



Four A's Syringe Access Program (FASAP)

- **What is a Syringe Exchange?**
 - A syringe exchange is a program where anonymous participants bring in used syringes in return for clean ones. The two goals are to reduce transmission of infectious diseases like HIV and Hepatitis C. and facilitate entry into treatment programs as participants express interest.
- **How is the program funded?**
 - Private foundations and individual donors support the exchange. Many Four A's donors are current and former participants of the program. No government grants go towards funding the exchange.
 - No taxpayer money supports this program; it actually saves taxpayer money. By preventing HIV and Hepatitis C in participants who may be on Medicaid, a syringe exchange can save taxpayers thousands of dollars per participant. Treatment of Hepatitis C for one person costs \$81,000. HIV treatment can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars over the lifetime of an individual.
- **Why Harm Reduction?**
 - Harm Reduction is a public health policy which responds to the reality of unhealthy behaviors by reducing the negative impact of those behaviors rather than reject or deny they exist. Many studies have proven the effectiveness of this model, and it is best practice according to the CDC and World Health Organization.
 - Harm Reduction sees drug use as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that manifests through a spectrum of behaviors from severe abuse to total abstinence. It acknowledges that some ways of using drugs are clearly safer than others.
 - It's the same line of thinking that we use when wearing seatbelts while driving. Another example is using condoms when having sex. There is risk out in the world, and harm reduction takes action to prevent and/or reduce that risk for an individual.
- **What about used, potentially contaminated, syringes?**
 - In calendar year 2015:
 - 98.3% of syringes that FASAP provided were returned and safely disposed of through a private incineration service.
 - Participants came to exchange syringes 9,313 times during the year.
 - 477,787 syringes were distributed and 469,360 syringes were incinerated.
 - The program incentivizes the return of used, potentially contaminated syringes by making more clean syringes available to the participant when they bring used syringes back to FASAP. Therefore, keeping FASAP easy to access by participants means less syringes on the streets.
- **How is this not enabling drug use?**
 - Here's why syringe exchanges and the harm reduction model are so effective: not only do we prevent infections, but we also build trust and relationships with participants. Establishing a trusting, non-judgmental relationship with participants means they know exactly who to talk to when they're ready for treatment.