

Supervised Injection Facilities: Needed in Massachusetts



What is a SIF?

Supervised Injection Facilities (SIFs) are legally sanctioned harm reduction facilities where intravenous drug users can safely inject pre-obtained drugs under medical supervision.

SIFs Provide:

- Emergency response to overdose
- Injection-related first aid
- Access to counseling, medical and behavioral health services, and substance use treatment
- Exchange and disposal of needles

There are over 100 SIFs currently operating in 11 countries around the world. Philadelphia, New York City, Seattle and San Francisco are all planning to open facilities soon.

Existing Evidence Strongly Supports SIFs:

Lessons from Vancouver, Canada

SIFs save lives

- Overdose mortality was reduced by 35% around the Vancouver SIF "Insite" injection facility.
- Zero overdose deaths have occurred at the site.

SIFs provide Community Benefit

- Vancouver saw significant decreases in public injections and numbers of publicly discarded syringes around the facility.

SIFs provide a pathway to treatment

- In just one year after opening, Vancouver saw a 33% increase in detoxification service use among persons who inject drugs.
- In just one year, nearly 3,000 individuals were referred to addiction counselling.

SIFs reduce healthcare costs

- Hospital admittance of intravenous drug users dropped from 35% to 9% after a SIF was opened, and the average length of stay decreased from 12 to 4 days.
- SIFs were also associated with 67% fewer ambulance calls for overdose response.

SIFs reduce risk of HIV and Hepatitis C transmission

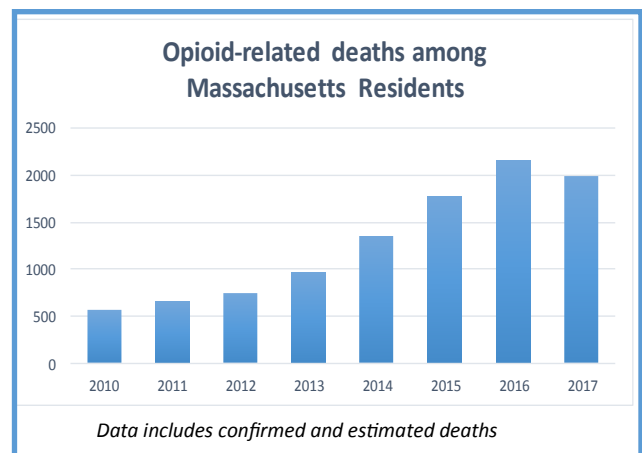
- Drug users who use Insite to inject drugs are 70% less likely to share needles.

SIFs do NOT

- Provide injectable drugs or promote drug use.
- Increase drug trafficking, assaults or robberies in the area.

"This extraordinary epidemic demands an extraordinary response, and safe injection sites are a measure both Baker and the Legislature should embrace."

The Boston Globe



Massachusetts should continue being a national leader in public health interventions

Massachusetts was a trailblazer in helping to stem HIV infections amidst the worst days of the AIDS epidemic in the 1990s by allowing needle exchanges to operate despite the lack of federal authority. Dramatic reductions in HIV infections followed.

Today, we are experiencing a devastating public health crisis of overdose deaths in the Commonwealth, and similar courage and creative intervention is needed.

Why Take Action Now? Overdose deaths in Massachusetts are *preventable*.

- Six Massachusetts residents die everyday from an overdose.
- In November 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health reported a dramatic increase in new **HIV infections** among injectable drug users.

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