

Parliament  
of Victoria

# Law reform case study

Medically supervised  
injecting centres



VCE Legal Studies, Unit 4, Area of Study 2:  
The people, the parliament and the courts

# About this resource

**This resource focuses on medically supervised injecting centres and may contain information that people find sensitive or confronting.**

## Parliament of Victoria

www.parliament.vic.gov.au/education  
Version 1.0, 31 March 2022  
ISBN 978-0-6452449-8-4



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Research  
Inquir  
Comm  
Media  
Politic  
Law R  
Terms  
referer  
Case S

# About this resource

This law reform case study is a teaching resource for VCE Legal Studies teachers and students, specifically focusing on *Unit 4 Area of Study 2: The people, the parliament and the courts*. It provides details of the committee inquiry process within the context of how a law is made, before providing specific details of a recent committee inquiry.

The resource is designed to be used flexibly, incorporating a range of information from both inside and outside of parliament. The aim of the resource is to present the process of law reform in tandem with the public and political debate that surrounds it. It includes a factual description of key processes, extracts from Hansard, commentary from the media and social media discussion, which provide a balanced representation of different views expressed at the time.

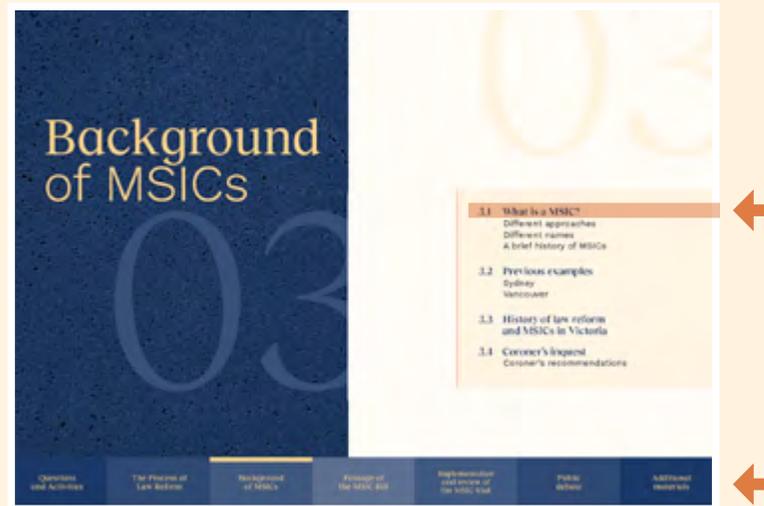
## Two bills, one inquiry

The case study used throughout this resource is the inquiry into the ‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017’, known informally as the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre bill (and referred to throughout this case study as ‘the bill’).

This bill was introduced in the Legislative Council by Fiona Patten MLC (Fiona Patten’s Reason Party) but it is not the bill that became law in December 2017. Following the committee inquiry and the presentation of its report to parliament, a new version of the bill—‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017’—was introduced by the government in the Legislative Assembly by Martin Foley MP (Australian Labor Party). It was this bill that would go on to pass both houses of parliament. The passage of both bills is described in chapter four of this resource.

Research  
Inquiry  
Committee  
Media  
Political  
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Terms  
reference  
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# About this resource



Elements of this resource are interactive. Buttons like these will take you to additional material on external websites.

If you're using a printed version, you can visit [vicpar.news/msic](http://vicpar.news/msic) to quickly refer back to the additional material.

The bottom menu bar will help you navigate between chapters. Each chapter begins with its own index page that you can use to jump to particular sections.

Research  
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# Video resources

A series of four videos is available as part of this resource. They provide an opportunity to hear first-hand accounts from some of the key people involved in this committee inquiry, and the passage of the bill through parliament, including members of parliament, local government and the community.

## **Part 1: Establishing the need for law reform**

This video covers the reasons for law reform, and outlines a range of perspectives on drug law reform, including the health, safety and economic needs of the community and businesses.

## **Part 2: Responding to the need for law reform**

This video covers the introduction of the bill into the Legislative Council and the committee inquiry into MSICs, including the research conducted and some of the findings from the inquiry.

## **Part 3: Listening to the community**

This video explores the role and influence of the media and social media in law reform, and how it was used by some stakeholders throughout the law reform process.

## **Part 4: Evaluating law reform**

This video explores the trial of the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre in Richmond, and includes different perspectives on the outcome of the MSIC's operations.

Research  
Inquiry  
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# Curriculum links

This resource addresses the key knowledge and skills for VCE Legal Studies: Unit 4, Area of Study 2. The resource provides information from key moments from a case study, allowing students to explore and evaluate how parliament makes laws, the committee inquiry process, and the influence of organisations, individuals and media over the law reform process.

Using the committee inquiry into the ‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017’ as a case study, students will consider the reasons for law reform and parliament’s role in this process, including the role of the two houses.

Students will also explore the representative nature of parliament, the political pressures on law reform and the restrictions on the law-making powers of parliament.

Unit 4, Area of Study 2 requires students to investigate one recent case study, for example from a parliamentary committee, where ‘recent’ is defined as being within the last four years.

According to the VCAA VCE Legal Studies Frequently Asked Questions:

*“(A) particular case or recommendation may have originated more than four years previous to the current year. There must, however, have been some type of change, appeal, legal discussion or a new aspect of the particular case or recommendation to have occurred within the last four years, and be cited during the study of the case or recommendation.”*

The review of the ‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017’ was published on 25 June 2020, and subsequently there has been consideration and consultation regarding the opening of a second Medically Supervised Injecting Centre within the Melbourne Central Business District.



Download ‘Frequently asked questions: VCE Legal Studies 2018-2023’

Research  
Inquiry  
Committee  
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# Chapter summaries

## 01 Questions and activities

Questions and activities designed to facilitate discussion and reflection on the various aspects of the case study.

## 02 The process of law reform

Describes how a law is made and provides an overview of the committee system in the Victorian parliament.

## 03 Background of MSICs

Explains what a Medically Supervised Injecting Centre is, with local and international examples, along with previous attempts to reform this law in Victoria.

## 04 Passage of the MSIC bill

Charts the process of law reform, including the original 2017 MSIC bill introduced into the Legislative Council, the committee inquiry, and the subsequent introduction of a new bill by the government into the Legislative Assembly.

## 05 Implementation and review of the MSIC trial

Provides an overview of the establishment and operation of the North Richmond facility in 2018 and key findings and recommendations from the review of the trial that was presented to parliament in 2020.

## 06 Public debate

A sample of the debate surrounding the bill as it was represented in the media and social media.

## 07 Additional materials

Listings of parliamentary terms and key documents referenced in this case study.

Research  
Inquiry  
Committee  
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# Questions and activities

# 01

# 01

The questions and activities in this chapter are designed to help you discuss and reflect on the various aspects of the case study.

The questions focus on identifying the need for law reform and evaluating the process of and influences on law reform, including the role of the media and social media. There are also questions and activities that refer to specific details about the bill and the committee inquiry process that led to the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Act 2017*.

# 1

## Questions and activities

When responding to the questions, consider the different ways law reform can be debated, what influences there are on law reform and what role committees have in bringing public discussions, experiences and debate into the official spaces and formal debates of parliament.

The questions and activities are designed to be completed by drawing on the information from the case study and using this information as evidence and examples where appropriate.

The questions included under the first four headings could be used to explore many different examples of law reform, especially law reforms that have been examined by parliamentary committee.

As well as the questions and activities, there is also a variety of thinking routines that can be useful when exploring an issue from multiple perspectives. Thinking routines that may be useful include:

- Circle of Viewpoints
- Claim, Support, Question
- Parts, People, Interactions
- Step In - Step Out - Step Back
- I Used to Think... Now I Think...

*A lotus diagram is a good way to track your ideas and arguments as you read through the information. The diagram breaks the information into eight sections. This could be based on stakeholder (interest) groups or particular perspectives, such as environmental, health or legal issues.*



Download Harvard Project Zero thinking routines



Watch a video on how to use a lotus diagram



Click the icon to download a lotus diagram template

# 1

# Questions and activities

## Identifying the need for law reform

- Why was the law reform considered necessary? What were the main reasons for law reform in this case study?
- What different perspectives were offered when considering the need for law reform? Consider: social, political, historical, economic, medical, religious, and legal perspectives.
- What are the benefits and limitations of the proposed law reform? Are there particular views or experiences that are being privileged? Why/why not? Provide evidence and examples for your response.
- Is there a need for a new law or an amendment to an act, or can the issue be addressed by other means?

## Responding to law reform

- What factors may affect parliament's ability to respond to the need for law reform? Consider the perspectives of and influences from: political parties, members of the public, media, advocacy organisations, interest and community groups, and experts in the field.
- How does the nature of the bicameral system affect the ability of parliament to respond to law reform? Consider in your response:
  - The passage of a bill
  - The representative nature and the differences in representation between the two chambers
  - How does the committee process contribute to and/or restrict parliament's ability to respond to law reform?

## Influences on law reform

- What previous debates may be informing parliament's response? This may include previous bills or committee inquiries on the same or similar issues.
- What views and values are being expressed across parliament, the media and social media platforms? Do these views change over time? If so, how?
- What role do social media platforms have in influencing people's views, and therefore what is their impact on law reform? Provide evidence and examples for your response.

# 1

# Questions and activities

## Evaluating the outcome

- How does the proposed new law, or the amendment to a current law, address the identified need for law reform?
- Does the law, or amendment to the law, address all the identified issues? If so, how? If not, why not?
- What other laws or policies are in place, or could be in place, to address the need for law reform?

## Understanding the issues

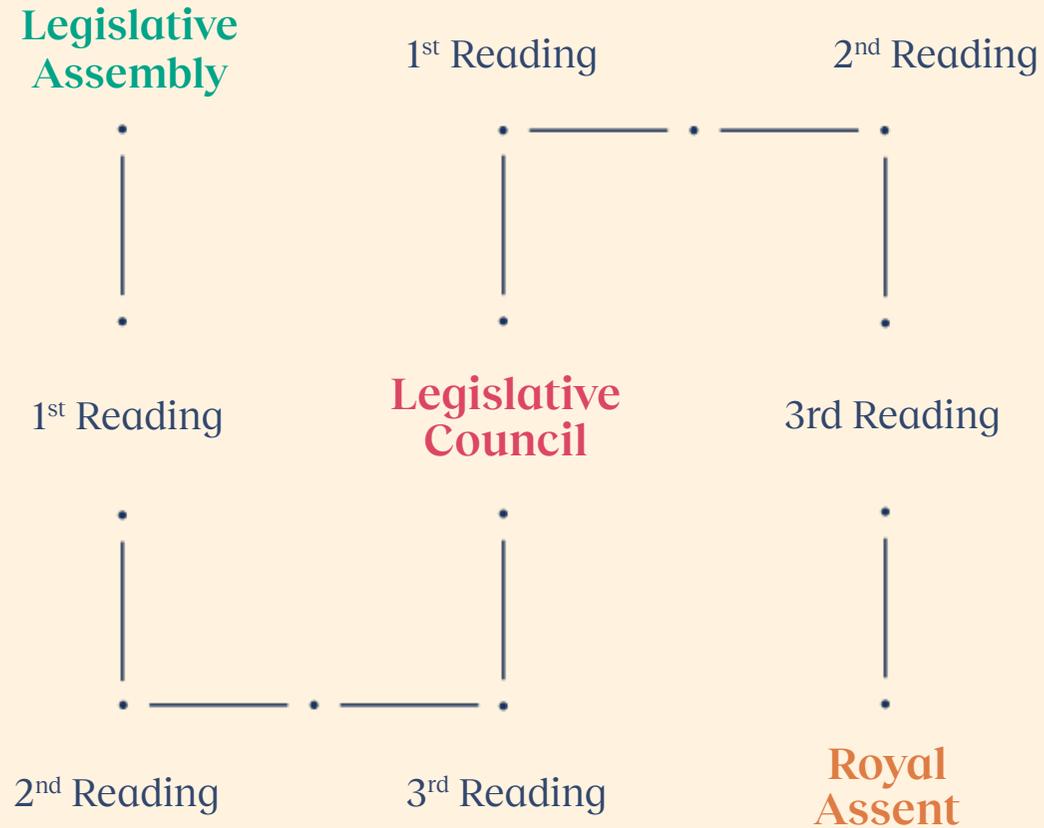
- Why has it taken more than 15 years to reform the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act* to allow for the trial of MSICs?
  - Does creating an exclusion zone for some drugs undermine the *Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act*?
  - What perceived need is the bill addressing? Draw on the information from the drug possession laws and heroin deaths figures.
  - How would the bill need to change to allow for additional safe injecting centres?
  - What different changes would need to be made to implement some of the other suggestions from the coroner's inquiry?
- What perspectives are being expressed in the media? How might these views have changed at different points in time? What might be the catalyst for these changes?
  - How does an MSIC address the perceived need? What are the concerns and benefits of an MSIC that the law needs to take into consideration?
  - Why do you think the committee report contains findings but no recommendations? How could this approach be considered both a strength and weakness of the committee process?

# The process of law reform

- 2.1 How a law is made
- 2.2 The committee system
- 2.3 The committee inquiry process

# 2.1

## How a law is made



# 2.1

## How a law is made

### 1st Reading

The introduction and first reading is a formal stage at which the member of parliament introducing the bill reads its full title. This is usually followed by a motion to schedule the second reading in the following days or weeks.

### 2nd Reading

The second reading speech is when the Member who introduced the bill to the house explains its general principles and purpose. This stage begins with the presentation of a Statement of Compatibility with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, which must explain how a proposed new law or amendment is compatible or incompatible with the rights set out in the charter.

Following the second reading speech, debate on the bill is adjourned to give members time to study it in more detail. When the bill is next called on for debate, Members can make speeches that detail their position, and it may be referred to a committee at this time. At the conclusion of the second reading debate, members vote on the bill. If it is supported by a majority of Members it proceeds to the next stage.

### 3rd Reading

Members may debate the bill at the third reading stage, but this is unusual. If the members pass the bill at this stage, it is then sent to the other house, where readings one, two and three are repeated.

### Royal Assent

After a bill passes both houses, the Governor of Victoria, on behalf of the Queen, gives it Royal Assent.



Watch the video  
Parliament of Victoria  
explains: How a law is made

## 2.2

# The Committee system

The committee system is designed to receive input from the public into issues being considered by parliament.

Committees hold inquiries and conduct research into particular issues and/or the impacts of a proposed law. Part of this process is to engage with the community and provide opportunities for members of the public to express their views. This may include individuals from the wider community, subject-matter experts, or representatives from businesses and government organisations.

Each committee is made of up of members of parliament from different political parties, supported by a small team of researchers and administrative staff, who report their findings and recommendations to parliament.

There are four different types of committees:

### **Joint investigatory committee**

This type of committee includes members from both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

### **Standing committee**

These committees are specific to each of the houses. There are currently three standing committees in the Legislative Assembly and three standing committees in the Legislative Council.

### **Select committee**

These committees are not common as they are established to investigate a very specific issue and they dissolve at the end of the inquiry.

### **Domestic committee**

The domestic committees focus on the operation of parliament.



Watch the video *Parliament of Victoria Explains: How Parliament's committees work*



Visit the Victorian Parliament's website to learn more about the the committee system

# 2.3

## The Committee inquiry process

### Terms of reference

The instructions and guidelines for which a committee must conduct its inquiry.

### Public hearings

The committee meet with people to explore areas of interest or concern. Most of the time these hearings are public, but occasionally the evidence may be taken in private.

### Reporting to parliament

Once the committee has gathered all information, it tables (presents) a report to parliament. This report also becomes publicly available.

### Call for submissions

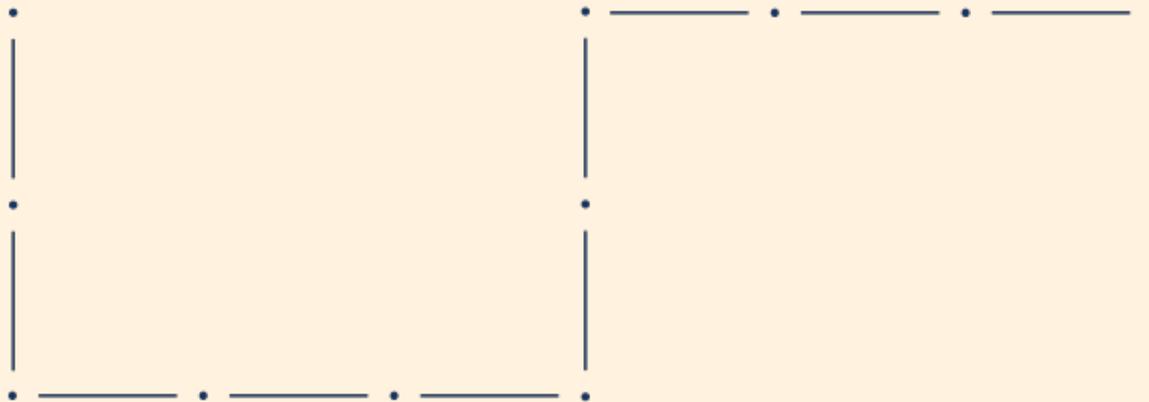
The inquiry is advertised. The public and interested parties can make submissions to the committee. The committee may also contact people or organisations with specialist knowledge to request a submission.

### Research

The committee may conduct research on specific parts of the inquiry or commission the research from expert sources.

### Government response

Once a report has been tabled in parliament, the government has six months to respond. The response must indicate whether the government supports any recommendations in the report.



# Background of MSICs

## 3.1 What is an MSIC?

Different approaches  
Different names  
A brief history of MSICs

## 3.2 Previous examples

Sydney  
Vancouver

## 3.3 History of law reform and MSICs in Victoria

## 3.4 Coroner's inquest

Coroner's recommendations

# 3.1

## What is an MSIC?

Medically Supervised Injecting Centres (MSICs) are places where it is legal for people to inject drugs. Drug users come with pre-obtained substances and inject themselves under the supervision of medical professionals. They also allow for drug users to access emergency care and clean injecting equipment.

MSICs aim to reduce drug use in public places and prevent overdose deaths. They are often located in areas where a high concentration of drug use is visible. The services provided and the skills and qualifications of staff may differ in each facility, depending on the needs or issues that are prevalent in the local community.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation describes three goals for MSICs:

- *To provide an environment for safer drug use*
- *To improve the health of drug users*
- *To reduce public disorder*

### Different approaches

There are three main approaches to the operation of MSICs:

#### Integrated

In integrated facilities, supervised drug consumption may be provided alongside basic medical care, counselling, food, laundry, and shower facilities for at-risk people, particularly those experiencing homelessness.

#### Specialised

Specialised facilities offer a narrower range of services directly related to supervised consumption, which includes the provision of hygienic injecting materials, advice on health and safer drug use, intervention in case of emergencies and a space where drug users can remain under observation after drug consumption.

#### Mobile

Mobile facilities provide a flexible but usually limited range of services that generally cater for a smaller number of users. For example,

in Barcelona and Berlin, vans are allowed to operate in specifically designated areas. This approach is often included as part of a coordinated network of support solutions for drug users.

### Different names

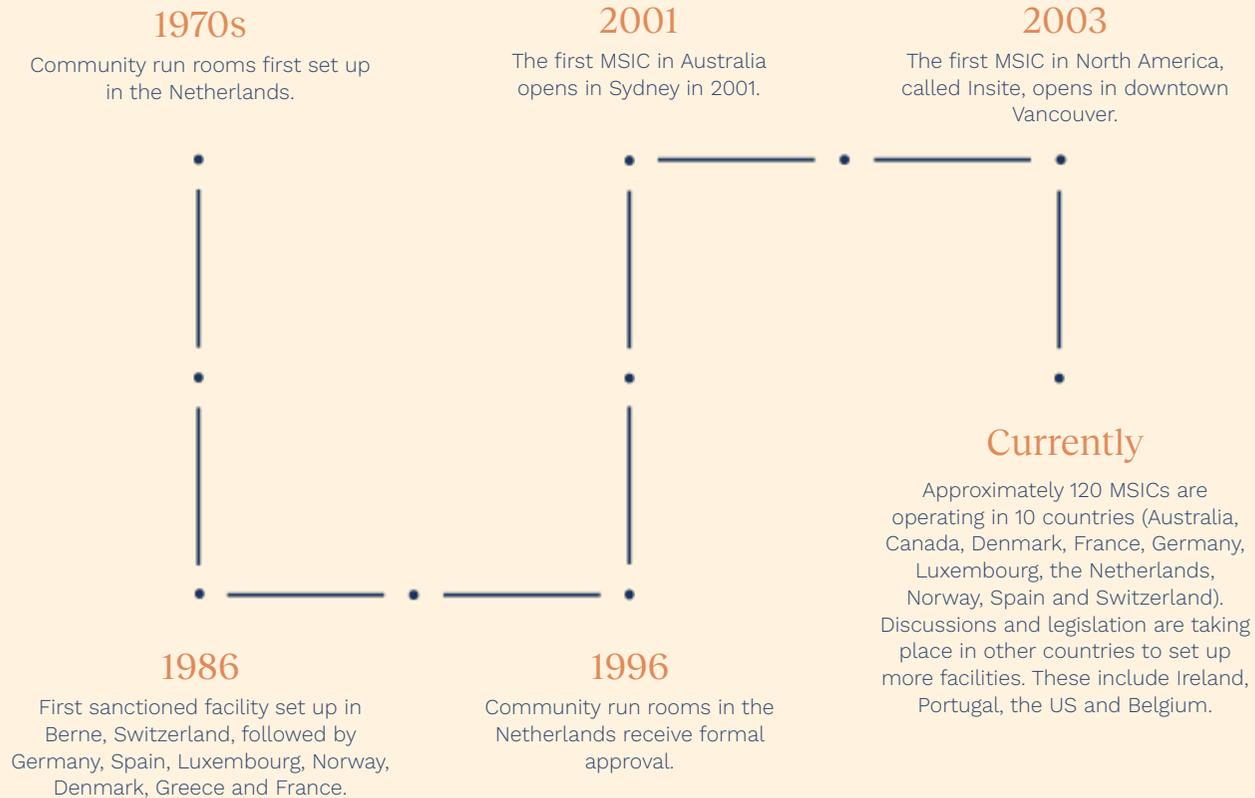
Medically Supervised Injecting Centres are also referred to as:

- Medically supervised injecting rooms (MSIR)
- Drug consumption rooms
- Safe houses
- Safety clinics
- Injecting rooms
- Off-street injecting facilities
- Safe injecting facilities
- Safer injecting facilities
- Shooting galleries

# 3.1

## What is an MSIC?

### A brief history of MSICs



## 3.2

# Previous examples: Sydney

In the 1990s, Kings Cross in Sydney was experiencing an alarming increase in the use of illicit injectable drugs.

A 1997 Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service included a recommendation that, “Consideration be given to the establishment of safe, sanitary injecting rooms”. In response, a Joint Select Committee was established the following year, to advise the NSW parliament about “the costs and benefits to the public of the establishment or trial of safe, sanitary injecting rooms”. The committee recommended that such a trial should not proceed.

By 1999 Kings Cross had the highest concentration of people dying from drug overdose in Australia. The photo of a young boy injecting heroin in a Redfern back alley was published in the media and became the catalyst for the first NSW Drug Summit, which recommended an MSIC trial.

That same year, the NSW parliament passed an amendment to the *Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985*, which allowed an MSIC to be established for a trial period of 18 months.

Australia’s first MSIC opened in Kings Cross in May 2001, administered by Uniting, a Christian non-government organisation. In 2002, 2003 and 2007 the NSW parliament voted to extend the trial of the MSIC.

A range of independent evaluations, economic analysis, and research found that the MSIC had no negative effect on robbery, property crime or drug offences in the surrounding area. In 2010, the NSW parliament voted to overturn the trial status of the MSIC and passed legislation to make the centre ongoing.



Sydney at night. Source: Adobe Stock.

10,600+

Overdoses managed

17,700

Visits

19,000

Referrals

0

Deaths



Source: Uniting MSIC, 2022  
Read more about the  
Uniting MSIC in Sydney

## 3.2

# Previous examples: Vancouver

In the late 1990s, drug-related harms peaked in the city of Vancouver and during that time, several unsanctioned MSICs operated briefly and then closed.

In Canada, possession of controlled substances is illegal, however, their drug act gives the federal Minister of Health the authority to issue an exemption from the act in matters of public interest.

In September 2003, Vancouver's regional health authority received an exemption from the drug act, allowing for the operation of a facility, known as Insite, to begin on a trial basis.

It was the first legally approved MSIC in North America and was opened under the condition that it operate as a scientific pilot and be rigorously evaluated.

Insite is an integrated clinic that provides access to other medical facilities such as mental health treatment, rehabilitation and first aid.

Following several attempts to close the facility, harm reduction activists began two court actions that sought to keep Insite open indefinitely. In September 2011, the Canadian Supreme Court issued a unanimous judgment ruling in favour of Insite. It ordered the minister to grant an indefinite exemption to Insite in order to respect the constitutional rights of facility users and staff.



Source: Vancouver Coastal Health, 2020

6,440  
Overdoses managed

3.6m  
Visits

48,798  
Clinical treatment visits

0  
Deaths (since 2003)



Source: Vancouver  
Coastal Health, 2020  
Read more about the  
Insite MSIC in Vancouver

## 3.3

# History of law reform and MSICs in Victoria

Over the past 25 years there have been three key attempts in Victoria to address the issue of Medically Supervised Injecting Centres.

The first was in 1997, when an inquiry into government drug policy gave qualified support for an MSIC. Proposed legislation—the ‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances (Injecting Facilities Trial) Bill’—was introduced in the Legislative Assembly by the Bracks Labor government in 2000 but did not become law.

The second attempt was a proposal by Yarra City Council for the introduction of an MSIC in response to increasing drug usage in and around the Melbourne suburb of Richmond. The council voted in favour of the trial. The Victoria St Traders and then Premier Ted Baillieu did not support the trial. No bill was tabled in parliament.

The third attempt, which is the focus of this case study, was prompted by the Coroner’s inquest into the death of a woman in North Richmond. This inquest was referenced in the introduction of the ‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017’ in the Legislative Council.

*“The committee’s preliminary view is that there is some merit in the idea of suitably regulated and controlled safe houses. The committee urges that there be greater public debate concerning the possibility of safe houses, and that debate be guided by appropriate evidence.”*

— Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee, Interim Report: *‘Turning the tide’*, December 1997, p. 15

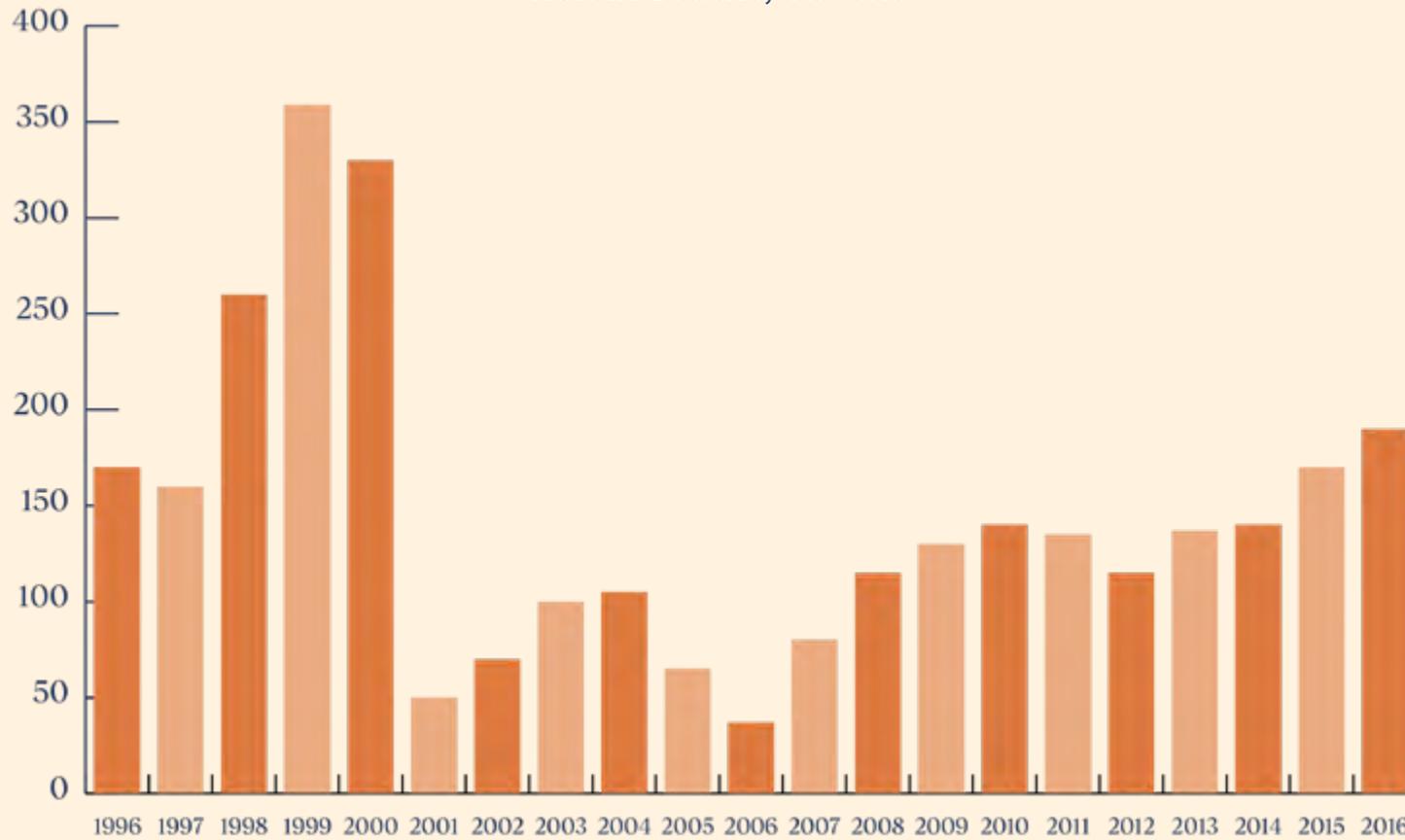


Aerial view of Melbourne CBD. Image: Adobe Stock

# 3.3

## History of law reform and MSICs in Victoria

Heroin Deaths, Victoria



Sources: Coronial Court Victoria (2009-2016), Victorian Drug Statistics Handbook (2000-2008), Drug Police Expert Committee (1995-1999)

# 3.4

## Coroner's inquest

In 2016, a woman known as Ms A overdosed in North Richmond and later died. A Coroner's Inquest was held to investigate her death and the report was delivered on 20 February 2017.

The Coroner's report acknowledged:

- There were a number of similarities between Ms A's history of drug use and other cases of overdose in the area
- The rate of heroin deaths in Victoria had risen to their highest levels in 15 years
- A number of these deaths had occurred in the same area of Richmond.

### Coroner's recommendations

*"Pursuant to section 72 (2) of the Coroners Act 2008, I make the following recommendations connected with the death:*

***I RECOMMEND THAT the Honourable Martin Foley MP as Minister for Mental Health take the necessary steps to establish a safe injecting facility trial in North Richmond.***

*I RECOMMEND THAT Ms Kym Peake, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, take the necessary steps to expand the availability of Naloxone to people who are in a position to intervene and reverse opioid drug overdoses in the City of Yarra.*

*I RECOMMEND THAT Ms Kym Peake, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, review current DHHS-funded services that support the health and wellbeing of injecting drug users in the City of Yarra, and consult with relevant service providers and other stakeholders, to identify opportunities to improve injecting drug users' access to and engagement with these life-saving services."*

— Coroner's report 20 February 2017, p. 24



Read the Coroner's full report

# Passage of the MSIC bill

# 04

## **4.1 Introduction into the Legislative Council**

- First reading
- Second reading
- Second reading debate
- Referral to the committee
- Committee report is tabled and  
debate continues

## **4.2 Committee inquiry**

- The Legal and Social Issues Committee
- Terms of reference
- Public submissions
- Public hearings
- Research
- Reporting to the parliament
- Government response

## **4.3 Introduction into the Legislative Assembly**

- First reading
- Second reading
- Second reading debate
- Third reading

## **4.4 Legislative Council review**

- First reading
- Second reading
- Second reading debate
- Third reading
- Royal Assent

# 4.1

## Introduction into the Legislative Council

### First reading

7 February 2017

Fiona Patten MLC (Fiona Patten's Reason Party—Northern Metropolitan) introduces the 'Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017' into the Legislative Council. The bill would "provide for the licensing and operation of a medically supervised injecting centre for a trial period of 18 months".

### Second reading

8 February 2017

Fiona Patten MLC moves that the bill be read for a second time and outlines its principles and purpose, with reference to the coronial inquest into the death of Ms A and the number of heroin overdoses in Victoria.

The proposed bill would:

- Enable the licensing and operation of a medically supervised injecting centre for a period of 18 months.
- Need to be supervised by a medical practitioner.

*"This trial will save lives, reduce ambulance call-outs, reduce discarded syringes and provide a gateway to drug treatment and counselling. I commend the bill to the house."*

– Fiona Patten MLC, *Hansard*, 8 February 2017

*Premier Daniel Andrews rejects coroner's call for a safe injecting room*

– *The Age*, 21 February 2017

*"... This is a disgusting yet necessary evil to ensure people are safe... But then again what are we saying? It's ok to shoot up?..."*

– Comment in response to news article, 20 February 2017

- Require the collection of comprehensive data for a detailed review of the trial. The review would be tabled in both houses of parliament.
- Allow the centre to be overseen by the secretary of the Department of Health and the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police.
- Require the centre to facilitate access or referrals to a range of healthcare and drug treatment services.

# 4.1

## Introduction into the Legislative Council

Second reading debate: 22 February 2017



### Gavin Jennings MLC

Member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Special Minister of State

Australian Labor Party

“... I acknowledge the spirit, the intent and the concern that underpins this piece of legislation and the desire and the desire of Ms Patten and other members of the Victorian community to try to prevent the incidence of untimely deaths in our community and scourge of heroin use where it affects so tragically the loss of life and opportunity for many of our citizens.”



### Inga Peulich MLC

Member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Liberal Party

“There is no reason whatsoever for us to cave in to drugs and those who are involved in benefiting from drugs or their manufacture or distribution... we need to redouble our efforts rather than... increase the risk to our young people by sending a message that it is okay and that it is fine, thereby increasing the number of people who actually use drugs.”



### Colleen Hartland MLC

Member for Western Metropolitan Region

Australian Greens

“... I heard all of those debates from 1999 on, because living in Footscray I attended all of those public meetings about whether we should have a supervised injecting room when the street use of heroin was at its absolute worst. We got Health Works, which has made a huge difference to the community, but we never got the supervised injecting room we need.”



### Dr Rachel Carling-Jenkins MLC

Member for Western Metropolitan Region

Independent

“I rise this afternoon to speak on [the bill]. I will say right from the beginning that I will be opposing the bill... The bill quite simply is flawed. It fails academically. The evidence does not stack up. It fails vulnerable people, who are encouraged and indeed enabled to continue their risk-taking behaviour.”

# 4.1

## Introduction into the Legislative Council

### Referral to Committee

22 February 2017

James Purcell (Vote 1 Local Jobs, Western Victoria) moves an amendment proposing that instead of considering the second reading stage further, the Council refers the bill to the Legal and Social Issues Committee. This is called a reasoned amendment. The committee is instructed to report back to parliament no later than 5 September 2017, with a review and consideration of the:

1. Recommendations in Coroner Hawkin's Finding – Inquest into the Death of Ms A, delivered on 20 February 2017, and other relevant reports;
2. Nature and extent of current, relevant regulations; and
3. Nature and extent of associated, relevant policing policy.

The division (vote) on James Purcell's amendment passes, 20 Ayes, 18 Noes, and the bill is referred to the Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee. The debate is adjourned until after the committee report has been tabled.



*“I believe the amendment gives us time to have a decent look at the bill that is being put forward. That committee will have a chance to... have consideration of those particular aspects, in particular the recommendations coming out of the coroner's report.”*

— James Purcell MP  
*Hansard, 22 February 2017*

# 4.1

## Introduction into the Legislative Council

### Committee report is tabled and debate continues

7 September 2017

The committee report is presented to the Legislative Council by the Chair of the Legal and Social Issues Committee Margaret Fitzherbert MLC (Liberal Party - Southern Metropolitan).

Over the following days a number of members give speeches in parliament, presenting their position on the bill and the committee report. This includes Fiona Patten MP, who, on 20 September, tables a petition for the house's consideration.

Just over a month later the government introduces a new bill into the Legislative Assembly, which would allow for a Medically Supervised Injecting Centre over a longer trial period. No further debate takes place on the original bill.

### Legislative Council E-Petitions

#### Title:

*Support 'Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017'.*

#### Grievance:

The petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council that preventable heroin overdose deaths are occurring in Victoria at an average of three per week.

#### Action:

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council pass the 'Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017'.

#### Closing Date:

18-09-2017

#### Total signatures:

439



Learn more about  
E-Petitions in the  
Legislative Council

# 4.2

## Committee inquiry

### The Legal and Social Issues Committee

On 22 February 2017, the Legislative Council referred the 'Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017' to the Legal and Social Issues Committee.

The Legal and Social Issues Committee is a standing committee appointed by the Legislative Council and is made up of representatives from different political parties.



Margaret Fitzherbert (LP) Chair



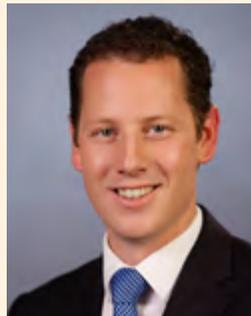
Nina Springle (Greens) Deputy Chair



Daniel Mulino (ALP)



Fiona Patten (RP)



Joshua Morris (LP)



Inga Peulich (LP)



Adem Somyurek (ALP)



Jaclyn Symes (ALP)

Members of the Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee (2017)

# 4.2

## Committee inquiry

### Terms of reference

The terms of reference include the scope of the research for the committee as well as the length of time for the committee inquiry. These are set by the house when referring any inquiry, including a bill, to a committee.

### Public submissions

The committee called for public submissions to the inquiry in March and April 2017. They received a total of 49 responses: 46 said they would support an MSIC trial and three would prefer other alternatives. The submissions were received from a wide range of sources. The submissions asked the committee to consider the following ideas and issues:

- Access to additional facilities including extra medical support, treatment facilities and social support services. For example, access to housing, rehabilitation and needle exchange programs.
- Operation of a/the MSIC including staffing, training for staff, reviewing age restrictions for more youth focused services, and reviewing the types of drugs permitted at the facility.
- Legislative considerations included extending the trial period and clarifying what might be considered a “small amount of drugs”. Other considerations included reviewing criminalisation and sentencing for example decriminalising drug possession for personal use at the MSIC.
- Additional strategies for addressing the issue included use of mobile facilities, providing access to naloxone, and encouraging police to take a health-based response when responding to drug-related incidents.
- Preferred alternatives to MSICs included increasing policing, emphasising rehabilitation, abstinence, reduction of drug supply, and use of Naltrexone implants.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

#### (Legislation and References)

#### Terms of Reference

58th Parliament

#### Inquiry into the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017

On 22 February 2017, the Legislative Council agreed to the following motion:

That this bill be referred to the Legal and Social Issues Committee for report, no later than 5 September 2017, on a review and consideration of the –

1. recommendations in Coroner Hawkins’ Finding – Inquest into the Death of Ms A, delivered on 20 February 2017 and other relevant reports
2. nature and extent of current, relevant regulations
3. and nature and extent of associated, relevant policing policy.

# 4.2

# Committee inquiry

## Public submissions



3

### Legal

Community legal organisations



3

### Academic

University researchers



10

### Advocacy & interest groups

Including religious, student, research, professional and membership groups



15

### Community support groups and residents

Social support organisations, residents and individuals with lived experience of drug use



3

### Emergency Services

Police, fire, ambulance



1

### Other

Joint legal/health submission



13

### Health

Health advocates, experts and health providers



1

### Local Government

Yarra City Council

# 4.2

# Committee inquiry

## Excerpts from public submissions



### Neighbourhood Justice Services

“In response to the Terms of Reference... the following recommendations are posited for consideration

1. Introduction of an Integrated Health Facility including a Supervised Injecting Room... staffed by nurses and allied health staff ...
2. Increased funding for street based assertive needles and syringe Alcohol and Other Drug workers...
3. Increased access to Naloxone...”



### Victoria Street Traders Association

“We make the following recommendations:

1. Consider the CCTV camera ... to create a safe, clean and well monitored environment ...
2. Provide a working group with a clear term of reference, expertise and resources ...
3. Engage in ongoing discussions ... to identify a holistic and appropriate solution in the longer term.

... As a contributing sector in the Yarra community, we want to continue working with the relevant authorities to ensure the vulnerable people can receive the best support possible.”



### Drug Free Australia

“The cost of saving that one life per year in its injecting room would fund around 950 Naltrexone maintenance implants ... Upon the principle of distributive justice, the Victorian government should choose the programming that guarantees more lives saved for the same funding. 100 vs 950 protected. One life or 9-10? This isn't a choice.”



### Local resident

“As a long term resident of Abbotsford, I have seen the utter futility of current legal procedures to effect the number of drug transactions ... Addiction needs to be monitored with safe facilities provided ... the trade needs to be stopped by providing supervised injecting.”



The full record of submissions received for this inquiry are available on the parliament's website

## 4.2

# Committee inquiry

## Public hearing

The Committee held a public hearing with seven witnesses on 7 June 2017.

Name	Title	Organisation
Judge Sara Hinchey	State Coroner	Coroners Court of Victoria
Dr Jeremy Dwyer Case Investigation Officer	Coroners Prevention Unit	Coroners Court of Victoria
Mr Robert Richter OC	President, Victorian Chapter	Australian Drug and Law Reform Foundation
Mr David Stanley	Treasurer	Australian Drug and Law Reform Foundation
Mr Geoff Munro	National Policy Manager	Alcohol and Drug Foundation
Ms Daisy Brooke	Program Development and Evaluation Head	Alcohol and Drug Foundation
Mr Dean Flynn	Victorian Director	Australian Christian Lobby



View the full  
transcripts from the  
public hearing.

# 4.2

## Committee inquiry

### Excerpts from transcripts of the public hearing



#### Judge Sara Hinchey

Coroners Court of Victoria

“...the recommendations in the death of Ms A did not specify the means by which a supervised injecting facility trial should be established, rather the recommendation was that the relevant minister take the necessary steps to establish that facility... while Coroner Hawkins recommended the establishment of a supervised injecting facility trial, a common theme of the evidence before her was that a supervised injecting facility is not in itself a silver bullet for addressing injecting drug-related harm, rather it needs to be included as part of a multifaceted approach to what is a public health issue.”



#### Australian Drug and Law reform foundation

“There is a degree of complete hypocrisy in terms of opposition to a facility such as this... It is extraordinary that whilst we provide safe-syringes – clean, new syringes – we do not allow the people who are going to go out and use them in a safe facility, but we expect them to go into some backyard or into some alleyway and inject. We do not have a panacea to drug addiction but we have ways of actually saving lives... We are talking evidence-based and we have the evidence base from Sydney and from the overseas facilities.”



#### Geoff Munro

Alcohol and Drug Foundation

“Naloxone is available on prescription, but for many people it is not subsidised, so it can be very expensive to purchase. The value of naloxone is that it provides an instantaneous resuscitation of a person who has overdosed on an opioid. It cannot be used to reverse a high and people cannot overdose on it because it reverses the effect of an opioid... We believe it should be subsidised because this is a way of saving people’s lives even if they are not in a safe or supervised injection facility.”



#### Australian Christian Lobby

“We have taken great efforts federally to stop the import of illicit drugs into Australia, and yet what we are considering here is sending a message that injecting illicit drugs can be safe and that people can attend these premises, use their illicit drugs and then emerge out on the streets and there will be no particular consequences... We are concerned that this will result in increased drug use... When you have the Sydney safe injecting room... they describe situations of drug dealers and drug users creating a very difficult amenity area around that facility.”

# 4.2

## Committee inquiry

### Research

In addition to evidence gathered through submissions and public hearings, the Committee also conducted research, which included:

- Site visits to North Richmond and Kings Cross
- Meetings with North Richmond Community Health Centre, local residents and the Victoria Street Business Association
- Conducting a literature review (including data from international MSICs)

### Reporting to the parliament

On 7 September 2017, Committee Chair Margaret Fitzherbert MLC (Liberal Party – Southern Metropolitan Region) tabled the Committee report, including appendices, extracts from proceedings and minority reports, together with transcripts of evidence.

*“The Committee visited Australia’s only supervised injecting centre in Kings Cross and met with its staff and local police.*

*The Committee also visited North Richmond, where we took part in a roundtable discussion with staff and other stakeholders at the North Richmond Community Health Centre, and another roundtable discussion with the Victoria Street Business Association and representatives of the Vietnamese community.*

*We also walked through streets and lane ways in the area to see conditions for ourselves. Along the way, we encountered a number of residents and spoke with them about their experiences and views.*

*The anecdotal feedback we received from the people we met along the way was frank and compelling.”*

— Legal and Social Issues Committee inquiry report, September 2017, p. xi

# 4.2

## Committee inquiry

### Findings from the inquiry into the Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre Bill 2017

#### Finding 1

The Victorian bill proposes an 18-month trial of an MSIC in North Richmond. It does not specify a street or location. The MSIC's licence would only continue if the centre were to satisfy a review determining whether the trial met its objectives.

#### Finding 2

It is appropriate that an MSIC is supervised by a medical practitioner during operating hours.

#### Finding 3

The objectives of the bill reflect the health and community harms associated with intravenous drug use. The inclusion of these objectives provides a clear framework for an assessment of a trial.

#### Finding 4

The views of the community, all stakeholders and local government must be considered when deciding matters relating to an MSIC.

#### Finding 5

Both the NSW Act and the Victorian bill require health professionals to form part of the MSIC staff. In addition, the Victorian bill requires mental health services to be provided.

#### Finding 6

Drug use in North Richmond has reached crisis level. It is a major concern for residents, business owners and emergency services.

#### Finding 7

There is a shortage of doctors and chemists dispensing methadone in North Richmond and a shortage of drug rehabilitation beds across Victoria.

#### Finding 8

MSICs improve the health of injecting drug users and reduce signs of drug use in surrounding streets.

#### Finding 9

Evaluations of the MSIC in Sydney found evidence of public amenity benefits to the local community and reduced demand for ambulance services. The evaluations did not find evidence of the MSIC having a 'honey pot' effect on crime.

#### Finding 10

46 of 49 submissions in this Inquiry, of which three were from local residents, support a trial of an MSIC in North Richmond.

#### Finding 11

Harm reduction strategies based on public health principles, such as needle and syringe programs, do not contravene international conventions.

# 4.2

## Committee inquiry

### Minority reports

Two minority reports were included in the final report: one from the Deputy Chair Nina Springle MP (Greens – South Eastern Metropolitan) and one from committee member Inga Peulich MLC (Liberal Party – South Eastern Metropolitan).

### Recommendations

There were no recommendations included in this report. While this is unusual it is not unprecedented, especially for bill inquiries.

*“What is also clear from the bulk of the submissions and testimonies the committee received is that an MSIC facility should be viewed as just one part of a suite of responses to areas of chronically high and public drug use.*

*That a facility such as this serves as a vehicle to keep drug users alive until they are ready to be transitioned into other health and social services including rehabilitation...”*

– Nina Springle MLC, minority report



[Download the full committee report](#)

*“As a member of the Legal and Social Issues Committee, I am unable to support the proposal for the establishment of a drug injecting facility in Victoria Street Richmond because:*

*The terms of reference are too narrow to adequately consider the ramifications of establishing a drug injecting centre...*

*Whilst there has been a well organised pro drug injecting room campaign around the committee’s and parliament’s consideration of this bill... there has been chronically inadequate consultation with residents... In fact, only 3 residents made written submissions to the LSRC inquiry on this bill.”*

– Inga Peulich MLC, minority report

# 4.2

## Committee inquiry

### Government response

On 31 October 2017, the government introduced a new ‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017’ into the Legislative Assembly,

allowing for a longer trial period. Premier Daniel Andrews commented at the time that the government decided to change its policy based on the evidence provided by the parliamentary committee.



*MSIC support rally*

— Broadcast on HSV 7 News, 27 August 2017



*“The politics of this issue are all over the place... The Committee’s lack of any recommendations also needs to be scrutinised. How could they not have come up with even one recommendation when the weight of the evidence was so powerful...”*

— Comment in response to news article, 8 September 2017



*No safe injecting room for Vic drug crisis*

— SBS, 7 September 2017



*“Maybe they should get rid of the housing commission flats and clean up Victoria Street? The area has been a known drug haven for decades and the dealers will continue to make their money.”*

— Comment in response to news article, 17 September 2017

# 4.3

## Introduction into the Legislative Assembly

### First reading

31 October 2017

Martin Foley MP, Minister for Mental Health (Australian Labor Party – Member for Albert Park) introduces a new bill into the Legislative Assembly which allows for a longer trial period for the proposed Medically Supervised Injecting Centre.



*“I love how they use the word safe! There’s nothing safe about injecting your self with toxic chemicals. It simply doesn’t work!”*

– Twitter comment, 30 October 2017



*Daniel Andrews has change of heart on Richmond safe injecting room trial because current drug policy ‘not working’*

– ABC News, 31 October 2017



*Victoria to trial supervised drug injection room amid heroin crisis*

– News.com.au, 31 October 2017



*“...All the data shows this saves lives. Compassion, forgiveness and care is how we must see health issues...”*

– Twitter comment, 1 November 2017

# 4.3

## Introduction into the Legislative Assembly

### Second reading

1 November 2017

Martin Foley MP moves that the bill be read for a second time and outlines the principles and purpose of the bill.

The reasons for the bill were as follows:

- The adverse effects of drugs, including heroin on Victoria
- The growing number of overdose deaths
- The complex nature of drug addiction and the need for a “multi-pronged approach”
- The need for harm minimisation and increased community safety
- MSICs use of referrals to drug treatments and other services
- The success of other supervised injecting facilities around the world.



*“A medically supervised injecting centre is one of a broader range of measures required to address this significant public health issue. Without action, deaths and other harms from drug overdoses will continue to have a devastating, costly and avoidable effect on the Victorian community.*

*This bill establishes a comprehensive legal framework for the licensing and operation of a medically supervised injecting centre for a trial period. It incorporates appropriate safeguards to ensure that the needs and concerns of local government, relevant stakeholders and the community are addressed.*

*It is time to establish a medically supervised injecting centre in Victoria.*

*I commend the bill to the house.”*

— Martin Foley MP, *Hansard*, 1 November 2017

# 4.3

## Introduction into the Legislative Assembly

### Second reading debate



**Emma Kealy MP**  
Member for Lowan  
The Nationals

“I rise today to add my contribution as the lead speaker for the Liberals and The Nationals... From the outset I would like to make it clear that we will be opposing this bill... it is clear that this is drug policy on the run. It is concerning that this is the result of a serious backflip that started happening about a month ago.”



**Richard Wynne MP**  
Member for Richmond  
Minister for Planning  
Australian Labor Party

“I rise to make a contribution to this very important bill... I do so in the context of what is widely recognised to be a very courageous, balanced and compassionate response by this government to the scourge of heroin addiction – the focus of which has for so long been in my electorate and particularly in the North Richmond area.”



**John Pesutto MP**  
Member for Hawthorn  
Liberal Party

“... We do disagree with [the member for Richmond]... I want to deal with a few issues, and I do so indicating at the outset that this is a very complex issue. Although we might disagree over this bill... I think we all want the same thing: we want to save lives. The real question is what will work.”

# 4.3

## Introduction into the Legislative Assembly

### Second reading debate



**Sam Hibbins MP**  
Member for Prahan  
Victorian Greens

“... This medically supervised injecting centre will save lives and it will reduce the number of overdoses that are currently occurring in the back streets, alleyways and bathrooms in North Richmond. It will act as a gateway to the services and treatments that those people will need. It will get used syringes off the streets. It is long overdue.”



**Suzanna Sheed MP**  
Member for Shepparton  
Independent

“... This is a Bill that offers a framework for establishing a medically supervised injecting centre trial. It is in response to the increasing number of heroin deaths in North Richmond... I heard the minister indicate that there had been up to 190 deaths in the area and that was part of the driving force for this to happen.”



**Russell Northe MP**  
Member for Morwell  
Independent

“... Having considered the legislation and having received various correspondence on the matter, I must confess that part of me is torn. On one hand I unfortunately know people who live in pretty horrible circumstances and persons who have passed away from heroin overdoses... unfortunately we have had a wave of people and generations who in reality have had to deal with drugs and drug addiction.”

# 4.3

## Introduction into the Legislative Assembly

### Third reading

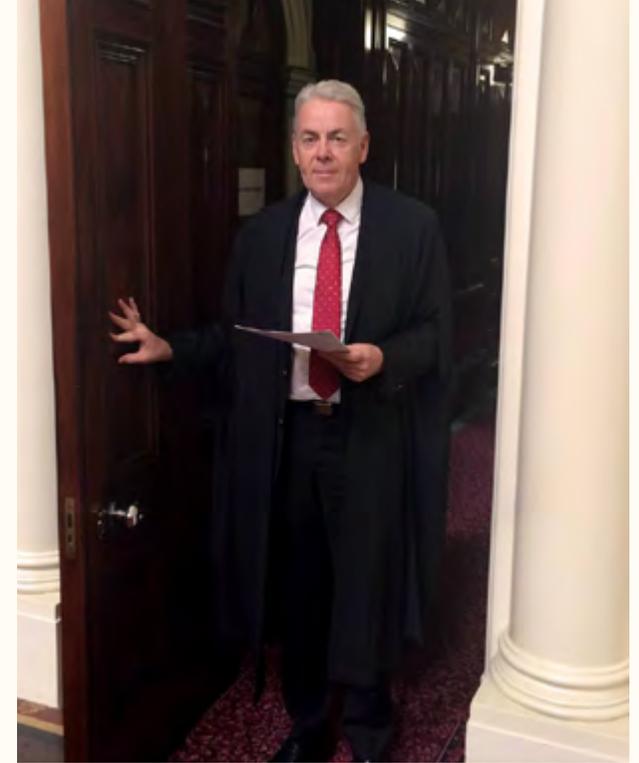
16 November 2017

The bill is read a third time and the house divides (votes): 46 Ayes and 35 Noes. Having passed the Legislative Assembly, a message is sent to notify the Legislative Council.

When the Legislative Assembly has agreed to a bill, the Serjeant-at-Arms takes a message signed by the Speaker and a certified copy of the bill to the Legislative Council. (If the bill starts in the Council, the Usher of the Black Rod does this in reverse, with a message signed by the President.)



Parliament staff preparing a message



Usher of the Black Rod Richard Willis delivering a message to the Legislative Assembly in 2017

# 4.4

# Legislative Council review

When a bill has passed the Legislative Assembly, the official message sent to the Legislative Council is read by the President.

## First reading

21 November 2017

Jaala Pulford MLC (Minister for Agriculture, Australian Labor Party – Western Victoria) moves a motion that introduces the ‘Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017’.

## Second reading

21 November 2017

After the statement of compatibility, Jaala Pulford MP moves that the bill be read for a second time and outlines the principles and purpose of the bill. The debate is adjourned and recommences on 14 December 2017.

## Second reading debate



### Mary Wooldridge MLC

Member for Eastern Metropolitan

Liberal Party

“... I have outlined some serious concerns we have in relation to this bill: how some of the detail has not been thought through; how we will even know the impact of this service; whether people will be facilitated to access treatment services rather than just provided with a facility for the injection of drugs; what drugs will be included; and whether there are clinical supports, guidelines and protocols in place..”



### Colleen Hartland MLC

Member for Western Metropolitan

Victorian Greens

“... I was involved in a campaign to establish a supervised injecting room in Footscray. For me it was very much that people would buy drugs at the Footscray railway station, walk to my street and often inject in the street or on my verandah... But the thing that I was terrified about was that I would come home one day and find someone dead on my verandah..”

# 4.4

# Legislative Council review

## Second reading debate



### Nazih Elasmr MLC

Member for Northern Metropolitan

Australian Labor Party

“On Wednesday, 30 August, I attended the Yarra Drug & Health Forum walking tour of the alleyways and lanes of Richmond... As I walked around Richmond, I was stunned to see the number of used syringes strewn all over the pavements and roadway... It was deeply distressing to see the incredible waste of potential of the many people caught up in the drug scene.”



### Fiona Patten MLC

Member for Northern Metropolitan

Fiona Patten's Reason Party

“I will not speak to the specifics of this bill, because I think I have spoken fairly expansively on this issue in my second reading speech... and I have been on the public record very broadly indicating my absolute support for this legislation. What I propose to do today is to clarify some of the matters that were raised.”



### Luke O'Sullivan MLC

Member for Northern Victoria

The Nationals

“Every one of us has got to have a degree of personal responsibility in everything that we do. I cannot support this bill, because I cannot sit by and be a part of a legislature that is saying it is okay to take drugs, because I just do not believe that is the case... Therefore I cannot support this legislation.”

## Third reading

14 December 2017

The bill is read a third time and the house divides (votes) on the bill: 21 Ayes and 18 Noes.

## Royal Assent

19 December 2017

Having passed both houses of parliament, an address is sent to inform the Governor of Victoria. *The Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Act 2017* receives Royal Assent from Her Excellency, the Honourable Linda Dessau, Governor of Victoria.



[View the \*Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment \(Medically Supervised Injecting Centre\) Act 2017\*](#)

# Implementation and review of the MSIC trial

## 5.1 Implementation

## 5.2 Review

Key findings and  
recommendations

Discussions in parliament  
following the review

# 5.1 Implementation

Once announced, the MSIC trial had a rapid establishment period, reflecting escalating public health and safety concerns about public injecting in North Richmond. North Richmond Community Health (NRCH) was licensed to operate the MSIC for two years starting 30 June 2018.

Commencement of the trial focused on the following priorities:

- Getting the service operational to provide an accessible place for injecting and other services to people who inject drugs
- Attracting the target service users to do their injecting in the facility
- Ensuring a safe and appropriate response to anyone who experienced an overdose.



Inside of an MSIC. Image: AAP

# 5.1 Implementation

Operation of the North Richmond centre was informed by the Sydney facility, including documentation and protocols, especially regarding treatment guidelines, data collection and reporting.

Unlike the Sydney MSIC however, which operates from a shopfront location with links to local service providers, the North Richmond MSIC is co-located within a broader community health service.

Implementation of the trial ran in stages, with an initial focus on the supervision of injecting drug use in a transitional facility, then a move to a larger facility on the same site with longer operating hours and additional client capacity (from 11 to 20 injecting booth positions). This provided better access for people with an increase in the number of supervised injections alongside additional capacity to provide clinical and other services in new consulting rooms.



Inside of an MSIC. Image: AAP

# 5.1 Implementation



Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews addressing the media to announce the two-year trial of an MSIC in Richmond, October 31, 2017. Image: AAP

## MSIC guidelines, North Richmond Community Health

- Once users enter, they are assessed and registered.
- In the injecting area they wash their hands and are provided with sterile injecting equipment
- The used equipment is disposed of safely
- In the after-care area they can meet with health professionals to discuss rehabilitation and medical care.



Read more about the MSIC operations at North Richmond Community Health



Review the regulations that inform the operation of the Richmond MSIC

# 5.1 Implementation



The Richmond MSIC. Image: AAP

3,200

Overdoses managed

119,000

Number of visits

13,000

Health and social support interventions

0

Fatalities

Data for the first 18 months of operation.  
Source: *Review of the Medically Supervised  
Injecting Room*, June 2020

# 5.1 Implementation

*The Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment Act 2017* included an instruction for the Minister for Health to arrange a review of the MSIC trial. An independent panel of experts considered relevant research, surveys of the local community and service users, direct observation and communication with a range of stakeholders. The focus of the review was the first 18 months of the MSIC's operation (June 2018 to December 2019), and it was presented to both houses of the Victorian parliament on 16 June 2020.



*"...And here I was thinking drugs were illegal. 🙄"*

— Facebook comment, 29 June 2018



*"Close it down... I am a ex addict and I think it's the most stupid idea and it's not going to stop their drug use."*

— Reddit comment, November 2018



*"#junkies not using #Safeinjectingrooms not obeying #Rules or thinking of others. Who would have thunk it. #Victoria #Auspol."*

— Tweet, 20 May 2019



*"If [he] shuts the lifesaving injecting facility in Richmond, the Ambulance Union will hold him to account for every death in the gutter, every overdose in a playground and every assault on our members that occurs as a result."*

— Tweet, November 2018



*"All day, every day: As a resident I support the concept but believe it should be 24 hours a day."*

— Response to reader poll in *The Age*, 26 June 2019

# 5.1 Implementation



*“Kids at that school already see daytime drug deals between junkies as well as people who are out of their minds. I don’t really see how the safe injection room will really expose them to more than what they’ve already seen.”*

– Reddit comment, June 2018



*Melbourne’s injection centre to open longer.*

– 9 News Online, 20 April 2019



*Needles on the ground, smashed windows and fears of violence: Horrifying reality of Melbourne’s drug epidemic revealed as neighbours countdown to the opening of a legal injecting room where addicts can shoot up.*

– The Daily Mail Australia, 4 June 2018



*Inject common sense.*

– The Herald Sun, 22 May 2019



*‘It’s saving lives’: Community rallies to support Melbourne’s drug-injecting room.*

– The Guardian, 16 September 2018



*‘It’s destroying a community’: Readers have say on injecting room.*

– The Age, 24 June 2019

# 5.2 Review

## Key findings and recommendations

The review was published in June 2020. The panel found that North Richmond Community Health had successfully implemented a medically supervised injecting room. They noted that, while the implementation remained a work in progress, the trial succeeded in achieving most of its objectives:

- The MSIC had more than 119,000 visits in the first 18 months, making it one of the busiest in the world
- There were no overdose deaths in the MSIC, despite 271 extremely serious overdoses
- While it was not possible to say with certainty how many people would have died without the MSIC, international approaches to modelling suggest at least 21–27 deaths had been avoided
- There was a reduction in ambulance attendances due to overdoses
- There was a reduction in reports of public injecting

- Many MSIC service users had accessed other health and support services
- The MSIC provided screening, assessment and treatment initiation for blood-borne infections

Some of the objectives had not been achieved by the end of 2019:

- Amenity had not improved
- Local people reported no change in their experience of seeing discarded injecting equipment

On 5 June 2020, the government accepted the recommendations from the independent review of the MSIC trial located in Richmond.

From August to November 2020, consultation took place for consideration of a second supervised injecting room, based in the City of Melbourne, led by former Victoria Police Chief Commissioner Ken Lay AO APM.

*“Given that North Richmond has long been a major site of heroin use and related harms in Victoria, and that the trial has successfully reduced harms for service users, the Panel call on the government to continue the trial of the Medically Supervised Injecting Room at North Richmond Community Health for a further three years.*”

*“Given also that there are other parts of the state with high concentrations of injecting drug use and related harms, the Panel recommends that the government expands the current trial to include another supervised injecting service.”*

– Medically Supervised Injecting Room Review Panel, *Review of the Medically Supervised Injecting Room*, June 2020, p vii.

# 5.2 Review

## Discussion in parliament following the review (2020)



### Martin Foley MP

Member for Albert Park  
Minister for Ambulance Services  
Australian Labor Party

“... The Andrews Labor Government is committed to reducing the harm associated with alcohol and other drug use and saving lives. Since the [MSIC] opened over a year ago, over 2,500 overdoses have been safely managed—some of which may otherwise have been fatal or resulted in serious injury. An independent panel is reviewing the trial and will report on their findings in 2020. The report will be tabled in parliament and inform future decisions about the trial...”



### Georgie Crozier MLC

Member for Southern Metropolitan  
Shadow Minister for Health  
Liberal Party

“... Throughout the report it makes comment, including, and I quote, that ‘these services have not yet been fully realised’, ‘there was not yet evidence’ and ‘results are not observable’. Whilst I note some of these quotes are not in full context, the point I am making is that it is clear that there remain many unknowns with this trial...”



### James Merlino MP

Member for Monbulk  
Minister for Education  
Australian Labor Party

“... There is a deep engagement and process not just with the City of Melbourne but with all stakeholders, with the broader community. If there is a better location, that will be considered. We said that very, very clearly from the very beginning... A site has been identified, but we have made it very, very clear if there is a better location, that will be considered...”



### Michael O’Brien MP

Member for Malvern  
Leader of the Opposition  
Liberal Party

“... The City of Melbourne, including the recently re-elected Lord Mayor... oppose the Labor government’s proposed location of a second medically supervised injecting room near the Queen Victoria Market. The local traders... and local residents are opposed to this location. Will the minister listen to residents and market stallholders... and ditch this proposal to locate a drug injecting facility next to one of Victoria’s tourist icons?”

# 5.2 Review

## Discussion in parliament following the review (2021)



**Tim Read MP**

Member for Brunswick  
Victorian Greens

“... If we care about reducing heroin addiction and use, the most significant issue that we need to address is not the location of the second medically supervised injecting room; it is getting more people onto the best treatment available by removing cost barriers for opioid substitution therapy and increasing the access to nurses or doctors who can prescribe it...”



**Emma Kealy MP**

Member for Lowan  
The Nationals

“... On Friday Richmond West Primary School was sent into lockdown because of a person experiencing a dangerous and violent drug-induced psychosis outside the school. Yesterday the school was again sent into lockdown ... Does the minister stand by the decision that an injecting room next to a primary school is both safe and appropriate?...”



**Bernie Finn MLC**

Member for Western Metropolitan  
Liberal Party

“... Last Wednesday evening I attended a sizeable rally in the Nicholson Street Mall in Footscray, along with Dr Crozier, Dr Cumming and a number of other doctors from all over the west. It was a very clear message sent to the government that we do not want a drug-injecting room in Footscray. That was very loud, very clear...”



**Katie Hall MP**

Member for Footscray  
Australian Labor Party

“... I believe in harm minimisation. I do not believe in demonising drug users who have a very serious health problem... I remember a time in Footscray when drug use was out of control, in the late 1990s. It was a terrible time in our community. Things have got better, but I know that there are still issues in my community and there are still very vulnerable people...”

## 5.2 Review

### Commentary from the community (2020)



*“Each and every one of these people are not simply numbers on a spreadsheet. They are stories of hope #harmreduction #MSIC.”*

— Tweet in response to a 9 News segment,  
31 May 2020



*“This is not Amsterdam, we don’t have people here who respect one another, these rooms should not be in the City near Residential C Zones. What is going on, why not in a commercial area where people do not reside!”*

— Comment in response to a news.com.au article,  
19 August 2020



*Safe injecting room trial extended in North Richmond, new facility slated for near Queen Victoria Market in Melbourne CBD.*

— ABC News, 5 June 2020



*Injecting room: No other site considered, as report looms.*

— CBD News, David Schout, 25 November 2020.

## 5.2 Review

### Commentary from the community (2021)



*“Harsher punishments for those dealing in drugs. It works in other countries. Why not enforce it here. Those who disagree haven’t seen first hand the terrible pain of a family with a son or daughter being destroyed by these drugs.”*

– Comment in response to news.com.au article, 25 March 2021



*#Melbourne City Council has voted in favour of a #SupervisedInjecting room in the CBD, #Melbourne... #HarmReduction*

– Twitter, 26 May 2021



*Addiction workers back push for more Victorian safe injecting rooms in Melbourne suburbs*

– ABC News, 11 May 2021



*Second safe-injecting room to be modelled on Kings Cross facility*

– The Age, 19 May 2021

# Public Debate

6.1 Media

6.2 Social Media

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
Drug injecting rooms: What do you think?	ABC Local	24 May 2011	Richelle Hunt & Simon Leo Brown	Victoria St Traders Premier Ted Baillieu Talkback radio callers	<a href="http://www.abc.net.au">www.abc.net.au</a>
Baillieu vetoes injecting room plan injecting room	ABC News	18 May 2011	N/A	Ted Baillieu Yarra City Council Head of Kings Cross	<a href="http://www.abc.net.au">www.abc.net.au</a>
Angry Richmond traders and residents say heroin-shooting gallery is not the answer	Herald Sun	15 February 2015	Andrew Jefferson	Government Victoria St Traders Residents Yarra City Council Greens Reason Party Health associations Police	<a href="http://www.heraldsun.com.au">www.heraldsun.com.au</a>
Fed up with drug deals, Richmond traders support mobile injecting centre plan	The Age	17 May 2016	Clay Lucas	Richmond Traders Victoria St Business Association Academic experts Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association Former Premier Jeff Kennett	<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a>

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
Rooms with a view to giving ice addicts a future	The Guardian	20 June 2016	Matt Noffs & Alex Wodak	Evidence from overseas MSICs Police in Kings Cross Drug reformers	<a href="http://www.theguardian.com">www.theguardian.com</a>
Inside Melbourne's sinister four-block 'heroin rectangle' where more than 20 drug users die from overdoses every YEAR – and syringes litter streets just metres from trendy \$1m hipster homes	The Daily Mail	11 December 2016	Josh Hanrahan	<i>The Age</i> Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association	<a href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk">www.dailymail.co.uk</a>
Premier Daniel Andrews rejects coroner's call for a safe injecting room	The Age	21 February 2017	Richard Willingham	Government Greens Reason Party	<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a>
MSIC support rally	Broadcast on HSV 7 News	27 August 2017	Jodi Lee	Local Residents Victoria St Traders Government Greens	N/A
No safe injecting room for Vic drug crisis	SBS News	7 September 2017	AAP	Government Reason Party Greens	<a href="http://www.sbs.com.au">www.sbs.com.au</a>

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
The rejection of a safe injecting room for Richmond is a tragedy	The Sydney Morning Herald	8 September 2017	Kathleen Maltzahn	Person with lived experience Sydney MSIC Legal expert	<a href="http://www.smh.com.au">www.smh.com.au</a>
Melbourne safe injecting room trial set to get the go-ahead	ABC News	30 October 2017	Richard Willingham	Government Reason Party Opposition	<a href="http://www.abc.net.au">www.abc.net.au</a>
Daniel Andrews has change of heart on Richmond safe injecting room trial because current drug policy 'not working'	ABC News	31 October 2017	Richard Willingham	Government Reason Party First responders Opposition	<a href="http://www.abc.net.au">www.abc.net.au</a>
Victoria to trial supervised drug injection room amid heroin crisis	news.com.au	N/A	Ally Foster	Government Uniting MSIC	<a href="http://www.news.com.au">www.news.com.au</a>
More rehab beds, better treatment and safer streets	Media release	31 October 2017	Premier of Victoria, the Hon. Daniel Andrews	Government	<a href="http://www.premiervic.gov.au">www.premiervic.gov.au</a>

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
Announcement of MSIC trial	Broadcast on ABC News	31 October 2017	Richard Willingham	Government Greens Reason Party Opposition	N/A
Needles on the ground, smashed windows and fears of violence: Horrifying reality of Melbourne's drug epidemic revealed as neighbours countdown to the opening of a legal injecting room where addicts can shoot up	Daily Mail Australia	4 June 2018	Nicole Pierre & Daniel Piotowski	Residents Advocacy groups Victoria St Traders	<a href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk">www.dailymail.co.uk</a>
School fortified against Daniel Andrews' drug injecting room	Media release	8 June 2018	Tim Smith	Opposition	<a href="http://www.matthewguy.com.au">www.matthewguy.com.au</a>
"It's saving lives": Community rallies to support Melbourne's drug-injecting room	The Guardian	16 Septmeber 2018	Luke Henriques-Gomes	Medical director of Richmond MSIC Government Opposition Local advocacy group Residents Local school	<a href="http://www.theguardian.com">www.theguardian.com</a>

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
Victorian Liberals to shut down injecting room in a week if elected	The Age	21 November 2018	Adam Carey & Aisha Dow	Opposition Government Victoria St Traders Health experts	<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a>
Victorian Liberals vow to shut Richmond's safe injecting room if elected	VICE	18 April 2019		Opposition	<a href="http://www.vice.com">www.vice.com</a>
Opening hours extended, security boosted at Richmond injecting room	The Age	19 April 2019	Paul Sakkal	Residents First responders	<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a>
Melbourne's injection centre to open longer	9news.com.au	20 April 2019	AAP	Government Residents Business owners First responders Opposition	<a href="http://www.9news.com.au">www.9news.com.au</a>
Melbourne's safe injecting room trial saving lives but upsetting locals	ABC News	20 April 2019	N/A	City of Yarra Opposition Government	<a href="http://www.9news.com.au">www.9news.com.au</a>
Saving more lives and making North Richmond safer	Media release	20 April 2019	Minister for Mental Health	Government	<a href="http://www.premier.vic.gov.au">www.premier.vic.gov.au</a>

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
Calls to move safe-injecting room rebuffed	NewsGP	21 May 2019	Matt Woodley	Reason Party Yarra City Council Residents	<a href="http://www1.racgp.org.au">www1.racgp.org.au</a>
Richmond safe injecting room: War of words continues over 'heroin hot spot'	7news.com.au	22 May 2019	Brendan Donohoe	Police Government Opposition	<a href="http://7news.com.au">7news.com.au</a>
Inject common sense	Herald Sun	22 May 2019	Alan Mitchell	Resident	N/A
Move it, police say: Injecting room 'increasing crime'	Herald Sun	23 May 2019	Monique Hore	Police Association Opposition Police Minister	N/A
Injecting room essential, Vic coroner says	The Canberra Times	19 June 2019	Georgie Moore & Andrew Drummond	Coroner Residents Government	<a href="http://www.canberratimes.com.au">www.canberratimes.com.au</a>
Overdose deaths unmoved	Herald Sun	20 June 2019	Ian Royall	Coroner	N/A
Richmond or Detroit? Residents fear creation of ghetto	Herald Sun	21 June 2019	Ian Royall	Residents Yarra City Council advocacy group Coroner	N/A
'It's destroying a community': Readers have say on injecting room	The Age	24 June 2019	NA	Residents Broader community	<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a>

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
Injection room poll: \$120,000 survey gives locals a say	Herald Sun	28 June 2019	Tom Minear	Opposition Government Coroner Yarra City Council	N/A
Labor's dud Ice Action Plan failing to put a lid on drug crimes	Media release	20 June 2019	Nationals	Nationals	<a href="http://vic.nationals.org.au">vic.nationals.org.au</a>
Safe injecting room trial extended in North Richmond, new facility slated for near Queen Victoria Market in Melbourne CBD	ABC News	5 June 2020	NA	Government City of Melbourne Pro-campaigner Residents Opposition Police Union Cohealth	<a href="http://www.abc.net.au">www.abc.net.au</a>
Melbourne council and local police weren't consulted about new injecting room	3AW	5 June 2020	N/A	Police Union Melbourne City Lord Mayor	<a href="http://www.3aw.com.au">www.3aw.com.au</a>
Work in progress?: Richmond's safe injecting room still divides, two years on	The Age	5 July 2020	Rachel Eddie	Person with lived experience Medical director of MSIC Richmond Legal services Local police Health providers Pro-campaigner Businesses & residents	<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a>

# 6.1 Media

Headline	Publication	Published	Author/s	Perspectives represented	Link
North Richmond residents call for more police patrols to enforce lockdown on rule flouters outside safe injecting room	news.com.au	19 August 2020	Anthony Piovesan	Residents Opposition Government	<a href="http://www.news.com.au">www.news.com.au</a>
Injecting room: No other site considered, as report looms	CBD News	25 November 2020	David Schout	Government Lord Mayor Department of Health and Human Services Residents association	<a href="http://cbdnews.com.au">cbdnews.com.au</a>
Addiction workers back push for more Victorian safe injecting rooms in Melbourne suburbs	ABC News	11 May 2021	Joseph Dunstan	Fiona Patten MP Opposition Community services provider Youth advocacy group Government	<a href="http://www.abc.net.au">www.abc.net.au</a>
Second safe-injecting room to be modelled on King's Cross facility	The Age	19 May 2021	Bianca Hall	Melb. Lord Mayor Government Ambulance Victoria Department of Health Business owners Drug and health forum	<a href="http://www.theage.com.au">www.theage.com.au</a>

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
As a past resident of Kings Cross this is a disgusting yet necessary evil to ensure people are safe. In Richmond just driving along the bad parts of Victoria St or even through the “housing’ areas you can almost be guaranteed to see people shooting up in plain sight. Richmond has a significant number of needles being littered. It’s got to stop as it’s now moving towards more family centric the area and the amount of needles is very concerning. But then again what are we saying? It’s ok to shoot up? Here, have Methadone for free?! Come in as much as you like? It’s a scary thought for most Melburnians.	Responding to an article on news.com.au	news.com.au	20 February 2017
The politics of this issue are all over the place. The Herald Sun is pushing for law reform which would normally make this a no-brainer for those in Spring St. But the need for both major parties to appear tough on crime has stripped normal political debate of any logic. The Committee’s lack of any recommendation also needs to be scrutinised. How could they not have come up with even one recommendation when the weight of evidence was so powerful, including three coronial recommendations.	Responding to an article in The Conversation	theconversation.com	8 September 2017
Maybe they should get rid of the housing commission flats and clean up Victoria Street? The area has been a known drug haven for decades and the dealers will continue to make their money...	Responding to an article in The Daily Mail	dailymail.co.uk	17 September 2017
Great news, will save countless lives #SafeinjectingRooms	Responding to an article in The Age	Twitter	30 October 2017

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
The stupidity of the Andrews Government continues. Why don't they legalise Heroine so everyone can shoot up? That would be a great move for the health of society!/sarcasm. I think if people injure or kill themselves doing something both illegal and stupid, it's on their own head. The rest of us cannot be responsible for them.	Responding to an article on the ABC website	Facebook	30 October 2017
I love how they use the word safe! There's nothing safe about injecting your self with toxic chemicals. It simply doesn't work! Bad idea DA	Responding to an announcement by Daniel Andrews MP	Twitter	30 October 2017
1M supervised injections in Sydney in 16 years. Zero deaths. I've had multiple dead people on my street this year. I support Dan's decision	Replying to the above tweet	Twitter	31 October 2017
...All the data shows this saves lives. Compassion, forgiveness and care is how we must see health issues...	Replying to the above comment	Twitter	1 November 2017
That'll be right give junkies free needles & safe place to inject illegal drugs, but can't give out free needle or pens to diabetics #wrong	Responding to an announcement by Daniel Andrews MP	Twitter	1 November 2017
Thank you Dan. All the data shows this saves lives. Compassion, forgiveness and care is how we must see health issues.	Responding to an announcement by Daniel Andrews MP	Twitter	2 November 2017
2017 proved to be a year that made the improbable real... As residents we stood on the shoulders of many individuals and organisations who have campaigned for decades. We are proud that a robust, authentic and community based grass roots movement for an MSIC in North Richmond over the line...	Facebook post by Victoria Street Drug Solutions	Facebook	31 December 2017

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
Thank you for your brilliant work. It was so important in making the government see sense and agree to MSIR	In response to the Victoria Street Drug Solutions Facebook post	Facebook	1 January 2018
Looking forward to seeing a wonderful life-saving and community-improving service open mid year...	In response to the Victoria Street Drug Solutions Facebook post	Facebook	2 January 2018
School is in support of the injecting room. They have already been consulted.	Comment thread	Reddit	June 2018
Kids at that school already see daytime drug deals between junkies as well as people who are out of their minds. I don't really see how the safe injection room will really expose them to more than what they've already seen.	Comment thread	Reddit	June 2018
One of the things that keeps me up at night is how out of control I was when I was on ice. It's also one of the major reason that keep me off it. I used to drive like a maniac on ice. I'd hate to think what so many people on ice would get up to anywhere, let alone next door to a school. EDIT: I'm an ice survivor. Please respect my journey. The downvotes just serve to marginalise my view and relegate me to the sidelines of a discussion I feel passionately about and have first hand experience in.	Comment thread	Reddit	June 2018
Prohibition always has been and always will be a failure. We need to take it out of the hands of criminals and start treating addiction as a health problem. What we're doing now is not working. Let's stop being so shortsighted.	Comment in response to an article	dailymail.co.uk	4 June 2018

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
Let em overdose... less junkies on the streets that way. Why is someone having to pay for these injecting rooms when it's a choice by the person to inject an illegal and dangerous drug?	Comments in response to an article	dailymail.co.uk	4 June 2018
...and here I was thinking drugs were illegal 🙄	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018
Free hot shots I hope 🙄	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018
...have a look at all the whingers on here would they rather more people in this world spread AIDS and other diseases from using dirty needles or leave their needles in parks for kids to potentially step on 🙄	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018
I don't understand we are supposed to stop for taking these substances not taking them in a "safe environment"	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018
I can't believe the nonsense I am reading here. Kings Cross has had an injecting room for 10 years without a problem. People smoke and take drugs in their own homes every day. Even growing quantities for personal use without any legal interference. At least we are finally doing something positive. Must be a lot of political agitators posting here. Leave politics out of it.	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018
What a waste of taxpayers money	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018
A next topic of debate	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
Corruption at it's [sic] best	Comments on the 7 News facebook site	Facebook	29 June 2018
As a first responder having to deal with OD's it makes sense to have a safe place. Do I agree with drugs no of course not, but while all of you armchair experts are having a sook, I or someone else are placing our safety at risk every time...	In response to a Facebook post by Daniel Andrews MP	Facebook	30 June 2018
Move the injecting room - We are advocating to move the Medically Supervised Injecting Room, (MSIR), from its current trial site next to a primary school	Facebook page	Facebook	NA
I can understand people not wanting to have a safe injecting room near them because it sounds like it's the normalisation of drug use. People have been fed anti-drug propaganda their entire lives and especially in Richmond have had to deal with junkies quite a lot	Comment thread	Reddit	July 2018
I understand that also - but the data shows (and I can confirm from first hand experience) that users won't travel far after they score. So it makes sense to have the room near to where it's happening. I think we have to be past talking about turning a blind eye to the illegality of it - I know it's a cliched term but we have to minimise the harm. There's no war on drugs. There's no way to win it anyway, so let's do what we can. As I've said elsewhere, kids and families in that area are suffering far more vicarious trauma from the amount of use and overdoses in the streets around them. At least with an injecting room risk of actually having an encounter is reduced. I acknowledge it isn't perfect - but gee it's an improvement.	Comment thread	Reddit	July 2018
In an ideal world, we wouldn't need supervised injecting rooms. But we don't live in an ideal world. So it would be a shame if Richmond's much-needed #injectingroom is sabotaged by sensationalism. #hereendeththesermon	Tweet	Twitter	5 July 2018

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
it's been proven world wide prohibition does not work until government and the law realise this drug use and crime will continue to rise.	Repsonding to @theage	Twitter	6 July 2018
Legalize, therefore control quality, tax	Reply to above tweet	Twitter	6 July 2018
Never really understood why do Gov supports injection rooms. Gov should force them to rehabs instead coz re-injecting doesn't solves anything	Tweet	Twitter	6 July 2018
I wished complex issues had simple answers. Drugs affect people from all walks of life. I've seen loved ones lucky enough to come out the other side, with the right help and support. Drug counselling is part of this facility.	Reply to the above Tweet	Twitter	6 July 2018
Close it down... I am a ex addict and I think it's the most stupid idea and it's not going to stop their drug use	Reddit comment	Reddit	November 2018
... proud of you for taking that step and getting off drugs!! More people need to hear your voice!! Great job [Smiley emoji]	Reply to the above Reddit comment	Reddit	November 2018
But you know what, not all are as strong as you. The Injecting Room is a good idea, it is about minimalising harm. It also gives workers the cance to engage.	Reply to the above Reddit comment	Reddit	November 2018
Nothing will stop them. Promoting the use of illegal drugs is not the answer. It they do it in the street it's illegal. But Dan says it ok in his drug lab.	Reply to the above Reddit comment	Reddit	November 2018
It wasn't smart to build it next to a school though. What the hell were they thinking doing that.	Reddit comment	Reddit	November 2018

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
That's where the drug users are, except before they were just shooting up on the street and the park next to the school, so that's where you build the injecting room. There was already a community health centre there so they just added it in. Not sure exactly where this alternative injection room would go.	Reply to the above Reddit comment	Reddit	November 2018
Build it further away and junkies near the school might not be bothered travelling to the injection room which means the students are exposed to the syringes and Oded people. Build it next to the school, at least the kids will be safer from all that.	Reply to the above Reddit comment	Reddit	November 2018
If [he] shuts the lifesaving injecting facility in Richmond, the Ambulance Union will hold him to account for every death in the gutter, every overdose in a playground and every assault on our members that occurs as a result	Tweet	Twitter	November 2018
I work very close by and it's become so much worse since the facility opened. Far more dodgy people, drug dealing, highly intoxicated people, fights, stabbings and rough sleepers overnighing are a regualr occurrence around the Facility. I'm pro drug myself but this isn't stigma by most measures this is a failure for the north Richmond community and at best a marginal improvement for these users who by and large still inject publicly even metres from the injecting room when it's open.	Reddit comment	Reddit	March 2019
I was there last weekend. I've been going there regularly for about 15 years. Never before have I seen the level of madness than it's current state. A man was bashed right next to us, a woman took off her pants, three men were Oding in the alley. I got physically trapped by a guy asking for money, and a woman was passed out on the table in the park. Standing on the corner, I looked around and thought this is what I would see in the back streets of [another country]. The injecting room has given junkies a free pass to do whatever they like. After going there for so many years I have to make a decision not to keep putting myself in that situation. I honestly don't feel safe that when I go...	Reply to the above Reddit comment (continues next page)	Reddit	March 2019

# 6.2

## Social media

down there I'll come back in one piece. This comes after seeing a dead guy... on the road a couple months ago near the Lennox Street corner. A shop owner told me it had come very complicated down there lately. Many shops are closing along the street. This is not a safe place to take the family. I'll be heading out to Springvale now. I really loved Victoria Street, but something just has to give. The decision to go ahead with the injecting room was a statement to say they are putting junkies ahead of customers, business owners and everyone else.

(continued from previous page)

Having had to ring ambulances for people who have OD'd in the streets of Fitzroy I think the facility is needed. The best way to reach these people is via a supportive environment. I just think this was stuffed it up by not policing the surroundings properly. I think a lot of the residents are supportive-of a well managed process, unfortunately they didn't get it. Hopefully, this is now being remedied.

Comment in response to an article

theage.com.au

19 April 2019

Stuffed up is right, how is it that most 'ordinary' people could see this coming and the experts ignored it. Better luck next time. But then get government at any level involved and this is what happens, leave it to the health experts and police and PLEASE listen to them.

Response to the above comment

theage.com.au

19 April 2019

Social science proves harm minimization is the best approach. Yet someone in this thread who has never studied any social science will be an arm chair expert and give an opinion

Facebook comment

Facebook

May 2019

Proud Arm chair expert here. I wouldn't put an injecting room near a primary school. Use whatever degree you have to argue with that!

Comment in reply to the Facebook comment above

Facebook

May 2019

## 6.2

Social  
media

## Comment

Unfortunately, our families are watching this experiment play out from that armchairs in our living rooms. People live as little as 30m away. Our children are becoming experts on drug activity, a lot of it very unsavoury. They are seeing and hearing traumatic, disturbing sights as well as just a steady stream of drug affected people. There is a primary school next door and those children are also witnessing it. Only 40% of people buying drugs are using the room - the remainder inject in cars before driving off, in people's yards, on the footpath, in from of the school, etc. Even two people who work there have been observed doing this on multiple occassions. It has brought thousands of drug users to the area and put a strain on local businesses, who are losing customers. The atmosphere is at times lawless and intimidating. Whilst there are many positive aspects of harm minimisation, it is not conscionable to place it within a high density residential area next to a school. That's when harm minimisation becomes potentially harmful and even dangerous - it's creaed a booming drug market in the tenants' car park. There have been a number of stabbings, assaults, and associated crime like theft and sale of stolen goods. If you are a social scientist, pull up the population figures for the area - a 20 storey housing tower sits less than 50 m away four more alongside - over 8,000 people, including thousands of kids. The biggest area of public housing in Australia. Children used to play in the playgrounds which are now over run with drug users, some shooting up in view of the playground.

## Context

Comment in reply to the Facebook comment on previous page

## Platform

Facebook

## Date

May 2019

Residents gathered at the All Nations pub last night to listen to each other's perspectives on matters around Richmond's MSIC. Opinions ranged... but there were also expansive thoughts shared around the need to open more Injecting Centres across Melbourne metro. Other opinions included introducing prescription heroin, bringing the supply of syringes inside the MSIC and enabling the MSIC to run 24hres. How simple and effective would it be to introduce all these initiatives?

Victoria Street Drug Solutions in response to an article posted on The Age Facebook page

Facebook

15 May 2019

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
#junkies not using #safeinjectingrooms not obeying #rules or thinking of others. Who would have thunk it. #Victoria #Auspol	Tweet	Twitter	20 May 2019
Keep it but move it Bad legislation should always be open to change, and in this case it should be changed to move the room to a more appropriate location.	Comment in response to a poll	theage.com.au	24 June 2019
Shut it down The government needs to admit its mistake and do something about it.	Comment in response to a poll	theage.com.au	25 June 2019
All day, every day As a resident I support the concept but believe it should be 24 hours a day.	Comment in response to a poll	theage.com.au	26 June 2019
Don't move them to where people don't go Legalising recreational drug use so the injecting room could be licensed by government to sell them would immediately solve all the problems. The black market and the dealers would evaporate. Users would have to attend the injecting room to buy the drugs and would have to inject there to be supplied, getting them off the streets.	Comment in response to a poll	theage.com.au	27 June 2019
It's a long term strategy that needs to start with trust building, junkies aren't going to change their habits overnight as they are naturally cynical but once they see their junkie mates are ok with it they'll make the switch because it is obviously a much better option than shooting up on the street or in bathrooms.	Comment on Reddit	Reddit	July 2019
Not to mention the chaotic and complex nature of many addicts. Inherently irrational behaviour doesn't magically improve because you have a suddenly rational option.	Reply to the above comment	Reddit	July 2019

## 6.2

Social  
media

Comment	Context	Platform	Date
But once they see their junkie mates are ok with it they'll make the switch. This is what happened with MSIC in Kings Cross. People had to give their name when they walked in and of course the interior had cameras. Some of the junkies who had warrants out didn't trust the place and wouldn't enter but after a while most of them trust it.	Reply to comment on the previous page	Reddit	July 2019
Each and every one of these people are not simply numbers on a spreadsheet. They are stories of hope #harmreduction #MSIC	Tweet in response to a 9News segment	Twitter	31 May 2020
This is not Amsterdam, we don't have people here who respect one another, these rooms should not be in the City near Residential C Zones. What is going on, why not in a commercial area where people do not reside!	Comment in response to an article	news.com.au	19 August 2020
Harsher punishments for those dealing in drugs. It works in other countries. Why not enforce it here. Those who disagree haven't seen first hand the terrible pain of a family with a son or daughter being destroyed by these drugs	Comment in response to an article	news.com.au	25 March 2021
#Melbourne City Council has voted in favour of a #SupervisedInjecting room in the CBD, #Melbourne... #HarmReduction	Tweet	Twitter	26 March 2021

# Additional materials

07

07

**7.1** Parliamentary terms

**7.2** Reference materials

# Parliamentary terms

## Parliamentary terms

### Adjournment of debate

A formal decision to pause debate on an issue or bill. Debate may be adjourned to allow parliament to move on to other issues or to give members time to consider and consult on a bill before debating it further. After a debate is adjourned the members then set a time for when the debate can resume. Debate does not always resume at the time nominated, but it cannot be debated sooner.

### Divisions

A division is a type of vote in parliament that involves a count of members that agree or disagree with a question. For example, they vote whether or not to pass a bill, or agree to a motion. Members must be in the chamber to vote in a division, and all Members present in the chamber must vote.

### Introduction of bills

Most legislation is introduced in the Legislative Assembly. However, a bill can be introduced into the Legislative Council as a Private Members' Bill. All Members of parliament can introduce a Private Members' Bill provided the bill is not an appropriations bill – a specific financial bill that is to do with government spending. Appropriations (spending) bills must be introduced into the Legislative Assembly.

### Minority reports

A minority report is a dissenting or alternative opinion written by one or more committee members, expressing an alternative view to the majority opinion of the committee and the content of a committee report.

### Motion

A proposal put to the house framed in a way that will result in the opinion of the house being expressed or a decision being made. Members can move motions on a variety of topics. Motions are moved to refer inquiries to parliamentary committees, to set the agenda for the week, or simply to note a certain event.

### Petitions

A petition is a complaint or a reaction to a decision made in parliament, or another representative body, that includes a demand for action. Aside from voting in elections, petitioning is the most popular form of political participation as they are initiated bottom-up by citizens and typically don't have complex formal requirements. Petitions typically advocate for a change to the law, the reconsideration of an administrative decision or the resolution of a local grievance. They also keep members of parliament informed about issues of community concern and help to gauge the degree of this concern. Petitions must be presented to parliament by a member.

### Private Members' Bill

Any member may introduce a bill into parliament. A bill introduced by a member who is not a minister is termed a 'Private Members' Bill'. Most Private Members' Bills are initiated by members of the opposition, minor parties, and independents.

## 7.2

# Reference materials

Title	Link
MSIC law reform case study videos	<a href="https://vimeo.com/showcase/msic">vimeo.com/showcase/msic</a>
<i>Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Act 2017</i>	<a href="http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/drugs-poisons-and-controlled-substances-amendment-medically-supervised-injecting-centre">www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/drugs-poisons-and-controlled-substances-amendment-medically-supervised-injecting-centre</a>
Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017	<a href="http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/bills/drugs-poisons-and-controlled-substances-amendment-pilot-medically-supervised-injecting-centre">www.legislation.vic.gov.au/bills/drugs-poisons-and-controlled-substances-amendment-pilot-medically-supervised-injecting-centre</a>
<i>Finding into death with inquest (Coroner's report), 20 February 2017</i>	<a href="http://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-12/ms%2Ba_%2B241816.pdf">www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-12/ms%2Ba_%2B241816.pdf</a>
<i>Inquiry into the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017 - Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee, 7 September 2017</i>	<a href="http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/lpic-lc/article/3555">www.parliament.vic.gov.au/lpic-lc/article/3555</a>
<i>Review of the Medically Supervised Injecting Room, June 2020</i>	<a href="http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/Review_of_the_Medically_Supervised_Injecting_Room_June_2020_WsP785dN.pdf">www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/Review_of_the_Medically_Supervised_Injecting_Room_June_2020_WsP785dN.pdf</a>
<i>Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), 58th Parliament, 2017 - Legislative Assembly</i>	<a href="http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/hansard/daily-hansard/3388-assembly-2017">www.parliament.vic.gov.au/hansard/daily-hansard/3388-assembly-2017</a>
<i>Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), 58th Parliament, 2017 - Legislative Council</i>	<a href="http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/hansard/daily-hansard/3389-council-2017">www.parliament.vic.gov.au/hansard/daily-hansard/3389-council-2017</a>
<i>Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre: Get to know our story - Uniting MSIC, 2018</i>	<a href="http://www.uniting.org/content/dam/uniting/documents/community-impact/uniting-msic/Get-to-know-our-story.pdf">www.uniting.org/content/dam/uniting/documents/community-impact/uniting-msic/Get-to-know-our-story.pdf</a>