



Santa Cruz County Syringe Services Program Advisory Commission

1060 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
P: (831) 454-4623 F: (831) 454-4488 TTY/TDD 711

hsaphadmin@santacruzcounty.us

<https://www//bit.ly/SSP-Program>

Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda In Person Meeting

1400 Emeline Ave., Bldg. K Room 206 & 207, Santa Cruz

Date: Tuesday, February 13th, 2024

Time: 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 260 959 931 974 Passcode: mDb9ap

Or Call in (audio only): United States, Salinas

Phone Conference ID: [+1 831-454-2222,344309212#](#)

Physical Location** 1400 Emeline Ave. Bldg. K Room 206 & 207
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

1. Roll Call & Introductions

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Damon Bruder	Commission Chair, 3 rd District	
Sarina King	Commission Vice-Chair, 5 th District	
Eric Sturm	Commissioner, 4 th District	
Steve Plumb	Commissioner, 1 st District	
Evan deSieyes	Commissioner, 2 nd District	
Vacant		
Vacant		

2. Review & Corrections of the Agenda

3. Review & Approval of November 14th , Meeting Minutes

4. Written Correspondence

5. **Oral Communications:** Any person may address the Commission on additional matters that are not on today's agenda, for a period not to exceed 3 minutes, within the jurisdiction of the Commission.

6. New Business/Action Items

6.1 Guest Speaker: Alessandra Ross, Director of office of AIDS CDPH

6.2 Update on QR data

6.3 Follow up on data regarding former HRC participants coming to SSP for services

6.4 Roundtable regarding outstanding items to be discussed at the last meeting on March 12th

7. Program Updates

8. Topics for Future Meetings

9. Adjournment

Next Meeting to be held on March 12th, 2024, at 6:00 PM

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate based on disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. If you wish to attend this meeting and require special assistance to participate, please call 831-454-4623 (TTY/TDD: 711) at least 72 hours in advance to make arrangements.

Summarized from Santa Cruz County Code, Chapter 2.125, Commission objectives include: increase coordination between agencies, departments, jurisdictions, and other stakeholders and policies related to delivery of services provided by SSP; review pending State and Federal legislation that may impact SSP, consumers and/or providers; stay informed and educated on SSP and related public health strategies; provide a forum for consumers and other parties interested in syringe services to contribute ideas to policy and program development and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding any proposed changes.



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Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, November 14th, 2023
TIME: 6:00 PM
LOCATION: 1400 Emeline Ave, Bldg. K, Rm 206 & 207
PRESENT:

Damon Bruder	Commission Chair, 3 rd District	Present
Sarina King	Commissioner Vice-Chair, 5 th District	Present
Eric Sturm	Commissioner, 4 th District	Present
Steve Plumb	Commissioner, 1 st District	Present
Evan deSieyes	Commissioner, 2 nd District	Present

STAFF: Rahshan Williams (*Program Coordinator*), Socorro Gutierrez (*Health Services Manager*), Ivan Avalos (*Administrative Aide*)

- Call to Order/Roll Call/Introductions:
The meeting convened at 6:01 PM.
Chair Bruder Confirmed attendance.
- Review and Corrections of the Agenda: No corrections
- Review and Approval of October 10th, 2023, Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve October 10th, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Motion/Second: Sturm/King

Aye: All

No: Plumb

Motion passed unanimously.

- Written Correspondence: none
- Oral Communications:
Our Health Officer, Dr. Hernandez joined the meeting and shared information about recent development, Harm Reduction Coalition(volunteer syringe exchange program). HRC working with state to get re-Authorization, the court has directed HRC to seize operations. They are working with attorney and also courts to appeal to decision and

have submitted paperwork to state for re-Authorization. The county is looking into how to support participants who were receiving services through HRC, referring patients to exchange site.

6. New Business/Action Items:

6.1 Guest speaker Alejandro Monroy, mental health client specialist for MAT, providing services to people experiencing and addiction. Case managers carry a case load of 40 to 50 participants at 3 county clinics, HPH, Emeline Clinic and Watsonville Health Center. Work with behavioral health, to provide therapy and or psychiatry services to participants if needed. Usually patients come into the clinic and inform the provider of an issue, for example, using too much heroin. Provider does a warm hand off and offers services to patient, case manager assesses situation. After intake appt., 3 expectations. An individual counseling session with drug and alcohol case manager, attend support group on weekly basis and take medication as prescribed by provider. Clients are met where they are at, after assessment, participants are placed in a tier system according to the services needed. Providers provide the following medication: for alcohol use disorder – vivitrol, once a month via injection. Also Nalxetrone in pill form, taken daily. For opioid use disorder -sobuxone strips and injections. For methamphetamine use disorder, vivitrol is also prescribed. Connection to SSP, patients come into clinic for services and they are referred to SSP for other services or resources.

6.2 Update on acquiring SSP QR Code through county account, with ability to retrieve data, how many people are scanning the code, where is it being scanned?: Rahshan has access to county QR code, data to be shared at next meeting. Rahshan reached out to SC metro to ask about the syringe disposal in their restrooms, can we add QR code. Waiting on response

6.3 Follow up on QR code with data: Data to be presented at next meeting.

6.4 Follow up on invitation to CDPH rep. guest speaker: Commissioner Sturm invited Alessandra Ross, Director of office of aids CDPH, she oversees all SSP in the state to next meeting. Alessandra will attend 1/9/2023 meeting and will present power point, talk about trends in the state, 15 minute presentation.

7. Program Updates: **Rahshan presented on distribution and collection of syringes and enhanced referrals and education.**

- 10 of 341 participants at mobile exchange sites accessed non drug use supplies e.g., **Fentanyl test strips, Narcan, smoking kits or syringes.**
- Supply kit production, currently volunteers help put together supply kits, looking to increase shifts due to high demand.

Mobile Exchange Syringe Distribution and collection.

-Syringes collected at mobile exchange sites through end of October: 768

- Syringes dispensed at Mobile Exchange sites through end of October: 118
- Persons who inject drugs often don't have the syringes at point of exchange.
- We are continuing distribution of sharps containers and maintaining readiness for and increase in syringe exchange at mobile sites.

Mobile Exchange Smoking kit Distribution

- 341 exclusive mobile exchange participants(have not accessed out fixed sites)
- 315 of those participants accessed pipes and not syringes (92%)
- We are limiting distribution of smoking kits to one of each variety at mobile exchange.

Smoking vs. Injection as Harm Reduction. Info found on Smoking Kit Brochures

- Injecting less frequently is associated with lower risk of bloodborne pathogen transmission.
- Risk of overdose is far less likely when smoking vs. injecting
- Injecting less frequently is associated with fewer skin and soft tissue infections.
- Some of the harms of injection drug use, like endocarditis, are injection-specific
- Reduces community syringe litter

Enhanced Referrals and Education

- We are continuing our close collaboration with MAT team and Street Medicine to Facilitate
- We are continuing to work to hire our SSU SUD navigators for and have top candidates.

Preparing Mobile Exchange Site for winter(rain).

- SSP has awning to use in Watsonville site
 - Rashan to follow up with City of Santa Cruz about another possible site in Santa Cruz
- The commission discussed reaching out to HRC to see how SSP can help while they are not able to provide services. Possibly give HRC QR code for SSP.

Commissioner offered her assistance putting together hygiene kits.

Reminder, no December meeting, the next meeting will be

8. Topics future meetings

- 8.1 Rahshan, to reach bring QR data to next meeting to review(Program Updates)
- 8.2 Rahshan to share data on numbers, participants who received services from HRC and are now coming to SSP
- 8.3 Guest Speaker Alessandra Ross, Director of office of aids CDPH

9. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn Meeting

Motion/Second: King/deSieves

Aye: All

No: None

Motion passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 7:33pm

Submitted by Ivan Avalos(Administrative Aide)



Public Health Division

SSP Advisory Commission Sunsetting

February 13, 2024

Background

- On [October 17, 2023](#), the Board directed the County Administrative Officer (CAO) to develop recommendations for commission restructuring, related to the “A Santa Cruz County Like Me” (ASCCLM) project to address underrepresentation in local government
- On January 30, 2024 recommendations on County commission restructuring were proposed to the Board of Supervisors.
- County Administrative Office recommended that the Board sunset several commissions, including the Syringe Services Program Advisory Commission.
- On February 13, 2024, the ordinance repealing County Code Chapters to sunset various advisory commissions will be on the Board agenda.
- Commissions will sunset on March 31, 2024 to allow time to complete any existing work and provide for any transitions.



Roundtable

**What outstanding items need to
be discussed by March 12th?**

Thank You





Public Health

County of Santa Cruz Syringe Services Program (SSP) Advisory Commission Program Updates

February 13, 2024

Current Activities

- 1) Distribution and Collection
- 2) Safe Disposal
- 3) Enhanced Referrals and Education

Distribution and Collection

- Hybrid Model Pilot update

Data from August–November 2023 shows that fixed site locations are preferred access points for participants using our one-for-one syringe exchange policy

Mobile sites have had tremendous success reaching participants and distributing harm reduction supplies

- Oct. vs. Nov. 2023 Syringe Collection and Distribution increase at all exchange sites

Oct. 2023---- Collected **7978** Dispensed **6308**

Nov. 2023--- Collected **13492** Dispensed **11384**

Safe Disposal

- Hybrid Model Pilot update

Downtown Streets Team (DST) data shows continuing decrease of syringe litter along designated routes

- July–Nov. 2022 vs July–Nov. 2023 DST

2022 = 2216 Syringes

2023 = 1103 Syringes



Enhanced Referrals and Education

- SSP SUD referral database created
 - Allows for the confidential tracking of SUD referrals
 - Not tied to the anonymous SSP database used to collect data and track participant encounters
- Welcome SSP SUD navigators
 - Extra Help Mental Health Client Specialist: **Montana Trotta**
 - Extra Help Community Mental Health Aide: **Siobhan Eskelsen**

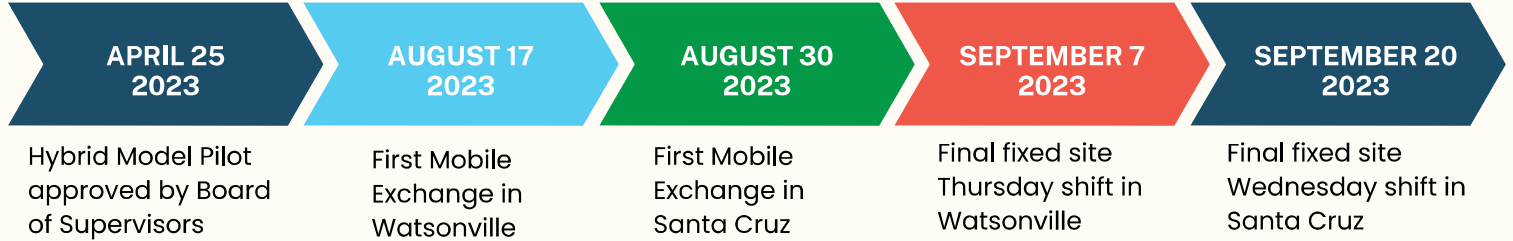


County of Santa Cruz

Syringe Services Program (SSP) Hybrid Model Pilot Update December 2023

On April 25th, 2023 the HSA SSP program presented its [Biennial Report](#) to the county BOS which included a recommendation to adopt recommendations from the SSP Advisory Commission to pilot a hybrid model that reduces exchange service at the Emeline and Watsonville fixed-site locations. This report has been created to provide an update for the first three months of implementation of the Pilot SSP Hybrid model in both Santa Cruz and Watsonville from August 2023 to November 2023.

Hybrid Model Pilot Roll-out Timeline



Current Schedule: Fixed and Mobile Site Shifts



Santa Cruz-Fixed Site 1060 Emeline Ave

Mondays	10AM - 1PM
Tuesdays	5PM - 7PM
Thursday	4PM - 6PM
Friday	10AM - 1PM

Santa Cruz Mobile Exchange

Wednesday	11AM - 1PM
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Watsonville-Fixed Site 1430 Freedom Blvd, Ste. B

Mondays	3:30PM - 4:30PM
Tuesdays	10:30AM - 11:30AM
Wednesday	1:30PM - 3:30PM
Friday	9AM - 11AM

Watsonville Mobile Exchange

Thursday	9AM - 11AM
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Exchange Models: Watsonville vs. Santa Cruz

SSP staff co-located with HPHP Street Medicine Staff at both locations

Watsonville Mobile Exchange

- Staff conducted supply distribution and syringe collection with a dedicated table.
- Conducted at an established outreach location with regular presence of representatives from other service providers such as Salvation Army, Salud Para La Gente, and Community Action Board.



Santa Cruz Mobile Exchange

- Staff utilized a wagon and backpack for supply distribution and syringe collection.
- Conducted in multiple locations with a split 2-hour shift: Coral St./Limekiln St. and River Walk between Water St. and Soquel Ave. bridges on the west/downtown side of the San Lorenzo River.
- Emails sent to City of Santa Cruz Staff: Tuesday for planned Mobile site locations before each shift and Thursday for activity updates after each shift.

Participant Snapshot: August 1st – November 30th 2023

Six Hundred and Sixty Six total unique individuals encountered

- **At Mobile Exchanges = 452 (67.9%)**
- **At Fixed Site Exchanges = 182 (27.3%)**
- **Both Fixed and Mobile Exchanges = 32 (4.8%)**

450 First Time Participants

- 382 (85%) initially reached at mobile sites.
- Out of the 382, 98% exclusively use mobile sites for exchange.
- 67 (15%) initially reached at Fixed sites.
- Out of the 67, 91% exclusively use fixed sites for exchange.

Santa Cruz Focus

132 individuals exclusively used the Emeline Fixed site exchange between August 2021 and August 2023 and visited an SSP location from Aug to Nov 2023.

- Since Mobile Exchange started.
 - **17 out of 132** participants exclusively used our mobile exchanges.
 - **11 out of 132** accessed both mobile and fixed sites.
 - **104 out of 132** exclusively used our fixed site for program access.

Supply Distribution

August 2023–November 2023

Total Program Syringe Distribution and Collection

- 36048 Syringes Collected
- 29610 Syringes Distributed

Syringes Distributed and Collected at Mobile Sites:

- 1308 Syringes Collected
- 250 Syringes Distributed

Smoking Kits Distributed

- 1913 smoking kits distributed all various exchange sites
- 847 smoking kits distributed from Mobile sites
- 495 smoking kits distributed at Santa Cruz Mobile exchange shifts.

Fixed site policy allows a maximum of 3 smoking kits per participant.

Mobile site policy allows a maximum of 2 smoking kits per participant.

Syringe Litter

July 2023–November 2023

- Downtown Streets Team reports a continual decline in total syringe litter collection numbers for the City of Santa Cruz Routes.
- The County Department of Public Works has not reported any syringe litter collection for the Watsonville Area since January 2023..
- The latest kiosk near Kaiser Arena on the River Walk path collected 121 pounds of syringe litter from August to November 2023.
- Downtown Streets Team collects syringe litter along 6 routes. Syringe litter collection #s from July–November 2022 compared to the same period in 2023:

	2022	2023
Downtown	395	140
Beach	37	43
Levee	740	317
Emeline	160	69
Harvey West	743	412
Midtown	141	122

Pilot Successes

- Meeting People where they're at performing mobile exchange with street medicine staff has allowed us to find persons who were lost to care for HIV and other infectious disease treatment
- Success referring participants for treatment
- Co-locating with MAT providers and Medical Assistants during mobile exchange facilitates immediate links for participants to schedule treatment appointments at County Health Centers and Janus.

Pending Program Improvements

- Developing a confidential SSP referral database to track and improve referral success and staff follow-up efforts for participant access to treatment.
- Two new SSP SUD navigation staff, funded by a Sierra Health Center grant, will start in the new year.
- Continuing proactive communication and outreach with Watsonville and Santa Cruz, seeking feedback and sharing community complaints or concerns and advising on target areas for mobile exchange.

Thank You

