

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Agenda Number:
Prepared on: 8/5/03
Department Name: Public Health Department
Department No.: 041
Agenda Date: 8/26/03
Placement: Departmental
Estimate Time: 15 minutes
Continued Item: NO
If Yes, date from:

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Roger E. Heroux
Director

STAFF CONTACT: Dan Reid, Program Administrator, HIV/AIDS Programs
681-5421

SUBJECT: Report on the Syringe Exchange and Education Program

Recommendation(s):

That the Board of Supervisors:

Receive and accept an oral presentation on the Syringe Exchange and Education Program in the County of Santa Barbara.

Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:

The recommendation is primarily aligned with:

Goal No. II: A Safe and Healthy Community in Which to Live, Work, and Visit.

Goal No. VII: A Community that Fosters the Safety and Well-Being of Families and Children.

Executive Summary and Discussion:

In 1999, the State of California enacted legislation allowing local governments to legalize syringe exchange programs within their jurisdictions. On April 27, 1999, your Board unanimously supported this legislation authorizing syringe/needle exchange projects (SEP) in Santa Barbara County. AB 136 protects local jurisdictions and their authorized contractors from criminal prosecution for distributing syringes and hypodermic needles in SEPs authorized pursuant to a "declaration of a local emergency due to the existence of a critical local public health crisis."

The primary purpose of a SEP is to reduce the spread of infectious diseases, including Hepatitis B Virus (HBV), Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), among injection drug users (IDU), their sexual partners, their children, and the public at large. A SEP also incorporates strategies to address both drug use and sexual risk behaviors.

On June 6, 2000, your Board approved Resolution #00-193 proclaiming the existence of a local emergency relative to the transmission of HBV, HCV, and HIV among IDUs, their partners, and their children through contaminated needles. The resolution states that the local emergency shall continue in effect until it is terminated by the Board of Supervisors, and that the need for the proclamation of a local emergency be reviewed every fourteen (14) days, as required by Section 8630 of the Government Code. The resolution also authorized Pacific Pride Foundation as the agent of the County, to operate a SEP.

As of August 26, 2003, the need for the declaration of a local emergency continues because of the ongoing threat to the health and safety of the residents of Santa Barbara County from the transmission of blood-borne viral infections.

At this time, the Public Health Department is requesting your Board receive and accept an oral presentation from the County of Santa Barbara's Health Officer and the agent and operator of the SEP, Pacific Pride Foundation.

Mandates and Service Levels:

This is a non-mandated program, however, the California Health and Safety Code Sections 101040 and 11364.7 allow for the Board of Supervisors to take any preventive measure that may be necessary to protect and preserve the public health from any public health hazard during any local emergency, as defined by Sections 8558 and 8630 of the Government Code.

This recommendation does not result in increases service levels for the County.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

This action will not impact the County's General Fund. Pacific Pride Foundation will operate the SEP through private donations at no cost to the County. The Public Health Department does not plan to operate any SEPs and will not incur any increased cost.

This action does not result in the need for additional facilities.

Special Instructions:

Please return one (1) copy of a Minute Order to the Department, attn: Pam Stowe.

Concurrence:

Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services
Santa Barbara County Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board