

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 5/29/2023 3:59:14 PM
Subject: Council resolution - Supervised Consumption Spaces (RTS 15619)
Attachments: COV Supervised Consumption Spaces - Conditional Letter of Support May 2023.pdf

Good afternoon Mayor and Council;

Dr. Mark Lysyshyn, Deputy Chief Medical Health Officer (MHO) with VCH, has provided the attached letter to Council in response to the above-referenced report. The report is included on the Standing Committee agenda for May 31, 2023 and recommends non-enforcement of the Health Bylaw to enable a pilot of indoor supervised inhalation services at a small number of supervised consumption sites.

In his letter, Dr. Lysyshyn confirms conditional support for the non-enforcement resolution in recognition that safe inhalation spaces prevent overdose deaths associated with the inhalation of drugs. His conditional support rests on Council mandating the approval of MHO for specific applications to be covered by the non-enforcement resolution.

Dr. Lysyshyn's statutory role as a Medical Health Officer includes advice to local governments. Council is not obligated to follow that advice.

To confirm, staff have consulted with the MHO on this report, and do so on a regular basis. Staff have also consulted staff from the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and received support with no objections/conditions.

We understand that the BC Centre for Excellent is not opposed to the evaluation that Dr. Lysyshyn is recommending for the Hope to Health site.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me or Sandra Singh at sandra.singh@vancouver.ca

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθkəy̓əm (Musqueam), Snw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.



Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer

#800 - 601 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4C2
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May 25, 2023

City of Vancouver

507 West Broadway

Vancouver, BC V5Z 0B4

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Proposed Motion to not enforce Health By-laws that prohibit indoor smoking specifically at supervised consumption sites

I am reaching out to you in my capacity as Medical Health Officer for the City of Vancouver to provide my conditional support for a motion that is presented to Council and up for decision on May 31st. This motion seeks approval to temporarily suspend the enforcement of the Health By-law ban on indoor smoking for a two-year period, specifically at federally approved supervised consumption sites in Vancouver. The purpose of non-enforcement is to enable a pilot of indoor supervised inhalation services at a small number of supervised consumption sites, with the aim of reducing harms and death from drug overdose. It is important to note that these sites require both Health Canada approval and compliance with applicable WorkSafe BC requirements.

The escalating crisis stemming from the toxic illicit drug supply has prompted us to explore diverse interventions that can mitigate the impact on the health, safety, and well-being of Vancouver residents. Overdose deaths have become alarmingly common, with an average of six lives lost every day in British Columbia. Drug toxicity has emerged as the leading cause of unnatural death, second only to cancers in terms of years of life lost.

In this context, supervised consumption services play a crucial role in preventing these harms. It is equally important to extend these services to include supervised inhalation services, considering the increasing number of overdose deaths associated with inhalation of drugs in our region.

However, my endorsement for the motion comes with a necessary condition:

1. That the motion put forth by the City of Vancouver Council should mandate the approval of the Medical Health Officer before staff approve applications to operate indoor supervised inhalation sites. As per the BC Public Health Act, Medical Health Officers are responsible for directing the response to local public health threats such as the overdose emergency. Medical Health Officer are also responsible for advising on policies impacting the health of the population and it is imperative that local governments consider the advice provided by their designated Medical Health Officer.



Our office has been in communication with the BC Centre for Excellence regarding the *Hope to Health* site and are prepared to approve their application provided they conduct a comprehensive evaluation that compares the efficacy of their proposed indoor site with a similar outdoor site. This comparative analysis would significantly contribute to our understanding of the efficacy and efficiency of different approaches to providing supervised inhalation services.

The proposed motion and the subsequent information gained about operating supervised inhalation services in Vancouver, alongside existing and future interventions, forms a critical part of our strategy to confront the effects of the current drug crisis on the health and wellbeing of our residents. With the above condition met, I extend my support for the motion and the subsequent operation of the indoor supervised inhalation site at the *Hope to Health* site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Lysyshyn".

Mark Lysyshyn MD MPH FRCPC
Deputy Chief Medical Health Officer
Vancouver Coastal Health

