



Submitted to the clerk
at the 9/6/17 HHS
Committee meeting

HAND DELIVERED

September 6, 2017

King County Council Members
Council Chair Joe McDermott (District 8)
Council Vice Chair Rod Dembowski (District 1)
Council Vice Chair Reagan Dunn (District 9)
Claudia Balducci (District 6)
Larry Gossett (District 2)
Jeanne Kohl-Welles (District 4)
Kathy Lambert (District 3)
Pete von Reichbauer (District 7)
Dave Upthegrove (District 5)
516 Third Ave, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Please refrain from expending or encumbering funds on drug consumption sites until after the special election has been ratified February 2018

Dear Esteemed King County Council members,

Speak Out Seattle urges members of the King County Council to refrain from **expending or encumbering funds for registration, licensing, construction, acquisition, transfer, authorization, use, or operation of supervised drug consumption sites until after the certification of the results of a special election to approve and ratify or reject Initiative 27.**

Speak Out Seattle volunteers collected signatures for Initiative 27 all over Seattle. We understand from face-to-face discussions that **citizens want a voice in deciding whether or not drug consumption sites should be allowed in King County.** SOS supports King County Initiative 27 to make drug consumption sites illegal in King County. Substance abuse disorder is a **non-partisan** issue that affects the entire county.

We are concerned that risks surrounding drug consumption sites have not been addressed, including federal forfeiture of properties, the complexity of interaction with the Drug Enforcement Agency, U.S. Department of Justice, and the current administration, and liability and licensing of medical professionals involved. We again request that King County Council members request information from King County Public Health on the following risks from Page 11 and Page 13 of a February 28, 2017 memorandum from

Catherine Lester, City of Seattle Human Services Dept to Councilmembers Bagshaw, Harrell, Burgess, and Johnson regarding: **Analysis of the Implementation of Task Force Recommendations (219-1-B-1-2017)**, *"Intent to serve all participants, non-discrimination, protocols for: minors, pregnant women, first-time injectors, those who arrive with children/minors, those who may be overly intoxicated/drug impaired/physically or mentally ill."*

Those who knowingly or unknowingly consume fentanyl, carfentanyl, and drugs that are designed and deployed into the local drug-using population represents risks of injury, overdose and death within the facilities to both drug users and to treatment providers.

SOS points out to the King County Council that the sites themselves draw out substance use disorder over an extended period of time, causing damage to brain and body.

SOS believes that people across the State of Washington should have equal access to public health services. Hyper-concentrating resources in specific urban locations does not help people who are suffering from substance use disorder across a wide geographic area, in suburbs and rural areas.

Naloxone distribution, enhanced needle distribution, and access to effective treatment including medicated assisted treatment should be the priorities, as stated in, *Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health November 2016*, Under Strategies to Reduce Harm, page 4-10: *"...outreach and education programs, needle/syringe exchange programs, overdose prevention education, and access to naloxone to reverse potentially lethal opioid overdose."*

Thank you kindly for your consideration.

Sincerely,

(electronically signed)

Jalair Box
Co-chair, Addiction and Recovery Committee
Speak Out Seattle!
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Speakoutseattle.com

cc:

Dr. John Wiesman, Secretary of Health, State of Washington
Christy Curwick Hoff, Washington State Board of Health
Pete Mayer, President, WSALPHO



Say NO to Drug Consumption Sites!

WHAT IS A DRUG CONSUMPTION SITE?

It is a place people inject, snort, or smoke illegal narcotic substances, including heroin and methamphetamines.

Two pilot drug consumption sites are proposed for a 3-year pilot by King County and the City of Seattle. In King County they are called, "Community Health Engagement Locations."

WHY IS SOS OPPOSED?

1. **Most overdoses would occur outside these sites.** One site would monitor only 0.3% of total injections in King County.¹
2. **Diverts limited resources** away from detox and treatment.
3. **Ineffective** -- Only 4% pass through detox at InSite in Vancouver, B.C.²
4. **More effective harm reduction methods exist**, such as enhanced needle distribution.
5. Heroin and Meth are **illegal**. Drug consumption sites are **illegal**. Drug dealing and crime is **hard on the local community**.

¹ In King County, 23,000 IV drug users inject 69,000 times per day. One drug consumption site is expected to monitor 200 injections per day (0.3% of total injections).

² Vancouver Coastal Health InSite User Statistics 2015 <http://www.vch.ca/Documents/Insite-user-statistics-2015.pdf>

Note: InSite does not share treatment statistics.

WHAT DOES SOS SUPPORT?

SOS supports evidence-based prevention, detox, and treatment. Harm reduction methods we support include outreach, needle distribution, wound care, counseling, and access to naloxone to reverse potentially lethal opioid overdose.

DO DRUG CONSUMPTION SITES REDUCE HIV/HCV?

European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction December 2016

Harm Reduction interventions for Opioid injectors Best Practices Portal:

"There is: 1) insufficient evidence to support the effectiveness of drug consumption rooms in reducing HIV infections, 2) insufficient evidence to support the effectiveness of drug consumption rooms in reducing HCV infections."

FURTHER READING

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) July 2016

Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health November 2016

Finding Solutions to the Prescription Opioid and Heroin Crisis: A Road Map for States July 2016 The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices

A Prescription for Action: Local Leadership in Ending the Opioid Crisis November 2016

A joint report from the National Association of Counties and the National League of Cities

In progress 2017-2018: **Shatterproof Substance Use Disorder Treatment Task Force.**

See also *safe injection sites, drug consumption rooms, supervised injection sites*

