



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 7/7/2020

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File #: 20-777

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** DHHS: Public Health

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

Report on the DHHS - Public Health Syringe Services Program (SSP)

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file a report on the SSP by the Humboldt County Health Officer and Public Health Director.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Public Health Fund

**DISCUSSION:**

Syringe services programs (SSPs) are recommended as public health best practice supported by the CDC, California Department of Public Health, and World Health Organization. Syringe services programs have been operating in California since the late 1980s, with now more than 56 operating in the state. Syringe services programs, which have also been referred to as needle exchange programs and syringe exchange programs, provide access to sterile needles and other injection supplies free of cost and facilitate safe disposal of used needles, and act as a point of access to health education and help for people who inject drugs. These programs prevent the spread of HIV, viral hepatitis and other blood-borne diseases such as bacterial infections like streptococcus (strep) and MRSA (methicillin resistant staphylococcus) among people who inject drugs, their partners and their children.

In 2000, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors approved syringe exchange services by partner agencies. In 2012, the Board approved DHHS-Public Health's Syringe Services Program through mobile outreach. The DHHS-Public Health SSP is an essential component of Humboldt County's strategy for reducing the harms of drug use on individuals, families, and communities. Benefits include the prevention of disease, injury, and death associated with drug use, as well as strengthened collaborations for addressing other drug related harm including referral to treatment. SSPs also provide first aid and basic supplies, such as clean socks and bottled water to meet the needs of homeless clients.

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

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact to reporting on the SSP.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by protecting vulnerable populations, and creating opportunities for improved safety and health.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Report on the DHHS - PH Syringe Services Program

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: I-4

Meeting of: 05/22/18

File No.: 18-455; 20-777