

Background

The City of Greater Sudbury has experienced an increase in used needles being discarded in public places. A recommendation from the Community Drug Strategy Committee was to install syringe recovery bins as part of a broader harm reduction in the community. The bins are intended to reduce the possibility of unintended sharps accidents by providing a safe container for disposal.

A report was brought to the Community Services Committee in November 2016 outlining the proposed installation of two syringe recovery bins. The bins were purchased by Public Health Sudbury and Districts through a one-time Civil Remedies Act grant. The first bin was located and installed in Hnatyshyn Park and the second bin was later located in the downtown core.

A copy of the 2016 report can be found here:

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?searchString=needles&comid=0&search=Search&startDate=08%2F23%2F2016&endDate=08%2F23%2F2017&searchInList=Agendas&lang=en&goSearch=1&pg=search>

In 2017, the Social Services Division worked with community partners, including the Public Health Sudbury and Districts, the Greater Sudbury Police Service, and Outreach Workers from the Sudbury Action Centre for Youth, to determine a prioritized list for the installation of three more syringe recovery bins. Recovery bins were installed at 200 Larch Street, the green stairs on St. Anne's Road/Marymount, and Energy Court (behind 105 Elm Street). The remaining syringe recovery bin was earmarked for install in the Melvin/Kathleen Street area.

Although the installed syringe recovery bins were well received and utilized, additional hot spots were identified and a business case for the 2018 budget process was submitted and approved for the purchase of three additional bins, along with the operating costs of pick-up and disposal of all bins installed on City property. These bins were installed in the spring of 2018 at Memorial Park, the Main Library on Mackenzie Street, and on Leslie Street at the entrance of the Trans Canada Trail.

The syringe recovery bin that was originally located at 200 Larch Street was removed from this property and relocated to the temporary Off the Street Shelter site when the ownership of the property was transferred to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). As this shelter is temporary and seasonal, the bin will be relocated in the spring of 2019.

Next Steps

To date, eight syringe recovery bins have been installed for the safe disposal of sharps at designated sites in the downtown core. The syringe recovery bins are located:

1. Hnatyshyn Park
2. Corner of Kathleen Street and Eva Avenue

3. Durham Street (near the Off the Street Shelter)
4. Green stairs on St. Anne's Road/Marymount
5. Energy Court (behind 105 Elm Street)
6. Memorial Park
7. Main Library on MacKenzie Street
8. Leslie Street Bridge (entrance of the Trans Canada Trail)

Due to the ongoing concern and complaints from citizens and community providers regarding the number of discarded sharps in public areas, a need has been determined for three additional syringe recovery bins. A Business Case was submitted for the 2019 budget for the purchase and ongoing operating costs for pick up and disposal of these bins. The total amount of the business case was \$33,265 and has been approved by the Executive Leadership Team to be included in the 2019 base budget.

The three locations that have been identified are on Paris Street (in the vicinity of Brady Square, Notre Dame Avenue (in the vicinity of the Salvation Army), and St. Catherine's Street (in the vicinity of the Elgin Street tunnel). The locations will be finalized in 2019 based on recommendations from the Sudbury Action Centre for Youth.

On an ongoing basis, the Social Services Division will continue to work collaboratively with community partners and the Community Drug Strategy Committee to address challenges related to the increase in opioid use in the City of Greater Sudbury. This includes working with Public Health Sudbury and Districts and the Community Drug Strategy in pursuing the feasibility study and if needed the establishment of a Safe Consumption Site in the community.

The Social Services Division will also continue ongoing communication with City of Greater Sudbury staff and the public regarding any changes or updates with the syringe recovery bins, needle pick up and disposal, as well as report annually to Council.

Sudbury Action Centre for Youth

The City of Greater Sudbury has an active syringe exchange program, supported by community organizations, that is offered at fixed sites throughout the City. This harm reduction approach allows for the distribution of syringes to citizens without the need to return the syringes for exchange; although it is strongly encouraged. This has led to a large number of used sharps being discarded in the community.

On October 24, 2017, through Council Resolution CC 2017 – 316, The Sudbury Action Centre for Youth (SACY) was approved for a one time unbudgeted expenditure for November and December 2017 to provide enhanced outreach services to persons that are using substances and to collect and dispose of used syringes in the community. A Business Case was submitted and approved for the 2018 budget to continue funding for the outreach and syringe recovery program. To date, SACY continues these services as well as providing presentations to community agencies and citizens on safe disposal methods. SACY outreach workers are on the streets daily visiting hotspots, collecting,

and safely disposing of used sharps. On a monthly basis, SACY records and reports to the Social Services Division the number of syringes that are being found in the community. In 2018, SACY collected 116,056 syringes that had been littered on the ground.

For 2019, the Social Services Division has allocated funding from Provincial sources in order to cover the total allocation that has produced a levy savings for the full amount of \$72,600. These savings have been reflected in the 2019 budget projection.

Recommendation:

The syringe recovery and needle bin program addresses the issue of public health and safety by removing discarded drug using equipment from public places and forms part of the harm reduction strategy in the community. Ongoing review of this problem will identify the need and locations for future stationary syringe recovery bins.

The Social Services Division will continue to monitor the effectiveness of SACY in providing this program and report annually to the Community Services Committee.

References

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=4&id=1260>

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=4&id=1204>