



Baltimore City Syringe Exchange Program

Derrick Hunt
Program Director

Lisa Parker, MHS, CPHE
Assistant Program Manager

Syringe Exchange Missions Statement

The Baltimore City Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) is a harm reduction and prevention program for intravenous drug users.

The Program is an evidence-based intervention designed to reduce the spread of HIV, Hepatitis C, and other bloodborne infections. These services are provided to the community without judgment and are free of charge.



Syringe Exchange Goal

To provide culturally competent syringe exchange to all of our clients regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, drug of choice or reason for need.



Brief History of the Syringe Exchange in Baltimore

The Baltimore City Health Department Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) began in 1994 as a response to increase HIV transmission due to injection drug use.

After years of debate, then Mayor Kurt Schmoke, Health Commissioner Peter Beilenson and Maryland Attorney General Joseph Curran , Jr. backed the plan to spend \$50,000.00 in city funds for a three year pilot needle exchange program.



Syringe Exchange Budget

SEP has a budget of 1.2 million dollars, 75% of which comes from general funds and 25% comes from state funds.

While the ban on federal funds for syringe exchange has been lifted, we currently do not receive federal funding.



The HIV Epidemic in Baltimore and the Impact of Syringe Exchange

IDU HIV/AIDS transmission in 1994 was almost 60.4%, Today it is less than 8%.

¹ Unless otherwise specified, data is from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (MD DHMH). *Baltimore City HIV/AIDS Epidemiological Profile, Fourth Quarter 2014*

² Source: MD DHMH. *HIV in Maryland*.



Syringe Exchange Site Selection

Generally all SEP sites are located in areas with known drug traffic, and usage. When selecting a site the following factors are considered:

- Sites are always within Baltimore City limits
- Sites are implemented based upon approval from local home and business owner associations.
- SEP staff attend neighborhood home association meetings to ask for community support and buy-in.



Syringe Exchange Site Selections

- The Baltimore City Police are made aware of new sites and outreach activities
- Staff safety is a high priority; SEP sites are in well lit areas with safe exposure to regular foot traffic
- Sites may be temporarily relocated if there are safety concerns or police activity



Site Information

The Syringe Exchange Program services 14 unique sites throughout Baltimore City. Some sites are duplicated due to the high volume of drug trafficking in certain communities. Giving us a total of 23 sites per week.

Services are provided during traditional and non-traditional hours of operation Monday thru Saturday totaling 56.7 hours of weekly service.



Syringe Exchange Enrollment

The only eligibility criterion to become a SEP client is that the individual must be 18 years old and be an injection drug user. There is no requirement to show an injection site.

New clients are given a brief orientation about SEP, and trained in overdose response and given naloxone as a part of the enrollment process.

Each client is given an SEP participant I.D. card that verifies their enrollment in the program.



Client Demographics

FY 2016

- 63% male and 34% female
- Average SEP client is more than 40 years old
- 46% are African American
- 49% are Caucasian
- 5% other including Hispanic and Asian decent



Client Demographics – FY 2016

Total # of clients	3,091
• # of new clients	1,268
• # of returning clients	18,432
Number of syringes distributed	1,225,858
Number of syringes returned	907,191
Number of condoms distributed	70,388
Number of condom demonstrations performed	1,024
Number of Safety Kits distributed	18,432
Number of Wound Care Kits distributed	246
Number of clients referred to drug treatment	140
Number of clients tested for Syphilis	341



Syringe Exchange Staff

- 5 full-time - Community Health Educators
- 2 part-time - Community Health Educators
- 2 part-time - Peer Educators
- Management Team - Program Director, Program Manager and Assistant Program Manager
- Volunteers / Interns from a variety of medical disciplines.



Legal Importance of Syringe Exchange I.D Card

The SEP I.D cards protects clients from the drug paraphernalia law and possession of trace amounts of illegal drugs when they are going to and/or coming back from the SEP van.

The Baltimore City Health Department and the Baltimore City Police Department have a Memorandum of Understanding. All SEP clients are exempt from paraphernalia laws in Baltimore City.



Exchange I.D. Card

Baltimore City Health Department
1001 E. Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Maryland State Authorized Needle Exchange Program Participant Card

Participant Name: _____ NEP# _____

This card has been issued to a participant in a hypodermic needle exchange program authorized by the State of Maryland under Senate Bill 402. The participant is exempt from prosecution under drug paraphernalia and controlled paraphernalia restrictions against possession of hypodermic needles and syringes within the City of Baltimore.

This immunity does not extend to redistribution of needles and syringes outside the Needle Exchange Program; any activities not authorized or approved by the NEP; or the possession of needles and syringes outside of Baltimore City limits.



Services Provided

- Syringe and other safe injection distribution
- Overdose Prevention and response education
- Health and harm reduction education
- Wound care
- Vaccines (Flu/Hepatitis A & B)
- HIV and Syphilis testing
- Reproductive health
- Male and Female condom distribution
- MTA disability bus passes
- ID assistance (i.e. birth certificates, driver license, social security cards)



Drug Treatment Referrals

- First come, first served. No waiting list is held and clients must come to the van for a referral
- Methadone and suboxone treatment are available, but staff will assist with other placements
- Most treatment programs require legal ID and assistance is available to obtain ID if needed
- FY '16: 100 referrals made (downward trend)



Staying Alive Overdose Response Program

The Staying Alive Program (SAP) began in 2004 to address Baltimore's overdose problem.

- Teaches individuals how to **identify** a potential overdose, **steps to take to reverse** an overdose and how to **administer the life saving drug** naloxone.
- After each training and during registration clients receive naloxone

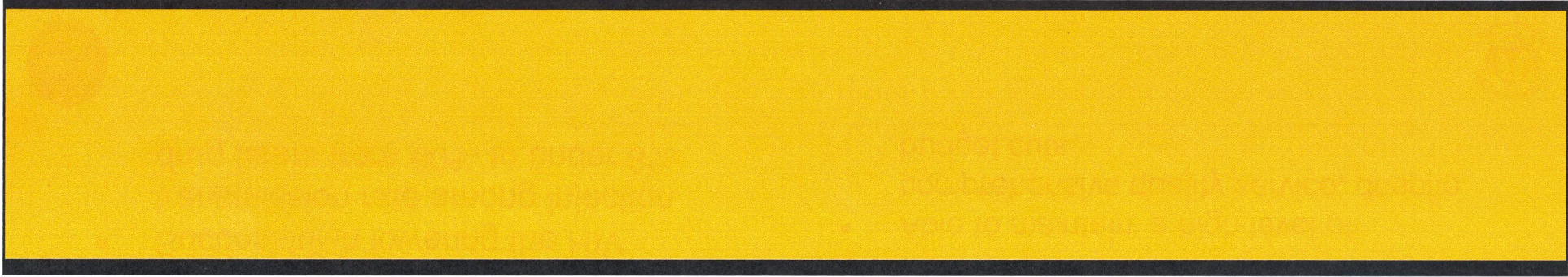
During FY16, 4,400 individuals were trained in overdose response (13,330 were SEP clients), 3,675 naloxone kits were distributed and more than 500 reversals were reported.



Syringe Exchange Successes

- Advocated for public policy change (one for one exchange to a needs based distribution model)
- In FY 16 we distributed 1.2 million syringes
- 907,000 syringes returned (76% return rate)
- Advocated for overdose response and “Good Samaritan” law
- Successful in lowering the HIV transmission rate among injection drug users from 60% to under 8%
- Overdose Awareness Day 466 individuals received overdose response trainings.
- Implemented electronic health records
- Develop wound care services
- Implemented DOT (Directly Observed Therapy for vulnerable HIV+ clients)
- Transitioned from anonymous to a confidential based program
- Able to maintain a high level of comprehensive quality service, despite budget cuts.





Derrick Hunt – Program Director
derrick.hunt@baltimorecity.gov

Jeffrey Long, Sr., MPA- Program Manager
jeffrey.long@baltimorecity.gov

Lisa Parker, MHS, CPHE- Assistant Program Manager
lisa.parker@baltimorecity.gov

3000 Druid Park Drive, Suite 2-C
Baltimore, MD 21215
Office: 410-396-3731
Fax: 410-233-2633

