

SYRINGE SERVICES PROGRAMS (SSPs)

A Vital Strategy for Addressing Overdose, HIV, and Hepatitis C

WHAT IS AN SSP?

SSPs are evidence-based, essential programs that:

- Prevent overdoses
- Reduce the rate of communicable diseases, including HIV and Hepatitis
- Save taxpayer dollars
- Increase the likelihood of people entering treatment for substance use disorder

THEY OFFER COMMUNITY-BASED, COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES:



Referrals to substance use disorder treatment, medication-assisted treatment, and medical, mental health, and social services



Provide safe disposal of syringes and needles and free, sterile needles and other equipment -- out of public sight



Provide HIV and Hepatitis testing, prevention tools, linkage to treatment, and vaccinations



Provide education about overdose and safe injection practices



Provide naloxone to people at risk of overdose

Despite being classified as essential health services, SSPs remain illegal under Pennsylvania law.

WHAT'S NEEDED

To amend the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act of 1972 to allow the distribution of sterile syringes. This will allow SSPs to operate across the entire state.

TAKE ACTION

Contact your Pennsylvania state representatives and senators and ask them to support legislation to allow SSPs to operate statewide.

KNOW THE FACTS

- Over a 12-month period ending in June 2020, over 81,000 overdose deaths were reported in the United States, the highest in US history.
- Of the reported overdose deaths, over 59,000 were opioid-related and over 46,000 deaths involved synthetic opioids, such as fentanyl.
- Pennsylvania ranks 4th in the nation for overdose deaths.
- In Pennsylvania, there were over 4,500 overdose deaths in 2019, and 83% were considered opioid-related.
- A recent study showed syringe services programs saved the city of Philadelphia over \$2 billion dollars over a ten year period by preventing HIV infections.