

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Public Health	(2) MEETING DATE 7/15/2014	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Penny Borenstein / 781-5519	
(4) SUBJECT Submittal of a Report on the San Luis Obispo Syringe Exchange Program (SLOSEP). All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive and file the Report on the San Luis Obispo Syringe Exchange Program (SLOSEP).			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? N/A
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ___) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. <u>30 min.</u>)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u>9/6/2011</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Geoff O'Quest, Administrative Analyst			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jeff Hamm, Health Agency Director
Penny Borenstein, MD, MPH, Health Officer

DATE: July 15, 2014

SUBJECT: Submittal of a Report on the San Luis Obispo Syringe Exchange Program (SLOSEP). All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive and file the Report on the San Luis Obispo Syringe Exchange Program (SLOSEP).

DISCUSSION

On March 7, 2006, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Health Agency to develop a local Disease Prevention Demonstration Project (DPDP), as authorized by Senate Bill (SB) 1159, allowing pharmacists to sell ten (10) or fewer hypodermic needles or syringes. The Board also authorized the development of a syringe exchange program that exchanges used syringes for clean syringes, as authorized by Assembly Bill (AB) 547. The implementation and evaluation plan was approved by the Board on July 17, 2006.

The DPDP was significantly altered on January 1, 2012, when SB 41 (Yee, Chapter 738, Statutes of 2011) went into effect as part of statewide efforts to reduce the spread of HIV and other blood-borne pathogens. The new law removed restrictions on pharmacy practices to allow nonprescription sale of syringes (NPSS) in licensed pharmacies throughout the state.

- Pharmacies may now sell up to 30 syringes without a prescription to adults 18 years of age or older for disease prevention purposes.
- Pharmacies may provide NPSS under their current licenses; they are not required to register with the County or State Health Department in order to provide NPSS.
- Pharmacies may sell up to 30 syringes per transaction.
- Pharmacists are not required to keep a log of NPSS sales; the log book requirement was removed from state statute in 2004.
- Pharmacists are not required to check customer identification in order to provide NPSS.
- Adults anywhere in the state are now permitted to possess up to 30 syringes for personal use.

While the DPDP has changed as a result of SB 41, the SLOSEP continues as before, under the auspices of SLO Bangers, who have been operating the program since 2007. The AIDS Support Network acts as the fiscal agent for SLO Bangers. The SLOSEP operates out of the Public Health Department in San Luis Obispo on Wednesday nights from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, and the first Saturday of each month. No problems at the site or in the neighborhood have been reported. Individuals are given safety containers to dispose of their used syringes, as well as information and brochures on drug treatment options, and safe syringe use. An additional benefit is the ability to provide onsite HIV and hepatitis C virus (HCV) testing for participants.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

San Luis Obispo County's Health Agency staff works collaboratively with SLO Bangers, which operates the syringe exchange program, and AIDS Support Network, their fiscal agent. Other collaborative partners include County Drug &

Alcohol Services, Cal Poly Department of Biological Sciences, the California Association of Syringe Exchange Programs, and the North American Syringe Exchange Network. An annual SLOSEP report is presented to the HIV Prevention, Advocacy and Care Consortium.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

SLO Bangers have received grants from the County Preventive Health Grants Program for the past several years to operate the program. The program is also staffed completely by volunteers who keep operating costs low. The Public Health Department provides a free location for their use, and also disposes of their medical waste. This item has no impact to the Department's adopted level of General Fund support.

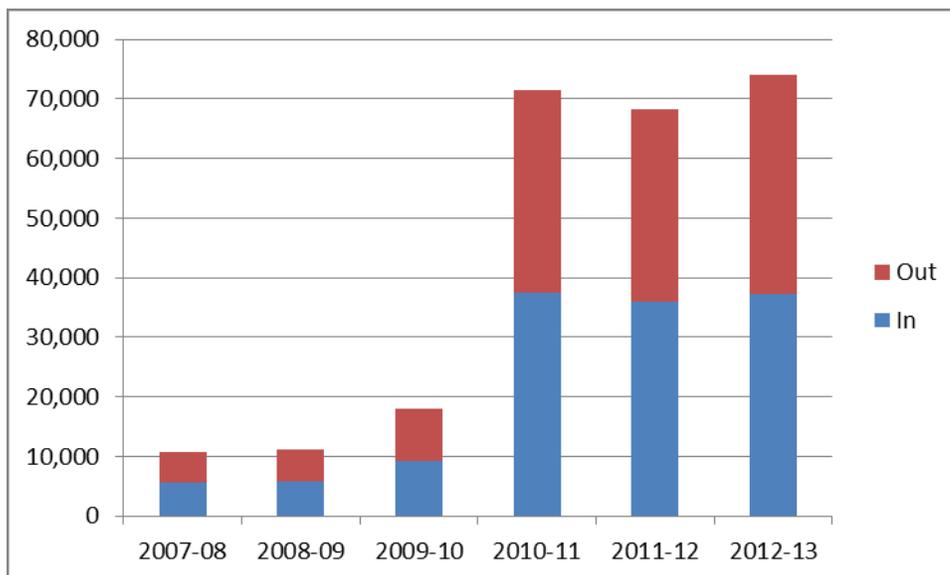
RESULTS

The overarching goal of the program is the reduction of blood-borne HIV and viral hepatitis incidence in San Luis Obispo County.

National statistics cite approximately 15% of newly diagnosed HIV cases and more than half of all cases of hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection are attributable to injection drug use. Though case numbers at the level of San Luis Obispo County do not allow for the same breakdown of causes of spread for these diseases, it stands to reason that the same risk factors exist in our county as throughout the United States. Prevention of additional cases locally can also be inferred from the more than 200 published studies to date that have noted the efficacy of syringe exchange programs in the reduction of HIV and HCV transmission. Among them, a sentinel 2002 study compared HIV prevalence rates in 103 cities. In the cities with syringe exchange, prevalence of HIV dropped 18.6% annually. In cities without syringe exchange, HIV prevalence increased on average 8.1% every year (World Health Organization Policy Brief, 2004).

The crude rate for AIDS incidence has generally decreased for California, as well as San Luis Obispo, since the peak period 1994-96. In SLO County, there were 12 new cases diagnosed in the community in 2007, 5 new cases in 2008, 8 new cases in 2009, 11 new cases in 2010, 7 new cases in 2011, 3 new cases in 2012, and 9 in 2013.

The graph below displays the number of syringes disbursed and collected locally from FY 2007-08 to FY 2012-13. In each year of the program, slightly more syringes were collected than were disbursed. The difference in the number of syringes collected to those disbursed is an indication that fewer used syringes are circulating because of access to the SLOSEP.



As the graph indicates, it appears that the program has leveled as far as syringes in and out. It took several years for the program to gain the trust of the community but now the program seems accepted and is accessed regularly. The needle exchanges represent 434 unduplicated individuals (a 10% increase over last year), of which 94 were new to the program

this year. Demographics include male, 68% and female, 32%; race/ethnicity includes White, 77%; Hispanic/Latino, 9%; Asian/Pacific Islander, 7%; Native American, 5%; and African American, 1%. It is also important to note that all clients are offered HIV and hepatitis C testing, and all clients are counseled and referred for substance abuse services.

This program supports the County's overall goal of a Healthy Community, "to ensure all people in our community enjoy healthy, successful and productive lives, and have access to the basic necessities".