Implementation of Supervised Injection Services in Toronto

Dr. David McKeown
Medical Officer of Health

Board of Health
July 4, 2016
Background

- **Toronto & Ottawa Supervised Consumption Assessment (TOSCA) Study (2012)**
  - Toronto would benefit from multiple SISs
  - model – integrated into existing health services for people who inject drugs

- **Board of Health supported:**
  - implementation of integrated SIS model in Toronto (2013).
  - community consultation process for 3 integrated SISs in Toronto (March 2016)
Three agencies propose to add small-scale SIS to existing health services for people who inject drugs:

- Toronto Public Health, The Works
- Queen West-Central Toronto Community Health Centre
- South Riverdale Community Health Centre

Agencies are coordinating program and policy development.
Continuum of Harm Reduction Services

Current harm reduction services:

- Sterile injecting supplies – distribution and return
- Community and mobile outreach/distribution
- Safer drug use education
- Overdose prevention (naloxone)
- HIV point-of-care testing + hepatitis C testing/treatment
- Primary care (e.g., immunization, wound care)
- Counselling and group programming
- Referrals to drug treatment, social services, housing, etc.

Additional services with SIS:

- Supervision of injection by nurse
- Monitoring for adverse drug reactions
- Medical intervention, if necessary
Need for SIS in Toronto

• Harm reduction client service profile
  ▪ 61% hepatitis C positive
  ▪ 5% HIV positive

• High demand for harm reduction services
  ▪ over 100,000 client visits (2015)
  ▪ almost 1.9 needles distributed (2015)

• Rising numbers of overdose deaths
Drug-induced deaths in Toronto 2004-2014

Source: Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, compilation and analysis by Toronto Public Health
Accidental deaths in Toronto caused by most frequently lethal drug types, alone or in combination

Source: Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, compilation and analysis by Toronto Public Health
Accidental deaths in Toronto caused by heroin or morphine (may include heroin), and/or by fentanyl, alone or in toxic combinations

Source: Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, compilation and analysis by Toronto Public Health
Community Consultation Objectives

• To gather and analyze input from the community about SIS related to:
  ▪ benefits
  ▪ concerns

• To provide information to the community about SIS to help inform their input on the issue.

• Document suggestions from stakeholders to address their concerns.
The 3 organizations worked together to develop the consultation plan.

Plan had common and agency-specific activities to address needs of each community.

External vendor conducted some activities + organizations engaged with additional local stakeholders.
Consultation Activities

- Online Survey
- Town Halls and Open Houses
- Focus Groups and Information Sessions
“Do you think small scale SIS would be beneficial?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>% Reporting Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto in general</td>
<td>1285</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen West – Central Toronto CHC</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Riverdale CHC</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto Public Health – The Works</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents could report benefits and concerns
Perceived benefits included:

• Reduction in risk of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C

• Reduction in fatal and non-fatal overdose

• Reduction in public injection in alleyways, public washrooms and stairwells

• Reduction in discarded injection drug use equipment

• Increase use of other health, social and treatment services
Online Survey Findings – Concerns about SIS

“Do you have any concerns about the addition of small-scale supervised injection services at (insert location)?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>% Reporting Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toronto in General</td>
<td>1285</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen West – Central Toronto CHC</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Riverdale CHC</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto Public Health – The Works</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents could report benefits and concerns
Key Themes: Concerns about SIS

Concerns included:

• Increase in crime, including drug use and trafficking
• Disruptive client behaviours following injection
• Community and personal safety, especially for children
• Decrease in business profits and property values
• Negative impact on neighbourhood reputation
• Diverse opinions on the role of police
• Adequacy of service hours
Strategies to Address Concerns

Design of the SIS

• Adequate waiting space inside and monitoring to prevent loitering outside.

• Encourage people to stay after injection to monitor for signs of overdose.

• Ongoing monitoring of operational hours.

• Safe needle disposal.
Role of Police

Adequate and appropriate police presence through:

• Develop protocols with Toronto Police Service to determine how close police would be to services in order to address crime, but not deter access by clients.

• Community policing approach.
Community Advisory Committee

• Identify concerns and strategies to address them.

• Involve BIA, local schools, residents' associations, clients, and police.
Evaluation & Monitoring

• Collect baseline data before service initiation.

• Regular monitoring after implementation, including patterns of service use.

• Share results with community advisory committee and make publically available.
Legal requirements

Section 56.1 (2) of the *Controlled Drugs & Substances Act* - criteria for federal exemption applications:

- Supporting data
- Detailed site plans, program policies/protocols
- Financial plan
- Links with drug treatment services
- Results of community consultation
- Letters of opinion and strategies to address concerns
Recommendations to BOH

• Support implementation of small-scale SIS at the three health organizations.

• Submit Section 56 exemption application to Health Canada to operate SIS at TPH/The Works.

• Forward report to City Council and request letter for exemption application for the three organizations.

• Request letters from Ministers of Health & Long-Term Care and Community Safety and Correctional Services, and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
Recommendations for BOH

- Request 100% capital and operating funding from Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care for three services.
- Direct MOH to submit proposal to Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care and requesting funding for SIS at TPH/The Works.
- Urge Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care to increase capacity to enable on-demand access to drug treatment.
Implementation of Supervised Injection Services in Toronto

Dr. David McKeown
Medical Officer of Health

Board of Health
July 4, 2016