

Supervised Injection Site Community Survey Results

Summary

A total of 1690 people completed the survey about Supervised Injection Sites (SIS) from October 5 to 26, 2016.

To be able to answer the survey, people had to:

- Agree to answer the questions;
- Live, work or go to school in Hamilton; and
- Be 16 years of age or older.

Most people who answered the survey:

- Were less than 35 years of age (59%);
- Live in Hamilton (82%) or work in Hamilton (9%);
- Have never used harm reduction services (67%) or know someone who uses harm reduction services (19%);
- Were students (26%) or healthcare workers (24%).

The majority of people (84%) who answered the survey were supportive of the possibility of having an SIS in Hamilton.

- Although most people were supportive of an SIS, there were some concerns about possible harms.
- People also identified some ways to lower possible harms from an SIS.
- The best SIS models for Hamilton were felt to be an integrated site that offers other services (89%) and mobile services that can travel to clients (62%)

Support for a Supervised Injection Site

The majority of people (84%) who answered the survey were supportive of the possibility of having a Supervised Injection Site (SIS) in Hamilton.



Yes	84%	No	10%	Neutral	3%
-----	-----	----	-----	---------	----

3% did not answer

The top reasons an SIS was felt to be helpful were:

- To decrease the risk of injury and death from drug overdose (84%)
- To help lower the risk of diseases like HIV, AIDS and hepatitis C (84%)
- To connect people who use drugs or their family members with health, treatment and social services (80%)
- To lower public drug use on street or in parks (80%)
- To lower used needles on the streets and in parks (80%)
- To increase community safety (64%)
- To decrease work for ambulance and police services (61%)



Notes:

824 people answered this question
People could select multiple responses

People said that the best models for Hamilton to offer supervised injection services were an integrated site that offers other services (89%) and mobile services that can travel to clients (62%)

	Number	%
Integrated site that also offers other services	1366	89%
Mobile service or van that can travel anywhere in the city to meet clients where they are	952	62%
Specialized site without other existing health and harm reduction services	489	32%
I don't know	74	5%
I don't want to answer	2	<1%

1491 people answered this question
People could select multiple responses

Concerns about a SIS

Although most people were supportive of an SIS, there were some concerns about possible harms.

When asked: ‘Do you have any concerns about having an SIS in Hamilton?’ people said:

No = 54%	Yes = 32%	Neutral = 9%	Don't know = 5%
----------	-----------	--------------	-----------------

People's concerns about an SIS:	Number	%
More people who use drugs in the neighbourhood	357	40%
Impact on reputation or image of the community	357	40%
Concerns about property values	347	39%
More drug selling or trafficking in the area	338	38%
Impact on neighbourhood cleanliness or quality of life	298	33%
More drug use	296	33%
Impact on business or profits	243	27%
Concerns about personal safety	235	26%
Concerns about the safety of my children or dependents	197	22%
Other	195	22%
More crime	142	16%
More used needles on the street	85	10%
I'm not sure	77	9%

891 people answered this question

People could select multiple responses

195 people listed concerns raised under the ‘other’ category. These included:

- Concerns about where an SIS would be located
- Safety of people working and attending an SIS and overall neighbourhood safety
- Condoning illegal drug use and not focusing on punishment and/or addiction recovery
- Tax money being used to support an SIS
- Concern the public does not understand the effectiveness of SISs
- Concerns people who use drugs would be stigmatized and/or not use an SIS

People were also asked if they had any ideas to help lower these concerns:

	Number	%
Evaluate the services to see what's working and what's not, share results with the community and take action	1076	72
Give out information about the goals of supervised injection services and how they can help the community	1046	70
Have a community group to work on issues about supervised injection services	698	47
More lighting in the area around supervised injection services	644	43
Ask for feedback from the community (e.g. by having a phone or e-mail address that people can use to contact us)	615	41
More police presence in the area	354	24
Other	242	16

1491 people answered this question

People could select multiple responses

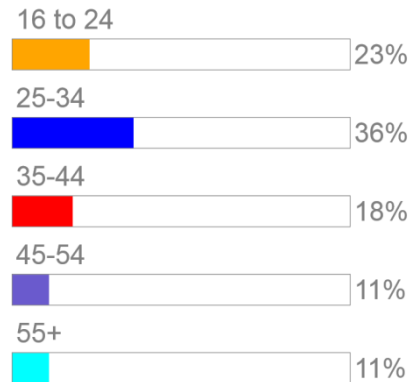
242 people listed ways to lower these concerns raised under the 'other' category.

These included:

- Educate the public about the many financial, health and social benefits of an SIS
- Not increasing police presence in the area
- Locate an SIS with other public/social health services

Who completed the survey

People of all ages answered the survey
- 59% were under 35 years of age



People were asked which of the following represented them. They said:

	Number	%
I have never used harm reduction services	1128	67
I currently use harm reduction services	24	1
I don't use harm reduction services now but I have used them in the past	54	3
Someone I know uses or has used harm reduction services	324	19
I work for an agency that offers harm reduction services	222	13
I work for an agency that supports people who use drugs but does not offer harm reduction services	143	9
I am a health care worker (e.g. nurse, doctor, etc.)	363	22
I am a first responder (Paramedics, Police, Fire)	33	2
I am a student	433	26
I am a business owner	82	5
Other	213	13
I don't want to answer	36	2

1680 people answered this question
People could select multiple responses

The 213 'other' responses were varied. Most were listed as:

- Citizens of Hamilton
- Current/retired social workers, counsellors, healthcare workers/students

People from all wards of the city participated in the survey with the greatest number of people completing the survey coming from wards 1, 2 and 3 (n=844, 61%).

