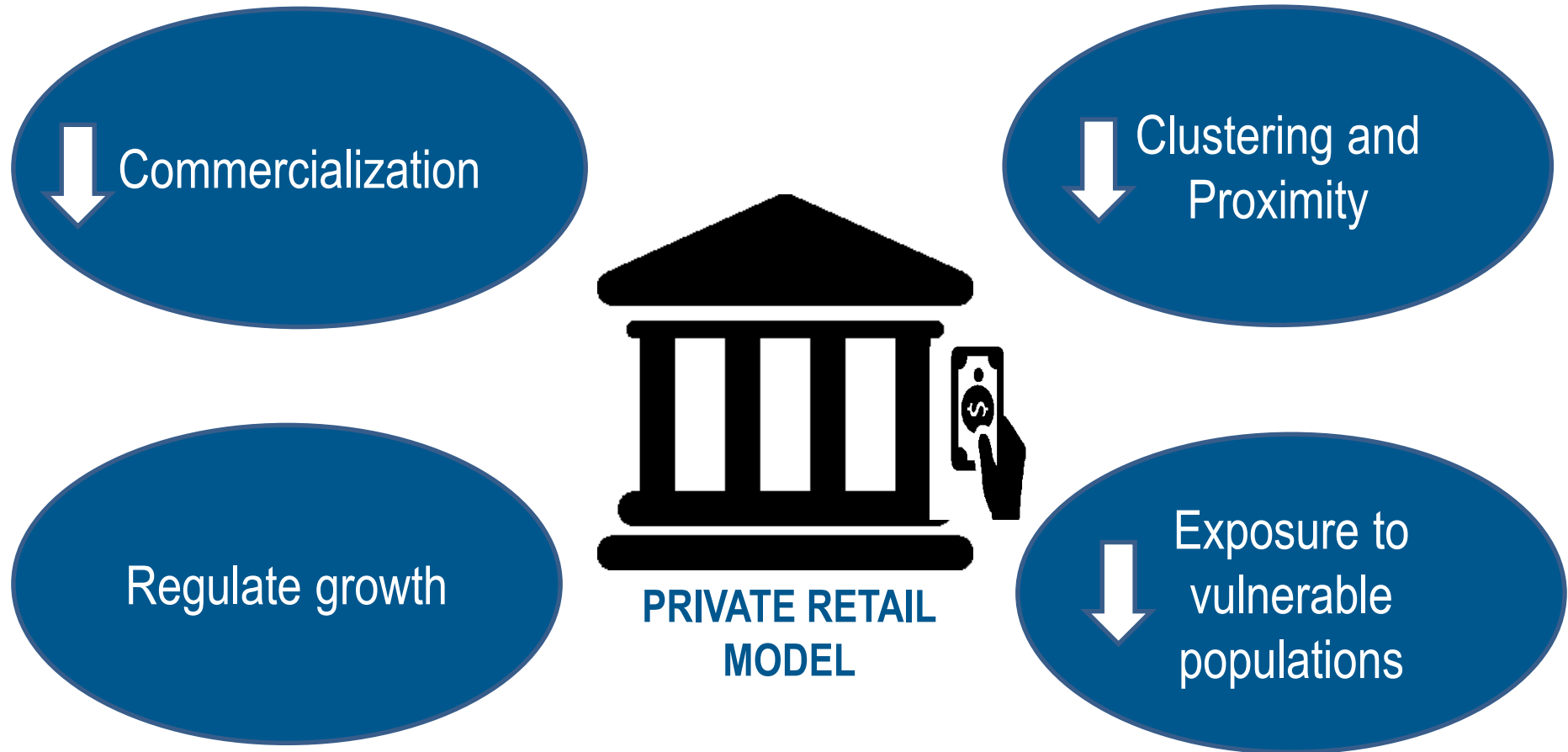
- Resources for **students, parents and educators**
- More resources within the school system for mental health and addiction needs



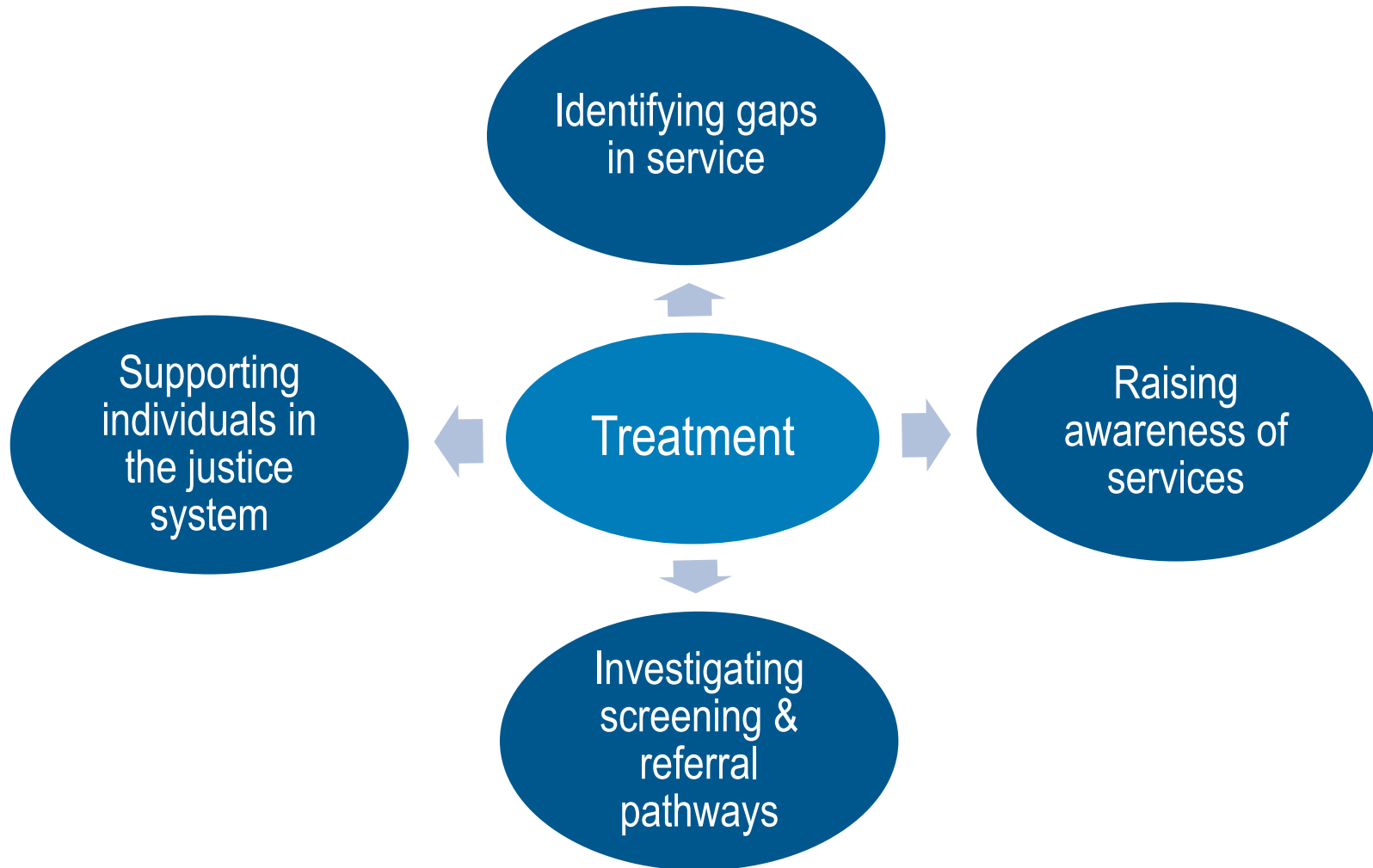
Harm Reduction



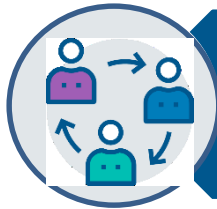
Harm Reduction: Retail Distribution & Public Health Goals



Treatment



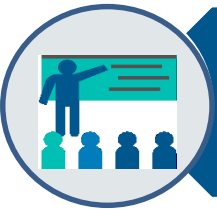
Enforcement: Drug Strategy



Collaboration to develop a comprehensive approach to cannabis enforcement



Funding & expansion of diversion programs

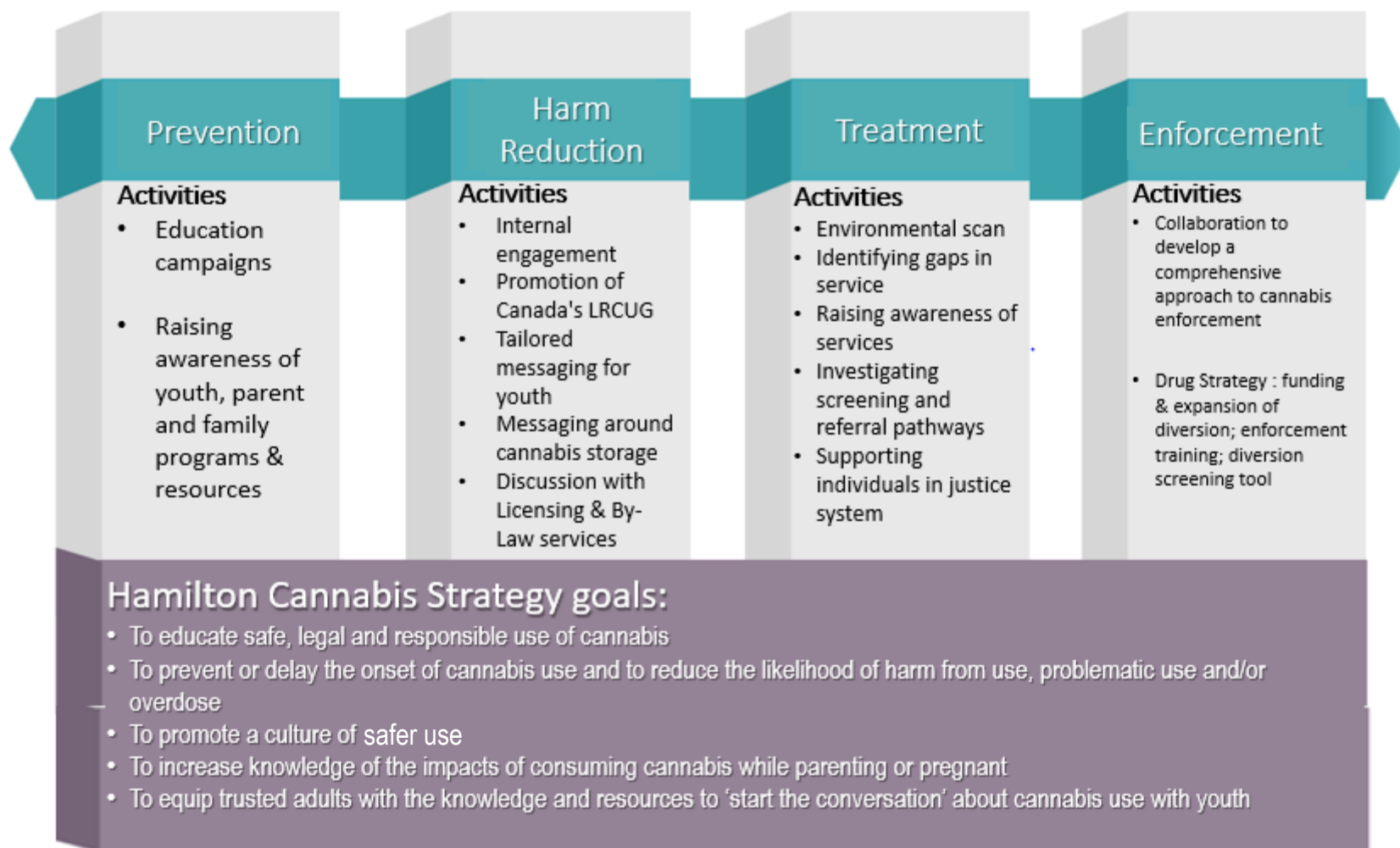


Substance use enhanced enforcement training



Diversion screening tool

Overview of Hamilton Public Health Strategy



Safer Use

