



March 16, 2016

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Chairperson Mihevc and Members of the Board,

The Canadian Association of Community Health Centres (CACHC) congratulates the Toronto Board of Health for considering the recommendation to move forward with implementation of Supervised Injection Services (SIS) in Toronto. We strongly encourage the Board to endorse the recent Toronto Public Health report and to implement its recommendations.

CACHC is the federal voice for Community Health Centres and community-oriented, people-centred primary health care across Canada. We are also a founding member of the International Federation of Community Health Centres (IFCHC), headquartered in the Netherlands, and a Standing Member of the IFCHC's Directing Council.

Our work across Canada and internationally puts us in close contact with the experiences of a wide range of health service agencies and communities, along with local, national and international evidence on health and health services. Evidence from many other jurisdictions, including Vancouver, indicates that SIS have a powerful impact in improving health for individuals and the public at-large.

SIS reduce negative health effects associated with injection drug use, including reductions in HIV and Hep C infection and loss of life, and SIS also improve pathways to recovery, increasing use of detox and addiction treatment services. SIS improve public health and the wellbeing of communities overall by reducing public drug use, reducing publicly-discarded syringes, improving HIV and Hep C prevention, and contributing to lower health services use and associated costs. These have immense benefits for all members of the community.

By all accounts, Toronto Public Health's recommendation for multiple SIS sites, integrated within existing healthcare services including South Riverdale CHC and Queen West Central Toronto CHC, is well thought out and aligned with best practices. We thank Toronto Public Health for its national leadership in addressing the need for SIS, and we humbly and sincerely encourage the Toronto Board of Health to further advance this leadership on behalf of the City of Toronto and all Torontonians.

Respectfully,

Scott A. Wolfe, Executive Director

cc:
John Tory – Mayor, City of Toronto
Dr. David McKeown – Chief Medical Officer of Health, Toronto Public Health

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