



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 9/23/2025

File #: 25-1074

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Public Health

Agenda Section: Departmental

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Report on the County of Humboldt Department of Health and Human Services - Public Health Branch Syringe Services Program

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file a report on the Syringe Services Program by the County of Humboldt Health Officer.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: Safe & Healthy Communities

Strategic Plan Category: 1002- Remove barriers to quality healthcare

DISCUSSION:

The County of Humboldt Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) - Public Health Branch (PHB) Syringe Services Program (SSP) or Needle Exchange Program are recommended as a public health best practice by the Centers for Disease Control, the California Department of Public Health, and the World Health Organization. These programs are a key component of a comprehensive harm reduction strategy, which aims to reduce the negative health and social impacts associated with drug use. SSP offer access to services such as sterile needles, injection and non-injection supplies, safer sex supplies, HIV and Hepatitis C testing, health education, overdose prevention education and Naloxone (Narcan), all of which are free of charge to participants. Operating in California since the late 1980s, there are now nearly 100 SSPs across the state, playing a critical role in preventing the spread of infectious diseases and reducing overdose deaths.

In 2000, the County of Humboldt Board of Supervisors approved syringe exchange services by partner agencies, and in 2012, the Board approved the DHHS - PHB SSP through its mobile outreach program. This program is operated by DHHS - PHB North Coast AIDS Project Program. This program is an essential component of County of Humboldt Board Strategic Plan to support "Safe and Healthy Communities" by "removing barriers to quality healthcare" and the County of Humboldt Community Health Improvement Plan Priority Area "Behavioral Health - Substance Use." This program is an essential strategy for reducing the harm of drug use to individuals, families and communities. Benefits include the prevention of disease, injury, and death associated with drug use, as well as addressing other drug-related harm by providing referrals to treatment.

Current regulations require that the Health Officer update the Board on the status of the DHHS - PHB SSP biennially. The full written report is attached and satisfies state regulatory requirements to maintain DHHS - PHB syringe services in the County of Humboldt.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

File #: 25-1074

Public Health Fund (1175) North Coast AIDS Project (437)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact to reporting on the SSP.

STAFFING IMPACT:

There is no staffing impact to reporting on the SSP.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2025 Health Officer Biannual SSP Report

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: 07/07/2020; 4/25/2023

File No.: 20-777; 23-422