

Dover Public Syringe Disposal Pilot Project:

A Collaborative, Community-Based Prevention Strategy

Prepared for the Dover City Council & Presented by:
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Who We Are

A multi-disciplinary working group comprised of individuals and community-based organizations, including:

Ashley Wright, MS; CPS
Manager, SCPHN

John Burns, BS; MBA
Executive Director, SOS
&
Ashley Lewis, CRSW
Operations Manager, SOS

Palana Hunt-Hawkins, BS
Director of Operations,
NHHRC

Bill Davis, MS
Community Volunteer,
NHHRC Board Member,
City of Dover Utilities
Commission

Adriane Apicelli, MSW
Project Manager, HRETA

Peter Fifield, MS; Ed.D
Manager of Integrated
Behavioral Health & SUD
Services, WDH

GREATER SEACOAST COMMUNITY HEALTH



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Purpose

- Formed working group to address and remediate community concerns about improperly discarded syringes in Dover public spaces
- Conducted secondary research and engaged in ongoing discussions and consultation with stakeholders to arrive at the proposed solution...



Collaboratively pilot, implement & maintain a year-long, anonymous public sharps disposal program in the Dover community

Proposed Solution:

Anonymous public syringe disposal in “sharps” boxes is a **low-barrier, low-cost, highly effective** strategy to decrease improperly discarded syringes and medical waste, thus improving community health and safety.



Successful initiatives like this have taken place on a national level and more locally, in our neighbor to the north(east) Maine.

Evidence-Base

- In North America there are many examples of public health collaborative approaches to the implementation of syringe drop boxes as a means of community safety¹⁻⁴
- Located in community-based settings, sharps disposal units significantly decrease the number of needles and medical waste in public spaces, as well as those improperly discarded in solid waste streams, both of which can result in costly needlestick injuries and illness
- Many people use syringes and hypodermic needles for various reasons, and those that are discarded improperly in household & public trash create a serious risk for sanitation employees working at transfer stations or landfills



Evidence-Base

- Four cities in Maine (*Portland, Bangor, Westbrook, and Lewiston*) have implemented public sharps box programs^{5–8} These programs were instituted by entities like city governments and community coalitions, all with the same objective: ***to decrease improperly discarded syringes and medical waste by creating low-barrier, anonymous syringe disposal in community-based settings determined by key stakeholders. Public sharps programs in Maine have demonstrated effectiveness.***
- In the first two months of operation, the City of Portland alone collected more than 1,000 needles from syringe disposal boxes throughout the city. Portland resident and independent harm reduction consultant Zoe Brokos explains the benefit of these programs as multifaceted, “*while these initiatives are often supported by funding specific to substance use and harm reduction, sharps disposal is an issue that impacts the whole community*”⁵



Existing Sharps Disposal Resources

- ✓ Syringe Service Programs
- ✓ Library Sharps Containers
- ✓ Wentworth-Douglass Hospital (*special events*)



Our Ask

Installation of two disposal units*

1. Near the mouth of the Dover Community Trail near the Dover Train Station
2. In or near the lower-level of Henry Law Park

**Locations of units were identified by community stakeholders as high-traffic areas where improperly discarded syringes have historically been found (those where the need has already been demonstrated)*

Our Partners: Their Expertise & Roles

Pilot Project Member	Areas of Expertise	Role in Pilot
Ashley Wright SCPHN	Proposal writing; Fiscal oversight/management; Coordination; Logistics; Public Engagement; Community Organizations	Fiscal Agent; Project Manager; Community Outreach
Palana Hunt-Hawkins NHHRC	Harm Reduction; Community Outreach and Education	Partial Project Funder; Community Outreach; Harm Reduction Education Expert
John Burns & Ashley Lewis SOS Recovery	Harm Reduction; Substance Use Education; Peer Support Services	Staffs & Maintains Disposal Units; Community Outreach; Harm Reduction & Peer-Based Services Experts
Peter Fifield Wentworth-Douglass	Treatment of Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders; Harm Reduction; Hospital Systems; Population Health	Supports Planning & Implementation of Program; Potential Funding Source
Dover Police Department	Community/Municipal Relationships; Municipal Systems and Navigation; Communications	Supports Program Implementation; Facilitates Communication with Municipal/Government Entities
Bill Davis Community Member & Volunteer	Community Engagement; Faith Community Engagement	Supports Planning, Community Outreach and Operations
Adriane Apicelli HRETA	Academic Research; Harm Reduction; Strategic Planning; Project Management	Evaluation: Data Analysis & Report Generation

Evaluation & Sustainability

Once we have demonstrated the cost savings, public health benefits, and efficacy of this community-based sharps disposal pilot, it is our intention to collaborate with additional entities to sustain this project.



Recap: What We Know

- ✓ Community members are concerned about improperly discarded syringes in public spaces
- ✓ Accidental needle-stick injuries can be costly to taxpayers, and so is using the PD to respond to calls about improperly discarded syringes
- ✓ Low-barrier, anonymous syringe disposal is an evidence-based, effective, and low-cost strategy to reduce the number of improperly discarded syringes in our community

Call to Action



1. Support and approve this pilot that will help keep our community safe by providing resources for accessible, anonymous sharps disposal for community members in Dover
2. Assist in the coordination of the installment of the disposal units at the requested locations