



Monroe County Health Department

Monroe County, Indiana

Health Department

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Futures Family Planning Clinic

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August 19, 2015

Monroe County Board of Commissioners
Courthouse, Rm 320
Bloomington, Indiana 47404

RE: Declaration on a Local Public Health Emergency

I find and declare a public health emergency to exist in Monroe County and specifically that:

1. There is an epidemic of Hepatitis C (HCV) in the County;
2. The primary mode of transmission of Hepatitis C in the County is through intravenous drug use; and
3. A syringe exchange program is medically appropriate as part of a comprehensive public health response.

I ask the Monroe County Board of Commissioner to consider and act on this declaration. I offer the following information in support of my findings and this declaration:

- Monroe County's outbreak of HCV is evidenced by a rise of cases greater than 50% over the course of 5 years.
- Intravenous drug use accounts for at least 68% of new Hepatitis C infections per CDC and heroin overdoses at IU Health Bloomington Hospital have increased over 50% in one year.
- Testing and referral systems are in place and drug treatment programs, drug court and mental health services are available, yet these measures have proven ineffective in preventing the epidemic.
- A syringe Exchange (SE) Program as part of a comprehensive response increases the capacity to save lives, link people to care including treatment services.

Sincerely,

Thomas W Sharp
Monroe County Health Commissioner

