

Supervised Injection Services

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Board of Health
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What is Harm Reduction?

- Measures that reduce the harms associated with substance use for individuals, families and communities

- Part of a comprehensive approach, with:
 - Prevention
 - Treatment
 - Enforcement

- Needle exchange
- Safer drug use education
- Overdose prevention (naloxone)
- HIV and hepatitis C testing
- Primary care (e.g., immunization, wound care)
- Counselling
- Referrals to drug treatment, housing, income support and other services

What are Supervised Injection Services (SIS)?

- Provide a safe/sterile environment where people inject pre-obtained drugs under the supervision of trained staff (e.g., nurses)

- Harms reduced by SIS:
 - spread of blood borne diseases (HIV, HCV)
 - overdose
 - public drug use and discarded needles
 - isolation from medical and other services

Services Offered at SISs

- Provision of sterile supplies
- Safer drug use education
- Supervision of injection
- Monitoring for adverse drug reactions
- Overdose intervention
- Referrals to other health and social services (e.g., detox, drug treatment, housing)

International, peer-reviewed research find SISs:

- Reduce overdose deaths
- Reduce behaviours that cause HIV/hepatitis
- Increase use of detox and addiction treatment services
- Reduce public drug use
- Reduce publically discarded needles
- Do not increase crime in the area around SIS

Injection Drug Use in Toronto

- 61% hepatitis C positive
- 6% HIV positive
- 20% share needles
- 54% injected in washroom/stairwell
- 46% injected in street or alley
- 895 fatal overdoses 2002-2010

- Toronto Drug Strategy (2005) is based on the integrated components of:
 - prevention
 - harm reduction
 - treatment
 - enforcement

- Recommended a needs assessment and feasibility study for supervised consumption services in Toronto

- Toronto and Ottawa Supervised Consumption Assessment (TOSCA) Study (2012)

- Recommendations:
 - Toronto would benefit from SISs
 - model – integrated into existing health services serving people who inject drugs
 - well evaluated

Supervised Injection Services

- Over 90 operating in Europe, Australia and Canada
- Originally implemented to address both public safety (public drug use) and public health (risk of overdose and blood borne infections) issues
- Models include: standalone, integrated, and mobile services

InSite, Vancouver



Dr. Peter Centre, Vancouver



Dr. Peter Centre



Dr. Peter Centre





TPH Recommendation

- Board of Health urge the provincial government to fund the integration of SISs, on a pilot basis, into existing provincially-funded clinical health services for people who use drugs in Toronto, and fund the evaluation of this pilot.

Supreme Court of Canada

- SISs operate with a federal exemption under the *Controlled Drugs & Substances Act*
- In 2008, federal government did not extend the exemption for InSite in Vancouver
- InSite operators initiated a legal challenge
- In 2011, the Supreme Court ordered the Minister of Health to extend the exemption
- The Court also set out factors for consideration for future applications

- On June 6, 2013, the federal government introduced legislation that includes the process and requirements for groups seeking a CDSA exemption to operate a SIS
- The requirements are onerous, and create significant barriers for implementation of SIS

Supervised Injection Services Toolkit

- Toronto Drug Strategy initiative
- Provides information and resources for groups considering whether to implement SIS
- Areas include:
 - demonstration of local need
 - program design & clinical protocols
 - community engagement
 - communications
 - police protocols
 - performance measures

TPH Recommendation

- Board of Health make a submission to the federal government opposing Bill C-65, and recommending a more feasible CDSA exemption application process, in consultation with provincial, public health, public safety and community stakeholders, including people who use drugs.

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