



WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN WOMEN'S HANDS
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

INCREASE • INNOVATE • IGNITE

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Toronto Board of Health
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March 17, 2016

Dear Chairperson Mihevc and Members of the Board,

Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre is encouraged by the efforts of the Toronto Board of Health as it attempts to move forward with the recommendations to implement Safe Injection Services in Toronto. We fully endorse this action as it reflects an understanding of the tremendous value that Supervised Injection Sites have in our communities and emphasizes that this is an important part of health services within Toronto.

Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre provides primary health care for racialized women in Toronto. We also currently serve one the largest populations of HIV positive women in the province. We understand the importance of Safe Injection Sites in reducing the spread of blood borne infections such as HIV and hepatitis. The sites will provide supportive environments to help people who want to transition off drugs and most importantly these sites will prevent unnecessary overdose deaths.

WHIWH-CHC fully endorses the recommendation by the Medical Officer of Health to move ahead with 3 supervised injection sites in Toronto, The Works program, Queen West-Central Toronto Community Health Centre and South Riverdale Community Health Centre. These organizations are well established and respected in their communities and have been delivering harm reduction programs for a significant number of years. Community Health Centres in particular offer diverse health services and interdisciplinary healthcare teams which will only further support those accessing Supervised Injection Sites.

Supervised Injection Sites are needed now more than ever as they have been proven to save lives, reduce the harm of drug use and improve public safety. We applaud Toronto Public Health's innovation and leadership thus far and we encourage the Board to fully implement the recommendations outlined in the March 14th released report.

Yours Sincerely,

Notisha Massaquoi
Executive Director