

From: Inquiry into the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017
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Sent: Thursday, 20 April 2017 4:20 PM
To: injectingcentrebill
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment (Pilot Medically Supervised Injecting Centre) Bill 2017

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

Mr Anthony Tassone

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President
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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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The Pharmacy Guild of Australia is firmly committed to reducing the social, health and economic costs of problematic drug use and addiction in Australia. The Guild believes that a national coordinated approach to the management and treatment drug addiction is required, given the magnitude of the issue.

The Guild supports a harm-reduction approach which recognises that an individual's engagement in drug use, illegal drug supply or illegal drug manufacture generally has flow-on effects, these manifest on health, social, economic, environmental and other consequences for those around them including for family, workplace and the broader community.

The Guild recognises the importance of availability and provision of sterile needles and syringes to the community for the purposes of injecting licit and illicit drugs. The Guild is committed to supporting harm reduction through community pharmacies Australia-wide.

The Guild is committed to considering all options which could protect both the wider community and people who inject drugs from blood borne viruses associated with unsafe injecting practices, such as needle sharing and unsafe disposal.

This includes support for a supervised safe injecting facility which is consistent with the above principles, on the basis that it is medically supervised and best practice guidelines and procedures are followed.

The Guild believes that such facilities would reduce the risks associated with injecting practices, use of illicit substances, and unsafe disposal of needles and syringes, as reported by various evaluation results of the supervised injecting drug facility in Sydney:

- Reductions in public injecting and inappropriate disposal of needles and syringes;
- The presence of medically trained staff who observe and provide advice to drug users regarding poor

injecting practices have reduced the spread of blood borne viruses like Hepatitis B and C, as well as Injecting Related Injury and Diseases (IRID) such as thrombosis or abscesses;

- An early study shows an 80% reduction in the NSW ambulance service calls to attend overdoses in the vicinity of the facility as the SIF offers monitoring and access to emergency response (resuscitation) if necessary;
- During six years of operation the SIF handled 2,106 overdose related events on-site with no fatalities (93% of these involved heroin or other opioids) .

In addition, community surveys of local residents and businesses indicate that there has been an increase in support for the MSIC over the period in which it has been operating.

References:

1. Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre, 'Get to know our story', 2016.
2. National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research 'Sydney Medically Supervised Injecting Centre Evaluation Report No. 4: Evaluation of service operation and overdose-related events' (June 2007)
3. http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/FlagPost/2010/September/Sydneys_Medically_Supervised_Injecting_Centre

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File2:

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