



## KENTUCKY BOARD OF PHARMACY

### Syringe Exchange Programs

#### What are Syringe Exchange Programs?

- Syringe services programs (SSP), also known as syringe exchange programs (SEP), provide access to sterile needles and syringes at no cost.
- The primary goal of SEPs is to make sterile syringes available to Persons Who Inject Drugs.
- SEPs facilitate safe disposal of used needles and syringes, while also offering safer injection education.
- SEPs reduce the spread of infections like HIV and viral hepatitis.

#### What's the Benefit?

- SEPs provide individuals with access to critical health services, including substance use disorder treatment programs; overdose prevention education; screening, care and treatment for HIV and viral hepatitis; prevention of mother-to-child transmission; hepatitis A and B vaccination; screening for other sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis; partner services; and other medical, social, and mental health services.

#### The Kentucky Impact

- SEPs mitigate a number of public health issues, including the new HIV epidemic.
- Outbreaks cost states millions of dollars to treat.
- Nearly half of Kentucky counties are at risk for an HIV outbreak.
- Of the 220 counties in the US, 54 of the counties classified as highly vulnerable to an HIV outbreak are in Kentucky.
- Kentucky possesses some of the highest rates of hepatitis C in the nation.
- New cases of hepatitis C are largely related to those that share needles to inject drugs.
- SEPs have been proven capable of reducing outbreak chances.

#### Helpful Considerations

- Do not impose limits on the number of syringes.
- Provide and coordinate the provision of other health and social services.
- Do not require unnecessary data collection.
- SEPs do not increase community crime, studies show that they actually decrease crime in the areas they are located.
- SEPs do not encourage the initiation of drug use.
- SEPs do not increase the frequency of drug use among current users.
- SEPs connect people to treatment programs.
- For locations and hours of SEPs, visit the CHFS website.