



**Parkdale  
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[www.pchc.on.ca](http://www.pchc.on.ca)

March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## **Re. Proposed Supervised Injection Services**

Dear City Council Members,

On behalf of Parkdale Community Health Centre (PCHC) I am pleased to write this letter of support for the proposed Supervised Injection Services at the three identified locations (The Works, South Riverdale CHC and Queen West-Central Toronto CHC). Parkdale CHC has a long history (over twenty-five years) of providing health care services to people grappling with serious substance use issues, including injection drug use.

As a primary health care centre located along the Queen Street corridor where substance use is prevalent, we know that our clients are vulnerable to serious chronic health problems such as HIV and Hepatitis C as well as to overdose and death. Our harm reduction program works hard to reach out to vulnerable communities to provide the education, resources and peer supports needed to mitigate the effects of substance use.

Working in collaboration with our clients and community partners we strive to promote individual and community safety. In 2015-16, PCHC's harm reduction program has had more than 10,000 visits, distributed over 100,000 new kits/syringes and has collected and safely disposed of more than 82,000 used syringes.

In addition, Parkdale CHC works closely with Queen West- Central Toronto CHC, The Works and South Riverdale CHC to implement programs that reduce the harms related to substance use and to enhance community safety. We currently participate in a joint Hepatitis C treatment program with Queen West CHC which focuses on Hepatitis C prevention and treatment.

Through wrap-around services that include primary health care, peer supports, care coordination and individual and group supports, this program has demonstrated successful Hepatitis C outcomes for individuals who face multiple barriers to treatment in traditional settings.

Our experience repeatedly tells us that it is these wrap- around services that integrate primary health care with community and social supports that offers best practices for health promotion and disease prevention for substance using communities.



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The Board of Health recommendation for Supervised Injection Services is a logical extension of current harm reduction practices and part of the overall comprehensive drug strategy. The fact that they will be embedded in community health spaces effectively addresses the need for low barrier access to population based health care. Community based health services have the knowledge, skill and longstanding relationships with clients and community partners to make this initiative a safe and successful health service.

Sincerely,

Shirley Roberts  
Executive Director, Interim  
Parkdale Community Health Centre