Public Health

County of Santa Cruz Syringe Services Program (SSP) Advisory Commission Program Updates

November 08, 2022
Current Activities

Goals: Prevent disease, link to treatment and services, improve public safety

1) Watsonville Exchange Updates
2) CRSP Syringe Litter Reporting
3) Use of Santa Cruz Exchanges by County SSP Participants
4) HRC Conference
5) Community Action Board (CAB) Collaboration
Watsonville Exchange

- We have completed the move of the 1430 Freedom Blvd. Watsonville Exchange from Suite A to Suite B
- We have reduced our HCV/HIV testing days from every Wednesday to the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month
- We will assess returning to every Wednesday if participation in testing offered through the exchange increases
- The SSP continues supporting testing in collaboration with HPHP Streat Medicine at the Salvation Army in Watsonville on Monday afternoons
City of Santa Cruz (CRSP) Syringe Litter Reporting Data

- We are continuing to work with the City of Santa Cruz to improve sharing of CRSP Syringe Litter reports
- We have data from September 2018–August 2022 which covers the # of reports made each month during that span of time
County SSP Exchange Participant Reported use of HRCofSCC/Mobile Exchange

- Surveyed County SSP Participants August–October 2022 to gauge how many of our participants utilized the HRCofSCC’s exchange

- Beginning in late August 2021 we have distributed bilingual flyers Spanish/English (through our exchange) informing our participants of the HRCofSCC mobile service
Survey Results

- **From August 1-October 31, 2022** 164 unique individuals visited our exchanges (Santa Cruz/Watsonville)
- 86.5% (142) participants reported they “do not” use the HRCofSCC/Mobile Exchange
- 13.4% (22) participants reported they “have used” the HRCofSCC/Mobile Exchange
Some anecdotes from conversations about Exchange use

• Participants who visited the exchange without Syringes expressed interest in using the HRCofSCC for syringe access
• Some participants were reluctant to use HRCofSCC delivery services due to concerns about discretion
• Some participants expressed more comfort in visiting our exchange due to its fixed location and known hours
13th National Harm Reduction Coalition Conference
San Juan, Puerto Rico
Putting the Experience to Use

- **CDC Harm Reduction TA Center**
  Sent in request to assist with Policies and Procedures re-write coupled with Volunteer and Staff Training Curriculum

- **Outreach and Mobile Exchange**
  Attended sessions conducted by service providers from Pennsylvania (Lehigh Valley Health Network) and California (Access Support Network)

- **CASEP (California Syringe Exchange Programs)**
  Met with leaders and staff from other CA exchanges and shared information about successes and challenges
Syringe Assessment Project
Assessing and Addressing Barriers to Syringe Access and Disposal in South County
Syringe Assessment Project

• 9-month contract with the Community Action Board (CAB) of Santa Cruz County

• Funding comes from the California Harm Reduction Initiative (CHRI) grant

• **Purpose:**
  
  • Learn about the barriers people who use drugs (PWUD) face in accessing the Syringe Services Program (SSP) in South County;
  
  • Document syringe litter hotspots, patterns of disposal behaviors, and barriers to proper disposal in South County;
  
  • Use insights to inform and tailor SSP and CAB service delivery, education, collaboration, and advocacy in South County.
Syringe Assessment Project

Three primary deliverables:

In-Depth Conversations with PWUD

- At least 20 conversations with open-ended questions about access and experience with the SSP, outreach, and syringe use and disposal
- Being conducted by people with lived experience

A Syringe Litter Assessment

- To take place over a two-week period this winter
- Replicating methods from the 2019 syringe litter assessment

Education and Advocacy

- Based on lessons learned, tailor education and outreach to better serve the South County population
- Share findings with community partners to improve SSP access and disposal of used syringes
Questions?
Thank You