



Supervised Injecting Facilities

– WHY WE NEED ONE NOW!

Many people in Melbourne believe we need to do something urgently about public injecting which is affecting many communities – Supervised Injecting Facilities are the answer.

How will supervised injecting facilities benefit our communities?

- less needles and syringes on the streets
- fewer people injecting and/or overdosing in public
- ambulances resources can be used for other life threatening emergencies
- police will not have to attend to calls made by concerned citizens seeing people injecting and overdosing

Supervised injecting facilities DO NOT:

- increase crime
- increase drug use or drug trafficking
- send the wrong message – in fact they send a positive message about caring for people!

Supervised injecting facilities DO:

- provide access to treatment for illicit drug users and encourage take up of treatment options
- improve public safety and amenity by reducing public injecting and the inappropriate discarding of needles, syringes, swabs and other drug related litter in public places
- prevent the spread of blood borne viruses in the community such as HIV and Hepatitis B and C
- SAVE LIVES!

CITY OF YARRA WANTS AN INJECTING FACILITY:

In 2011 the councillors of the City of Yarra voted overwhelmingly in favour of establishing a supervised injecting facility to make the community in Yarra safer.

WHO SUPPORTS SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITIES?

- The majority of Australians support the introduction of SIFs (National Drug Household Survey 2010)
- In Sydney a survey of local businesses people indicated that the majority (nearly 70%) supported the local injecting facility (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) remaining
- Victoria's peak alcohol and drug agencies support a supervised injecting facility: Australian Drug Foundation, Anex, VAADA, ReGen
- The Victorian Branch of the AMA stated that they would support the trial of a SIF in Victoria.



How much will they cost and what would a supervised injecting facility look like?

Setting up an injecting facility will not cost much in terms of funding – money is available through confiscation of assets (proceeds of crime) similar to the way in which the Sydney injecting facility is funded. There are existing health services that could easily include an injecting room at little or no cost. There will be no need to build new facilities in places where public injecting is already happening.

Do police support supervised injecting facilities? Yes!

Both Vancouver Police and the New South Wales Police have thrown their weight behind injecting facilities and provide support through referrals to these centres.

Where do we need injecting facilities in Melbourne?

We need supervised injecting facilities in places where people don't have a safe place to inject drugs, particularly where they inject in public. Calls for injecting facilities in Melbourne include suburbs where there is ongoing problems with public injecting such as Footscray, St Kilda and North Richmond.

Why do we need supervised injecting facilities?

- to make our community healthier and safer
- to reduce the workload of ambulances, police, and other emergency services
- to reduce overdose deaths and the risk of HIV to our community

Did you know? Since the establishment of the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) in King's Cross, Sydney in 2001:

- There has been an 80% reduction in ambulance call-outs to Kings Cross
- The number of discarded syringes in the area has halved, improving public amenity
- Over 3,500 overdoses have been successfully managed at the Centre without a single fatality
- Independent evaluations have demonstrated no increase of crime in the area
- Three quarters of the injecting facility clients had never previously been in contact with drug treatment services
- Ambulance services in NSW have reported reduced calls to attend overdoses in the vicinity of the MSIC thereby saving ambulance time and resources.

The Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) in King's Cross, Sydney has been rigorously evaluated: http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/resources/mhdao/pdf/msic_kpmg.pdf



DID YOU KNOW?

- Injecting facilities are operating in Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Norway, Luxembourg, Switzerland, France – in nearly 100 cities worldwide – yet we only have one in Australia?
- Evaluation of the injecting facility in Vancouver, Canada, showed that drug dealing, drug-related crime and rates of new injecting drug use have not increased as a result of this facility opening.



Log on to the Yarra Drug & Health Forum website to support the establishment of a Supervised Injecting Facility in Melbourne: www.ydhf.org.au

