From Crisis to Connection: How NORS Walks With People Who Use Drugs

January 15, 2027

10:00-11:30am MT

This session introduces the full range of services offered by the National Overdose Response Service (NORS), a peer-led, trauma-informed virtual organization serving people across Canada. Participants will learn about the NORS overdose response line, which connects people who use substances alone with a caring peer who can send help if needed, and the Peer Wellness Program, where peers walk alongside participants as they navigate their wellness journey on their own terms. We will also share how communities, health centres, and frontline workers can connect people to NORS services.



Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the full range of NORS services, including the overdose response line and the Peer Wellness Program
- Understand how peer-led, trauma-informed support helps people stay safer and connect to the care they need
- Recognize how NORS supports people navigating complex systems such as housing, treatment, safer supply, mental health, and corrections
- Confidently refer clients, family, and community members to NORS services

Speakers:

Kim Ritchie, MSW, RSW, is a social worker, researcher, and advocate who specializes in harm reduction, trauma-informed practice, and peer-led programs. As co-founder and former Executive Director of the National Overdose Response Service (NORS), she helped build Canada's first virtual overdose response service and now manages its Peer Wellness Program. Her research has been published in peer-reviewed journals, and her work bridges research, policy, and practice to drive change at both grassroots and structural levels.

Target Audience: Community health staff, nurses, addictions and mental health workers, NNADAP workers, outreach and frontline workers, community leaders, and anyone in the community who uses substances or supports someone who does

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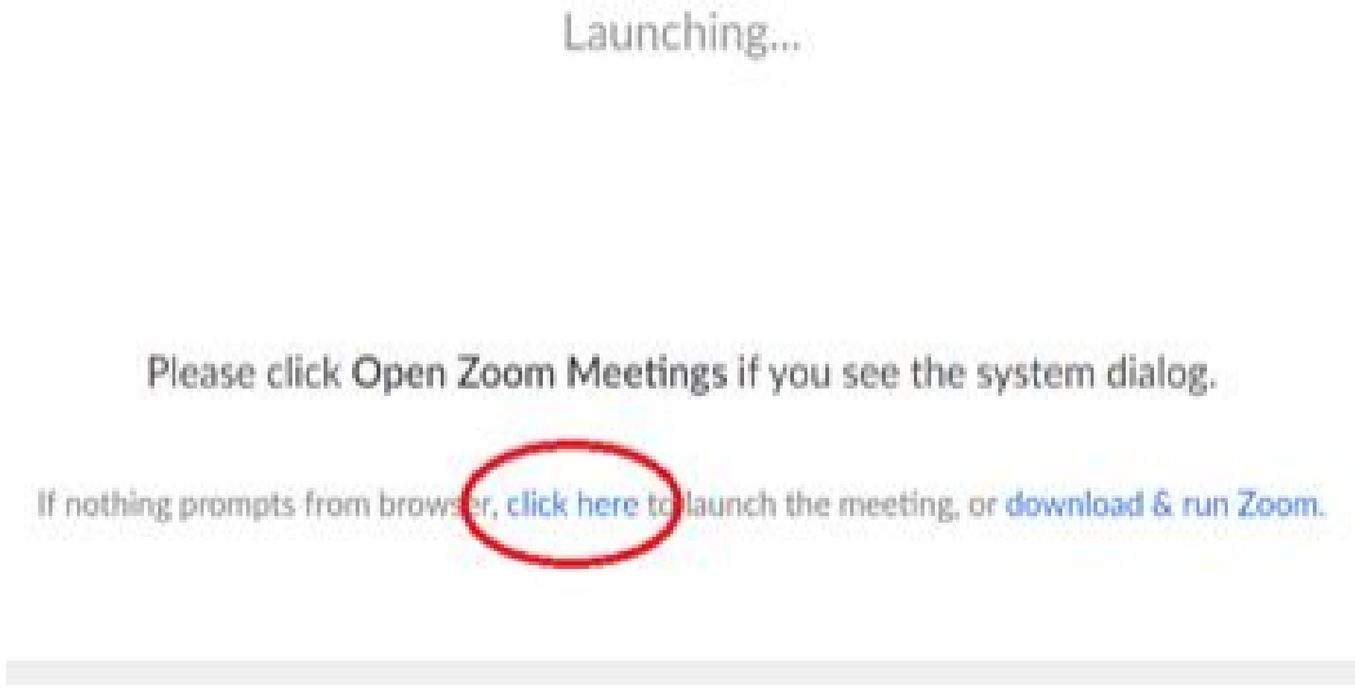
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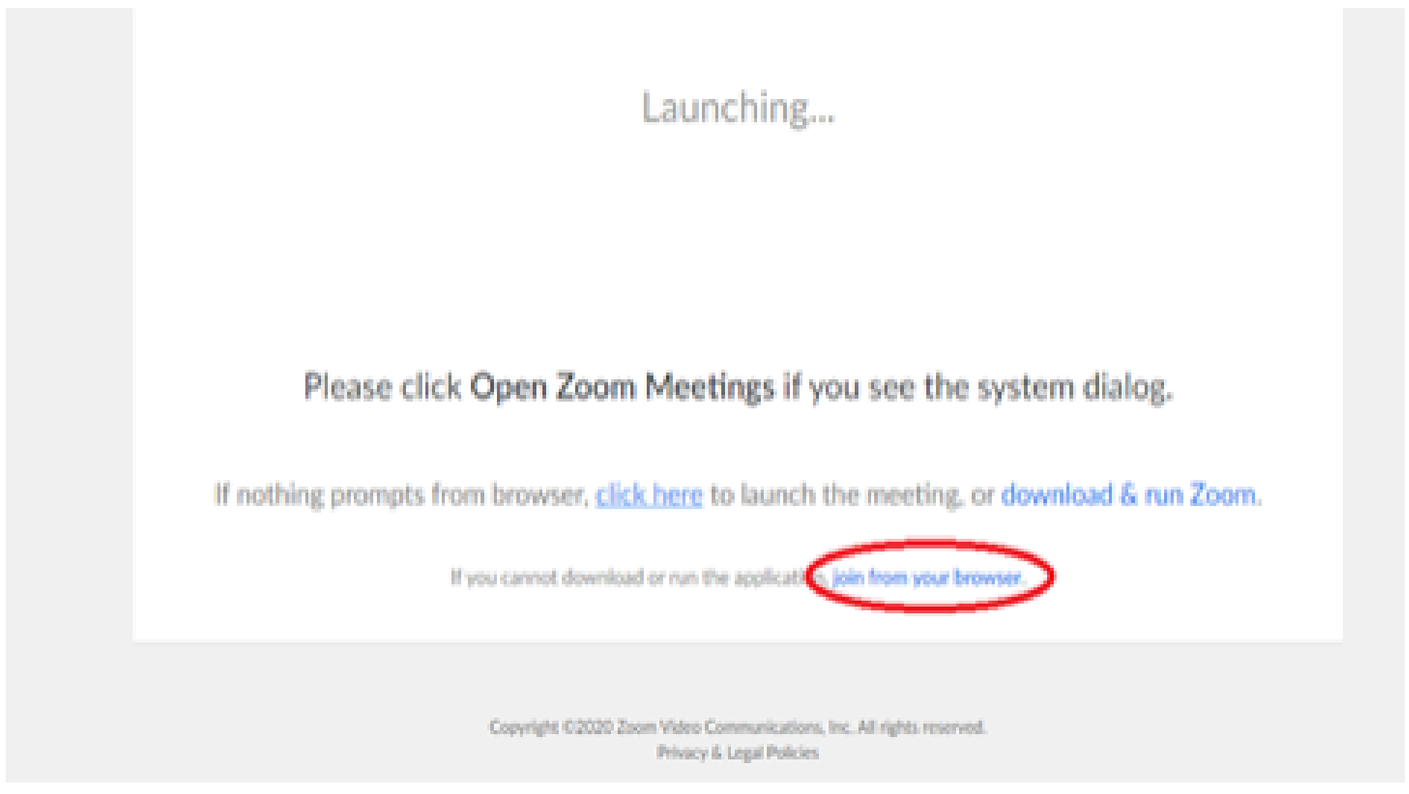
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