

## Background

This report seeks endorsement from City Council to support a feasibility study for the establishment of a Supervised Injection Site (SIS) in the community. The report estimates the cost of a feasibility study to be in the range of \$150,000 to \$200,000.

The Community Development Department has been working on a Population Health Community Priorities Strategy for the past year and has recently brought forward the Strategy for Council approval.

<https://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca//index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&agenda=report&itemid=30&id=1137>

Through community consultations, under the Mental Health and Compassionate City Community Priorities, the suggested action includes the study of and possible establishment of a Supervised Injection Site (SIS).

In addition, the establishment of a SIS has been prioritized by the Community Drug Strategy as part of the Harm Reduction Pillar area of responsibility.

The Province of Ontario has recently released further assistance to combat a Provincial increase in opioid related deaths and overdoses. The Province is increasing funding and distribution for naloxone kits along with increasing access to Rapid Access Addiction Medical (RAAM) Clinics.

<https://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2017/12/ontario-expanding-opioid-response-as-crisis-grows.html>

The Province has also released a new program on time limited Overdose Prevention Sites which are intended to provide targeted harm reduction services to address Ontario's opioid crisis. Prospective sites need to be "led by an incorporated healthcare or community based organization, or partners with one."

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/news/bulletin/2018/hb\\_20180111.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/news/bulletin/2018/hb_20180111.aspx)

The Community Drug Strategy has recently reported that 54 people in Greater Sudbury were admitted to hospital in the past six months due to drug overdose as reported by local media.

<http://www.thesudburystar.com/2017/12/08/52-od-hospital-visits-in-sudbury-area-since-april>

Further data from 2016 indicates a rise in local opioid related Emergency Department visits with 107. Of these 107 visits, 35 cases led to related admissions.<sup>1</sup>

This report outlines information on SIS and seeks support from City Council to move forward with seeking support for a feasibility study, which would be the first step in an application process for the community.

## **Supervised Injection Sites (SIS)**

Insite was the first SIS to open in North America in 2003 in Vancouver, British Columbia with the help of several community partners. SIS sites have been well researched in peer-reviewed journals and have shown the following outcomes:

- Reduced overdose related morbidity;
- A decrease in public injecting and discarded needles, and no increase to related crimes;
- Associated with increased referrals to health and social services, including detoxification and drug treatment programs; and
- Associated with less risky injecting practices and a reduction in transmission rates of HIV and Hepatitis C.

The Province of Ontario has approved Supervised Injection Services as part of a broader harm reduction strategy in response to growing opioid misuse and overdose. Several communities in Ontario are moving forward with applications to the MOHLTC for SIS sites.

## **Approval Process**

The approval process for a SIS is a multi step process that requires an application to Health Canada for an exemption to operate a SIS along with a Provincial application for funding support. An inter-ministerial team then in looking at several criteria reviews the applications to the Province. Strong evidence through a feasibility study needs to be submitted as part of the application process in order to demonstrate the need for the site in the community.

## **Community Needle Usage**

As part of the 2018 Budget process City Council has approved a discarded needle pick-up service. As mentioned in the 2018 Budget Business case, the Sudbury and District Health Unit (SDHU) has reported a significant rise in the needles issued through their needle exchange program with as many as 800,000 needles issued in 2016, rising to a predicted 1.2 million needles to the end of 2017. A SIS would be an enhancement to current harm reduction services in the community, which would help with the discarded needle problem. A future report will be brought forward to the Community Services Committee to review best practices related to the discarded needle problem.

## **Funding**

The MOHLTC has committed to funding SIS's in the Province for both operating and capital.

## **Next Steps**

The City of Greater Sudbury has met with community partners. The cost of this type of study would be in the range of \$150,000 to \$200,000. It is recommended that the Community Drug Strategy Committee apply for funding through the MOHLTC or the North East Local Health Integration Network for a feasibility study.

Reports will be brought forward through the Community Services Committee to keep City Council informed of this matter.

<sup>1</sup> Data Source: NACRS, intelliHEALTH.

Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Webinar "Supervised Injection Services in Ontario", September 28, 2017.