Syringe Services Program Decreased Injection-Drug-Use Risks in Indiana Town

Scott County, Indiana, recently saw a major outbreak of HIV and hepatitis C among people who inject drugs.

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People who inject drugs (PWID) in Scott County, Indiana, the nonurban site of a major recent outbreak of HIV and hepatitis C virus (HCV) among this population, greatly reduced drug-use behaviors that increase the risk of transmission of these viruses after the establishment of a syringe services program (SSP) in the small town, Medical Xpress reports.

Publishing their findings in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes, researchers conducted a study of 148 Scott County residents attending the local SSP, or 62 percent of those using the program.

During a median 10 weeks of follow-up (and a range of 1 to 23 weeks), the proportion of those reporting sharing syringes to inject drugs decreased from 18 percent to 2 percent; sharing syringes in order to divide drugs declined from 19 percent to 4 percent; and sharing other injection equipment such as cookers declined from 24 percent to 5 percent. The study participants' median number of uses of the same syringe declined from 2 to 1 during the follow-up period.

While responses to questions about the frequency of drug injection were mixed, overall there was no apparent change.

To read the Medical Xpress article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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