Reducing Risk in Sin City

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Las Vegas may be famous for its slot machines, but now some of its vending machines are making headlines. City health officials recently installed the nation's first public syringe-dispensing machines. By providing easy access to clean needles, safer-sex kits and first aid supplies, they aim to reduce the risk of HIV, hepatitis C and other blood-borne infections among injection drug users. "The program also hopes to keep used and discarded needles out of the community by providing sharps containers as well as sharps disposal bins for people to return their used items," says Chelsi Cheatom, the program manager at Trac-B Exchange, a harm reduction center that helped develop the machines. As they say in Vegas: Jackpot!

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