



Housing-based syringe services programs to improve access to safe injection supplies for people who inject drugs in Vancouver, Canada

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Acknowledgements

- Indigenous land
- Study participants
- Study team members and contributors
 - PIs: Ryan McNeil & Will Small
 - Research Coordinator: Cara Ng
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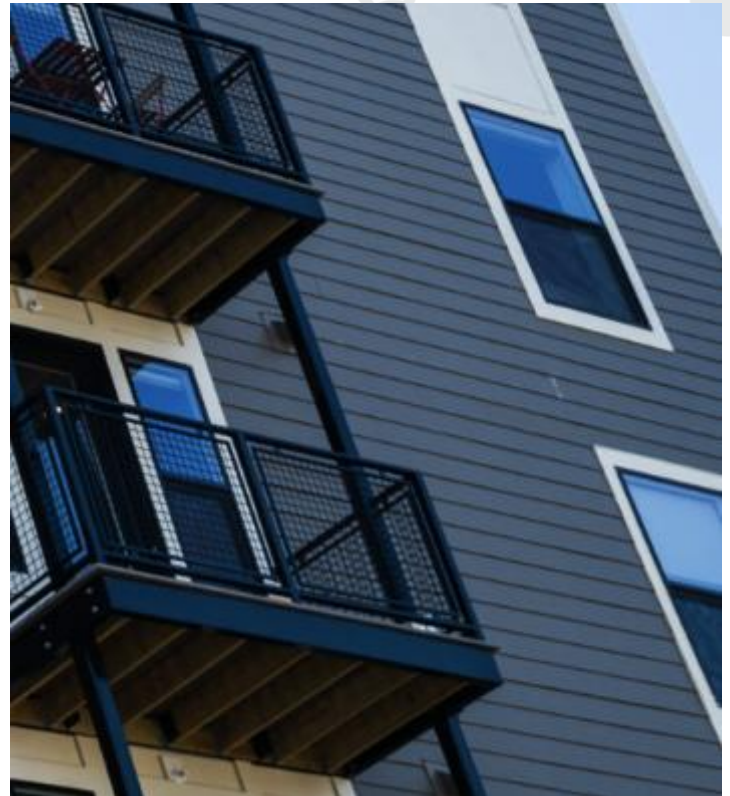
Disclosure

I have no conflict of interest to disclose.

An abstract graphic consisting of several grey lines and circles. The lines intersect at various points, creating a network-like structure. There are several grey circles of varying sizes scattered across the right side of the slide, some connected to the lines and others not.

Harm reduction in housing environments

- Shape injecting drug-related risks and harms, e.g. transmission of HIV, hepatitis C and other blood-borne infections
- Represent a critical implementation setting for syringe services programs (SSPs)



Study aim

- To examine the role of housing-based SSPs in distributing sterile syringes to PWID in Vancouver, Canada.

Methods

- Semi-structured, in-depth interviews (n=26)
- January to March 2020
- Participant eligibility
 - 18 years of age or older
 - Live in Greater Vancouver
 - Injected drugs in the last 30 days

1. Available when and where most needed

There's no shortage of getting your drug paraphernalia from some hotel or wherever. That's easy to access, you know. Then we don't have to go running around looking for a needle. That's just downstairs at the front door.

(56 years old, Indigenous, man)

2. Fear of law enforcement

I don't usually carry them [syringes] on me. [...] I don't want to get arrested. [...] I just go to the building, that way I'm not carrying on me.

(40 years old, white, man)

3. Anti-drug user stigma

Most people do care, you know. What if these people know I'm using. That's the only problem I think people have going in there. They don't want other people to see them going in there.

(62 years old, white, man)

3. Anti-drug user stigma

It's safe housing, and they have products there to use, safe injection, if need be. And the women that work there [...] They are very aware of what goes on, you know, and on the streets there. They have experience themselves, so everybody feels comfortable.

(58 years old, white, woman)

Key takeaways

- Access to SSPs remained constrained for some PWID due to contextual barriers
- Housing-based SSPs are an important approach to improving access to sterile syringes

Thank you!

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