

What are Syringe Services Programs (SSPs)?

Syringe Services Programs, often called SSPs, are community-based prevention programs. SSPs provide a range of health services, and they provide a lifeline to those struggling with substance abuse. Comprehensive SSPs offer patients vaccinations and testing for diseases, referrals to treatment for substance use disorder and other diseases (such as viral hepatitis and HIV), and sterile injection equipment to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases.

Scientists, including those at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have studied SSPs for more than 30 years and found that comprehensive SSPs benefit communities.



SSPs **save lives** by lowering the likelihood of deaths from overdoses.



Providing testing, counseling, and sterile injection supplies helps prevent outbreaks of other diseases. For example, SSPs are associated with a **50% decline** in the risk of HIV transmission.



Users of SSPs were **three times more likely** to stop injecting drugs.



Law enforcement benefits from reduced risk of needlesticks, **no increase in crime**, and the ability to save lives by preventing overdoses.



When two similar cities were compared, the one with an SSP had **86% fewer syringes** in places like parks and sidewalks.



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

What can a Syringe Services Program (SSP) do?

SSPs adapt to local needs by providing comprehensive support services, such as ways to get treatment, medicines to prevent overdoses, and tools to prevent HIV and viral hepatitis. Many support services may be operated in partnership with federal government funding.

Vaccines for diseases like Hepatitis A and B
Testing for diseases like HIV and Hepatitis C

Counseling on treatment and prevention of HIV and Hepatitis B and C, such as antiretroviral therapy and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)

Referral to substance use treatment, medical care, mental health services, and other support services

Access to and safe disposal of sterile syringes and injection equipment



More than 30 years' worth of research demonstrates that SSPs protect the public's health. They save lives, help those experiencing a substance use disorder get the support needed to regain a healthy life, and reduce the impact of drug use on the community.

Visit www.cdc.gov/PWID to learn more.