

# Syringe Services Programs

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# Syringe Services Programs

- ***What are syringe services programs?***
  - Syringe services programs (SSPs) are public health programs that serve the community by addressing the health needs and risks of people who use drugs.
  - Syringe services programs provide access to clean syringes and other medical supplies, disposal of syringes, referrals to drug treatment and other social services, HIV and HCV testing, naloxone and a range of other services. The size and services offered varies, but all are focused on reducing the harms of drug use.

# Syringe Services Programs

- Former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher wrote in a report in 2000 that, “After reviewing all of the research to date, the senior scientists of the Department and I have unanimously agreed that there is conclusive scientific evidence that syringe exchange programs, as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention strategy, are an effective public health intervention that reduces the transmission of HIV and does not encourage the use of illegal drugs.”

-US Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher, Department of Health and Human Services, *Evidence-Based Findings on the Efficacy of Syringe Exchange Programs: An Analysis from the Assistant Secretary for Health and Surgeon General of the Scientific Research Completed Since April 1998* (Washington, DC: Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2000).

# Syringe Services Programs

- “Scientists, including those at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have studied SSPs for more than 30 years and found that comprehensive SSPs benefit communities.”
  - CDC, *What Are Syringe Services Programs (SSPs)?* 2019
  - ▀ Save lives by lowering likelihood of overdose deaths.
  - ▀ Associated with a 50 percent decline in the risk of HIV transmission.
  - ▀ Users of SSPs five times more likely to enter treatment.
  - ▀ Law enforcement benefits from reduced risk of needlesticks, no increase in crime.
  - ▀ Fewer improperly discarded syringes.

# Syringe Services Programs

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the CDC website page for Syringe Services Programs (SSPs). The browser tabs include "CDC Syringe Services Programs (SSPs)" and "How to Take Screenshots in Wind...". The address bar shows "cdc.gov/ssp/index.html".

The page header features the CDC logo and the text "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention" with the tagline "CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™". A search bar is located on the right side of the header.

The main heading is "Syringe Services Programs (SSPs)". Below the heading, there is a navigation menu with the following items: "Syringe Service Programs", "Safety & Effectiveness Summary", "Fact Sheet", "FAQs", "Determination of Need", and "Funding".

The main content area features a large image with five circular icons overlaid on it. The icons represent: a first aid kit, a stack of money, a medical symbol (Rod of Asclepius), a police officer, and a house with a red roof. The image shows a doctor talking to a patient, a woman looking at a document, a woman lying in a hospital bed, and a man being held by another man.

Below the image, the text reads: "Syringe services programs (SSPs) are community-based prevention programs that can provide a range of services, including linkage to substance use disorder treatment; access to and disposal of".

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 1:50 PM on 8/28/2019.

# ▶ Syringe Services Programs

The bottom line is that every time someone goes to a syringe services program it is one less chance they will get HIV or die from an overdose and one more chance they will get drug treatment and other services they need.

# Syringe Services Programs

- ***How many states have syringe services programs?***
  - ▣ The first officially approved syringe services program in the United States was started in Tacoma, Washington in 1988.
  - ▣ There are now more than 300 syringe services programs operating in 39 states, the District of Columbia (DC), and Puerto Rico.
  - ▣ The overdose crisis and spikes in HIV and hep C rates have caused states as diverse as Kentucky, Indiana and Florida to change their laws to allow for syringe services.

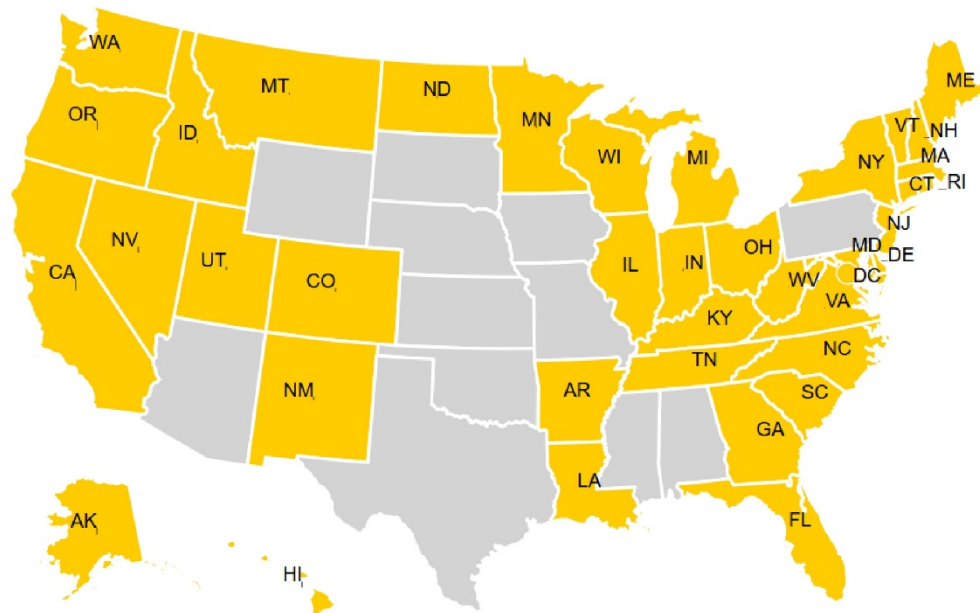
# Syringe Services Programs

- ***Does Pennsylvania have syringe services programs?***
  - ▀ Yes. Two cities, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have established successful syringe service programs. Each of these programs have operated for more than two decades.
- ***Why are there only two cities with syringe services programs?***
  - ▀ Non-profit organizations established syringe services programs in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh under city and county health authorities. But other cities, counties and non-profit entities are hesitant to establish programs because Pennsylvania law does not make explicit provisions for the programs.



# Syringe Services Programs

State Law Allows for the Operation of Syringe Services Programs



The Policy Surveillance Program, Temple University Beasley School of Law. <http://lawatlas.org/>

# Syringe Services Programs

- ***Why does Pennsylvania need more syringe services programs?***
  - The overdose epidemic is the worst public health crisis in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rate of drug overdose deaths in the country and the 9<sup>th</sup> highest rate of new HIV infections.
  - The CDC declares that Pennsylvania is one of the states at risk for, or experiencing, increases in HIV and hepatitis C. Three counties in Pennsylvania (Luzerne, Cambria, Crawford) are at imminent risk.

# Syringe Services Programs

- ***How do syringe services programs support entry into treatment?***
  - According to the CDC, syringe services programs serve as a bridge to other health services including, HCV and HIV diagnosis and treatment, including MAT. People who inject drugs who regularly use an SSP are more than five times as likely to enter treatment and nearly three times as likely to report reducing or discontinuing injection as those who have never used an SSP.
  - In New Jersey, which established syringe services programs in 2007, more than 20 percent of participants entered treatment.

# Syringe Services Programs

- ***Public health goal for Pennsylvania is to:***
  - Pass legislation explicitly making provision for syringe services programs by amending the state drug paraphernalia law.
  - Untie the hands of local municipalities, public health professionals, syringe services programs, and volunteers to maximize PA's ability to reduce overdose deaths and new HIV and hep C infections.

# ▶ Syringe Services Programs



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# ▶ Syringe Services Programs





# ▶ Syringe Services Programs

Syringe services programs enable people to stay alive, enable them to protect themselves from getting HIV, enable them to get into drug treatment, enable them to access physical and mental health services and enable them to have hope for the future.

# ▶ Syringe Services Programs

- The opposite of addiction is not sobriety, it is connection.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/johann\\_hari\\_everything\\_you\\_think\\_you\\_know\\_about\\_addiction\\_is\\_wrong#t-202527](https://www.ted.com/talks/johann_hari_everything_you_think_you_know_about_addiction_is_wrong#t-202527)

- Syringe services programs are connection.

# Syringe Services Programs

Thank you for your time!

Questions?