

PROUD

OUT LOUD!

Volume 9: May 2015

Supervised Injection

PROUD OUT LOUD is a newsletter produced to communicate preliminary research findings from the PROUD Study, as well as relevant information for our community members and partner organizations. This current issue covers data from two different studies, the **PROUD Cohort study** gathered from 858 participants, and a sub-study conducted in the summer of 2014, which interviewed 136 people who had injected drugs in the last 30 days.



May 7th is **International Harm Reduction Day**. It is a day when we recognize the need for life saving services for people who use drugs.

Supervised Injection Services provide a place where people can bring their previously obtained drugs to inject in the presence of staff who are trained to respond to adverse drug using events and to provide easy access to health care, counselling and drug treatment.

These services prevent overdose death, reduce public drug use and change behaviours associated with the spread of disease amongst participants.

The first injection room opened in Switzerland in 1986 and there are currently over 90 operating around the world. Vancouver, Canada has two: Insite and Dr. Peter Centre.

From March 2013 to January 2014, the **PROUD Cohort study** recruited a total of 858 people who use drugs to participate in a survey and HIV point-of-care testing.

72% of total male participants and **83%** of total female participants think there should be supervised injection services (SIS) in Ottawa.

Among the participants who would use a SIS:

- **39%** had used a needle that had been used by someone else.
- **91%** had ever been homeless
- **10%** self-reported testing positive for HIV
- **48%** of male participants and **59%** of female participants said they would use a SIS **daily**.
- **92%** of participants think there should be health services available at the site.
- Top locations participants would like a supervised injection service to be available:
 - **70%** Byward Market/Lowertown
 - **19%** Centretown
 - **9%** Vanier

In the summer of 2014 a follow up study was conducted with a sample of **people who had injected drugs in the last 30 days**. Of the 136 participants in the sub-study:

66% of participants had injected in public

58% of participants felt unsafe due to the location where they were currently injecting drugs.

84% of participants would use a Supervised injection site (SIS)

- **99%** would use a SIS if it was located at 216 Murray street
- **83%** would use a SIS if it was located at Sandy Hill Community Health Centre (SHCHC)

Findings are consistent with the Toronto Ottawa Safer Consumption Assessment (**TOSCA**) (2012) study, which recommended 2 locations for SIS in Ottawa.



The PROUD Cohort study is a community-based research project that examines HIV risk among people who use drugs in Ottawa. Participants who reported using injection drugs or smoking crack cocaine in the past 12 months were enrolled through a specific, street-based recruitment strategy. We enrolled a representative sample of participants who completed a comprehensive questionnaire and were offered HIV Point-of-Care testing. The survey and strategy was developed by people who use(d) drugs and their allies.

Bill C-2 the “Respect for Communities Act” amends the Controlled Drug and Substances Act in order to create a process for agencies to apply for an exemption so they can open supervised injection services. However the Bill creates 23 new requirements which will make it more difficult for agencies to complete. Bill C-2 is opposed by over 120 civil society organizations, including: the Canadian AIDS Society, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Canadian Public Health Association, Canadian Nurses Association, Canadian Medical Association and the Government of Quebec.

Of the 858 **PROUD Cohort study** participants:

71% of participants have known someone close to them who has died of overdose

25% of participants took a hit that they knew would put them under

44% of participants had overdosed

- **12%** of participants were on the street when they last overdosed
- **51%** of participants reported that an ambulance was not called the last time they overdosed.

Special thanks to our:

Community Advisory Committee members: Jenn B., Tiffany R., Ranji M., Tyler P., Dave P., Christine L., Sherri M., Brad R., Nick, B.

PROUD participants for supporting our project and sharing their stories

Community Partners: DUAL, Ottawa Public Health, OASIS, Ottawa Inner City Health, ACO, Shepherds of Good Hope, Carlington CHC, & Michel Samson (Dept. Family Medicine U of O)

Funding received from: SRC CIHR (#HCP-97106), The Ottawa Hospital, Department of Medicine and Division of Infectious Diseases, Ontario HIV Treatment Network.

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