Syringe Access & Disposal Services in SF

Community Health Equity & Promotion Branch

Presented by: Eileen Loughran
Program Manager for Syringe Access and Disposal Programs
CHEP is the branch of the SFDPH responsible for authorizing syringe access and disposal programs in SF.
Presentation Overview: Syringe Access

• Harm reduction and disease prevention
• Global best practice
• A major reason that SF can pledge to get to zero new HIV infections
• Sites do much more than provide clean needles
• Part of a bigger picture of care for people who inject drugs
• Needle disposal is a key component of the program
Program Overview: Syringe Programs

• SFDPH is responsible for managing syringe access and disposal for San Francisco as an effective HIV/Hepatitis C prevention intervention for people who inject drugs (PWID).

• Syringe access and disposal programs in San Francisco are governed by State law.

• Community engagement and collaboration are conducted by SFDPH to ensure the programs are successful.
FACTS ABOUT INJECTION DRUG USE IN SAN FRANCISCO

THE ESTIMATED 22,500 PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS (PWID) IN SAN FRANCISCO ARE...*

71% MALE
55% AGES 41-60
50% USING HEROIN
34% USING METHAMPHETAMINE

AND RESIDE IN...

31% TENDERLOIN
24% SoMA
9% MISSION
8% BAYVIEW-HUNTERS POINT

*2015 estimates

PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS ARE AT HIGH RISK FOR...

OVERDOSE
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER
HIV
HEP C
OTHER BLOODBORNE DISEASES
SF Syringe Access & Disposal History

- 1988: Underground “Needle Exchange” run by volunteers
- 1993: Mayor Frank Jordan declares State of Emergency
- 1993: Syringe programs formally sanctioned in SF
- 2010: Syringe Police Bulletin signed
Objective of Syringe Programs:
To reduce risk behaviors that may lead to the transmission of bloodborne pathogens among people who inject drugs and their sexual partners.

Strategies:
• Provide access to sterile syringes and injection equipment and safer sex supplies.
• Promote safe disposal of syringes and injection equipment, including collection and disposal of used syringes.
• Develop and deliver education and health promotion activities relevant to the goal.
• Provide information about and referrals to other ancillary services.
SF Police Bulletin illustrates partnership for health:

- Describes the service as disease prevention and overdose prevention
- Lists supplies participants may carry
- Explains authorization of syringe programs
- Provides format for Roll Call trainings conducted by DPH
Syringe programs in San Francisco are successful

- San Francisco’s early adoption of syringe access services has contributed to the low level of HIV among PWID
- The number of new infections among PWID has dropped from 110 to 38 per year.
- San Francisco can get to zero because of early adoption of syringe programs.

Why?
SF’s early adoption of syringe services, beginning in the 1980’s and formally sanctioned by the mayor in 1993
Syringe Programs are evidence based

• Research demonstrates that syringe programs that are needs based (or “distribution” models):
  • have a larger impact on reducing syringe sharing and unsafe injection practices than one-for-one exchanges
  • Reduce transmission of HIV and HCV
  • Do not increase syringe litter

• And one-for-one exchanges limit the number of syringes and make it more likely that people will end up re-using, or sharing, injection drug equipment.
Syringe Access Programs are a global best practice

• Research has shown that syringe access and disposal programs are the most effective, evidence-based HIV prevention tool for people who use drugs.

• In cities across the nation (including SF), people who inject drugs have reversed the course of the HIV epidemic by using sterile syringes and harm reduction practices.

• Harm reduction (including needle/syringe program and opioid substitution therapy) is an evidence-based approach to HIV prevention, treatment and care for people who inject drugs and is strongly supported by WHO and other UN agencies.
Syringe Access Programs are a gateway to care

Syringe Programs provide education, information, and services:

- Access to Narcan to reverse overdose
- Access to test strips for fentanyl testing
- HIV/HCV testing, linkage, and treatment
- Medically assisted substance use treatment
- Linkage to detox and drug treatment programs
- Links to medical, dental, and mental health services
- Case management, counseling, and referral
- Referral and linkage to housing services
- Community building
Syringe programs are provided by community partners

• The SFDPH funds the San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF) to provide syringe access and disposal. SFAF subcontracts with:
  • San Francisco Drug User’s Union
  • Homeless Youth Alliance
  • St. James Infirmary
  • Glide

• Community services:
  • Fixed Site
  • Venue Based
  • Pedestrian
  • Satellite Syringe Access
Best Practice: Multiple Access Points, Multiple Disposal Options

Access Points
• 13 community sites
• For purchase at pharmacies

Disposal Options
• Disposal at every syringe program sites
• Syringe programs conduct regular community sweeps
• Community Health Response Team
• Walgreens Pharmacies
• Community Sharps Disposal Kiosks
• Citywide Hotline (311)
• DPW street cleaning and pit stops
• Residential biohazard pick-up
• Training of Community Partners
• 10 NEW Syringe Clean-up staff
Disposal Boxes
Civic Center
- Bill Graham Civic Auditorium (Larking @ Hayes)
- Main Library (Fulton@ Hyde)
- 76 50 Leach Walesa near Please Touch Garden

Tenderloin
- 330 Ellis next to Glide
- 149 Turk
- 290 Turk
- 146 Leavenworth between McAllister & Golden Gate
- 45 Jones
- 150 Golden Gate
- 133 Golden Gate (ST. Boniface)

SOMA
- 5th Street Between Harrison & Bryant
- 1380 Howard
- Stevenson Between 6th & 7th
- Trainor between 14th & Division

Castro
- Eureka Valley Library Parking Lot @ Pond

Bayview
- Evans @ Shelby
Thank you

Eileen Loughran
Syringe Access & Disposal Program Manager
eileen.loughran@sfdph.org