

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	March 20, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Supervised Injection Site Study Update (BOH17004) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction: Not applicable.

Information:

Background

In December 2016, Council approved \$92,000 in 2017 for a Supervised Injection Site (SIS) needs assessment and feasibility study. Background information on SISs and the capital budget request are contained in report BOH16037 (Supervised Injection Sites: Evidence and Proposed Next Steps, September 19, 2016) and BOH16057 (Supervised Injection Site Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study Capital Budget Request, November 25, 2016).

Recent Developments

The original plans and cost estimates for the study were based on the federal *Respect for Communities Act*. The Act, which passed in June 2015, amended the Controlled Drugs and Substance Act (CDSA) to add 26 criteria that needed to be met in order to

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submit an application to the federal Minister of Health to receive an exemption from the CDSA to operate an SIS (Government of Canada, 2015).

In December 2016, the federal government introduced legislation, in the form of Bill C-37, to repeal the *Respect for Communities Act* and ease the requirements for submitting an application for an SIS. Bill C-37 was introduced to the House of Commons and underwent first reading on December 12, 2016 (Government of Canada, 2016).

If passed, Bill C-37 would reduce the number of requirements to submit an application to operate a supervised injection site from 26 to five. The new proposed requirements as outlined in Bill C-37 include “evidence, submitted in the form and manner determined by the Minister, of the intended public health benefits of the site and information, if any, related to:

- a) The impact of the site on crime rates;
- b) The local conditions indicating a need for the site;
- c) The regulatory structure in place to support the site;
- d) The resources available to support the maintenance of the site; and
- e) Expressions of community support or opposition (Parliament of Canada, 2016).

Implications

Bill C-37 reduces the number of requirements to submit an application for an SIS, including the need to submit letters of opinion from provincial Ministers and the province’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, the need to hold and report on consultations with provincial licensing authorities for physicians and nurses, and detailed documentation at the time of application on all proposed staff members of the site. An economic analysis is also not a requirement to submit an application to operate an SIS, under Bill C-37. With the passage of Bill C-37, these proposed changes will result in a different political and legal landscape for SISs and changes for those organizations looking at the feasibility of SIS in their local jurisdictions. Given that the federal government holds a majority, it is anticipated that the proposed legislative changes will eventually come into effect; Public Health Services (PHS) is proceeding under the assumption that this will occur.

Revised Estimate

With the anticipated SIS application requirement changes in Bill C-37, PHS re-examined the plans for the SIS Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study proposal and made revisions to the projected staff requirements, budget and timeline. The current

estimated budget for the study is now \$62,000 with completion expected in the final quarter of 2017.

PHS has been able to decrease the cost of the study from \$92,000 to \$62,000 by eliminating the costs associated with the following:

- Completing an economic analysis (To provide estimates of the potential financial impacts of an SIS on the health care system, PHS can utilize local data on the health impacts of injection drug use along with cost-effectiveness data from Insite in Vancouver and from the Toronto and Ottawa Supervised Consumption Assessment (TOSCA) study.);
- Decreasing the number of student positions from six to four which reflects the proposed decrease in federal requirements; and
- Decreasing the number of peer researcher hours which reflects the proposed decrease in federal requirements.

The resulting \$30,000 reduced capital requirement will be addressed through the Capital Closing Report and returned to the Unallocated Capital Levy in accordance with the Capital Closing Policy.

Summary

The SIS Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study capital use will be decreased by \$30,000 (\$92,000 approved, reduced to \$62,000) and the timeline to completion of the study and presentation to the Board of Health will be by the end of 2017 (formerly Q1 2018).

REFERENCES

Government of Canada. *Government of Canada announces new comprehensive drug strategy supported by proposed legislative changes*. Retrieved from: <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1168519> [Accessed 2017-Jan-17].

Government of Canada. *Respect for Communities Act*, S.C. 2015, c 22. Retrieved from: http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/AnnualStatutes/2015_22/page-1.html#h-1 [Accessed 2017-Jan-18].

Parliament of Canada. *BILL C-37 An Act to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and to make related amendments to other Acts*. Retrieved from: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=E&Mode=1&DocId=8695970> [Accessed 2017-Jan-16].