As long as there is breath, there is hope.
Every day, every hour, I live with the searing loss of my daughter to a heroin overdose. Marah would be so proud if Seattle became the first city in the United States to open a safe consumption space. This compassionate move would boldly prove we are not afraid to try a variety of approaches to helping those struggling with addiction. That open door could be the one thing that saves someone’s life.”

– Penny LeGate, Seattle/King County Heroin and Prescription Opiate Addiction Task Force & Founder of The Marah Project
“Compassion and dignity are the cornerstones of recovery. Safe consumption spaces give people the opportunity to be safer and healthier where they are, even while they are still using drugs. The experience of being treated with respect, kindness, and dignity can be transformational. Harm reduction changed the course of my life and was the pathway to recovery for me. Had an SCS been available to me, I might have found that pathway sooner, while also avoiding so much of the pain and harm I lived through due to unsafe and unsanitary conditions.”

Turina James
VOCAL Washington member

“For us as a council, to represent all of our neighbors, we want to advocate for things that increase everybody’s quality of life. And when we’re talking about neighbors, we’re not just talking about homeowners or renters, we’re talking about people experiencing homelessness or addiction. I don’t think people are or would be dramatically opposed to this.”

Zachary Pullin
President of the Capitol Hill Community Council

“By empowering people who use drugs to do so in a safer way we acknowledge their intrinsic value to us as individuals and community members, which helps increase their sense of self-worth, self-efficacy, and belonging. These are essential components for anyone wanting to make any positive change in their life. It is not surprising therefore that SCS help people engage in treatment.”

Dr. David Sapienza
Primary care and addiction medicine physician

“My daughter Amber was just 19 when she died of an accidental heroin overdose... In an ideal world, we wouldn’t need SCSs. But as my family knows too well, we are not in an ideal world. Prevention doesn’t always work, treatment isn’t always available, and even when it is, people are not always ready to accept it... A supervised consumption space may not have saved my daughter. But it may save someone else’s.”

Michael Roberts
Amber’s H.O.P.E
59,000-65,000 people died in the USA from drug overdose in 2016

This is the largest annual jump ever recorded in the USA

*Because drug deaths take a long time to certify, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will not be able to calculate final numbers until December

Source: New York Times
Drug overdose is now the leading cause of injury-related death in America

Highest causes of injury related death in 2015:

- GUNS: 35763
- CAR ACCIDENTS: 37757
- OVERDOSES: 52404

Drug overdoses killed more Americans last year alone, than in the entire 20 years of the Vietnam war

“I’m here to tell you the war on drugs hasn’t worked. I was a foot soldier in it so I have a little bit of experience and I know that it’s been a failure. It’s been an abject failure, actually, so we have to try something different.”

John Urquhart
Former King County Sheriff
Heroin & Opioid Addiction Task Force Press Conference
September 15, 2016
SEATTLE, KING COUNTY SETS NEW RECORD FOR OVERDOSE DEATH IN 2016

There were 332 fatal overdoses in Seattle, King County in 2016

61% involved opiates

“Opioid addiction is killing people in our community, sparing no age, race, sexual identity, income level or neighborhood.”

Dow Constantine
King County Executive
Press Release, January 27, 2017
There are more than 20,000 injection drug users in Seattle, King County.

Nearly 7 MILLION syringes were exchanged in 2015.

In 2015, admissions to treatment programs for heroin surpassed those for alcohol for the first time ever.

- 3016 TREATMENT ADMISSIONS FOR HEROIN
- 2730 TREATMENT ADMISSIONS FOR ALCOHOL

The majority of those entering treatment for the first time for heroin were aged 18-29.

Chances of relapse amongst opiate users are higher than any other drug.

- 91% of opiate users in recovery will experience a relapse within the first year.

Over the last two years, the Seattle Fire Department responded to more than 3,700 incidents related to drug overdoses.
WHAT IS AN SCS?

Safe Consumption Spaces (SCS) are safe, clean spaces where people can legally use previously obtained drugs under the supervision of healthcare professionals who provide overdose prevention, safe and sterile equipment, support and referrals to medical, mental health, rehabilitation and social services.

“Here’s the bottom line. There’s a hard-to-refute premise that you can’t get better if you’re dead. You can’t get better if you’re dead.”

Jeannie Darneille
Washington State Senator
Washington State Senate Floor Debate, March 2, 2017

SAFE CONSUMPTION SPACES SAVE LIVES!

Safe consumption spaces have been saving lives around the world for over 30 years. There are now over 100 sites worldwide. There have been millions of injections at these sites and ZERO overdose deaths.
SCSs and harm reduction strategies are part of a comprehensive four pillared approach to drug use, practiced by numerous cities worldwide.

SCSs do not provide drugs, allow the sale of drugs or condone drug use in any way. They are simply a tool that allows people who use drugs to stay alive so that they may have the opportunity for recovery.

**Participants of SCSs are more likely to enter detox and treatment.**

The opening of the Vancouver Safe Injection Facility (SIF) was associated with a greater than 30% increase in the rate of detoxification service use among SIF users. Subsequent analyses demonstrated that detoxification service use was associated with increased use of methadone and other forms of addiction treatment. King County has plans to make buprenorphine available in proposed SCSs.

“The published evidence on SCSs is clear that they reach some of the most marginalized people who have difficulty accessing care, and that people who use the facilities more frequently are actually more likely to engage in future addiction treatment.”

*Dr. David Sapienza*  
*Primary care and addiction medicine physician*
SCS COST LESS

Addiction and drug use weighs heavily on society and the system. Safe consumption spaces have been proven to reduce that burden and save taxpayers money.
Vancouver’s safe injection site saves tax payers 6 million dollars a year based on a cost-benefit analysis funded by the Conservative Government of Canada.

In the US, separate studies projected saving tax payers 3.5 million dollars a year in San Francisco and 6 million dollars a year in Baltimore by having Safe Consumption Spaces in each city.

Treatment is the primary strategy of the Heroin and Opiate Addiction Task Force. Here’s some perspective on King County’s current investments in treatment compared to the proposed cost of an SCS.
These sites will provide individuals with opioid use disorder a portal to return to healthy lives by reducing overdoses, preventing infections such as hepatitis B and C and HIV and other drug-related medical problems by increasing access to drug treatment services and providing a safe and non-threatening environment where persons can receive help for other medical and behavioral health problems and their social service needs. These sites have been shown elsewhere in the world to reduce health problems, to reduce public drug use and the discarding of drug using equipment, while not increasing drug use, crime, or negative impacts on the community.”

Jeff Duchin
King County Health Officer
Heroin & Opioid Addiction Task Force Press Conference, September 15, 2016
SCSs improve community health and safety in a variety of ways.

*Safe consumption spaces reduce:*

- Discarded syringes on the street
- Reliance on the criminal justice system
- Public drug use
- The spread of HIV & Hepatitis C
- Overdose death
WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING...

THE WASHINGTON ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

“Injection drug use frequently occurs in public spaces, such as parks, recreational areas or streets, and public or commercial bathrooms - posing significant risks to the individuals themselves and at times also to the community. The Washington Academy of Family Physicians (WAFP) encourages policy makers to move forward with pilot projects of supervised drug consumption sites (i.e. safe injection facilities) as one part of a broader movement to improve care for people who use drugs and comprehensively address substance use disorders.”

SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

“We urge the City of Seattle to take all necessary steps to authorize and establish supervised drug consumption facilities, in partnership with appropriate community based organizations. Such sites represent an essential public health intervention. Studies in Vancouver and around the world have demonstrated their success in reducing transmission of HIV, viral hepatitis transmission, and other blood borne diseases. They provide an imperative resource to stop deaths from drug related overdose. Ultimately, they serve as spaces in which drug users can find the treatment they need to take next steps towards full recovery. As such, they promote public safety.”

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

“Studies from other countries have shown that supervised injection facilities reduce the number of overdose deaths, reduce transmission rates of infectious disease, and increase the number of individuals initiating treatment for substance use disorders without increasing drug trafficking or crime in the areas where the facilities are located.”
SEATTLE TIMES EDITORIAL BOARD

“It is fair to view Seattle’s utopian chemistry-set tinkering with policy with skepticism. But this idea is a good one, because it will save lives.

The ideas for that facility and the discussions now under way in King County are simple. Treat drug addiction like a public health problem, not a criminal justice one. Keep people with addiction alive long enough to get treatment. And mitigate the civic consequences, such as piles of used needles in the alley.

Research on these sites – there are nearly 100 around the world – overwhelmingly shows a drop in overdoses and in infections of HIV and Hepatitis C caused by dirty needles. A Canadian cost-benefit analysis showed a 5-to-1 return.”

Jonathan Martin, Seattle Times, March 7, 2016

JOHN URQUHART
Former King County Sheriff

“I think we can keep people from dying, we can keep people from catching hepatitis C or even AIDS by these safe injection sites, and we have a better chance of getting them into treatment if they are there in one place.”

- Interview with KIRO Radio’s Ron and Don, February 27, 2017

DAN SATTERBERG
King County Prosecuting Attorney

“I am convinced that the physical site and, more importantly, the personal connections made between users, street outreach workers and medical professionals that can lead to recovery services are a critical element to this new strategy of harm reduction and community health.”

- Letter to King County Board of Health, January 19, 2017
NORM STAMPER  
*Former Seattle Police Chief*

“SIFs do not increase community drug use or increase initiation into injection drug use. Moreover, providing a sterile, safe place to inject increases the chances that counselors will help individuals into treatment or support services.”

- *Letter to the Editor, Seattle Times, March 24, 2017*

DOW CONSTANTINE  
*King County Executive*

“Opioid addiction is killing people in our community, sparing no age, race, sexual identity, income level or neighborhood. The experts we brought together have provided us with the battle plan we need to defeat this epidemic - a plan to save lives, to make it easier for people to get the help they need, to prevent the devastating harm that addiction causes.”

- *Press Release, January 27, 2017*

SALLY BAGSHAW  
*Seattle City Councilmember and Health Board Member*

“Heroin and opioid use in Seattle and King County, like many other cities nationwide, is reaching crisis levels. The addiction rate is high, and treatment is needed across the city and county to reduce associated deaths, property crime, and costs to taxpayers.”

- *State Legislative Agenda Overview & Priorities Feedback, November 7, 2016*

DR. CALEB BANTA-GREEN  
*University of Washington School of Public Health*

“What we’ve seen so far, the evidence is that they will use less in public. There will be less public consumption. There will be less infectious disease transmissions. And the evidence is pretty good that there will be less overdose deaths.”

- *Seattle City Council Briefing, October 2, 2016*

JEAN KOHL-WELLES  
*King County Councilmember and Health Board Member*

“We have two choices: to allow users to consume in safe, supervised spaces with access to services, or to continue pushing them into the shadows, where they shoot up in alleyways, on kids playgrounds, and on our city streets.”

- *Written Statement, Seattle Weekly, February 17, 2017*
JEANNIE DARNEILLE  
*Washington State Senator*

“You can’t get better if you’re dead... We are going to immediately see a reduction in deaths with the implementation of this kind of strategy under strict guidance of our directors of health.”

- *Washington State Senate Floor Debate on SSB 5223, March 2, 2017*

REBECCA SALDAÑA  
*Washington State Senator*

“If it’s not happening in an enclosed space, where it’s happening is out in public, right in front of your small business. And what the City of Seattle and King County are looking at is how do we address this public health crisis.”

- *Washington State Senate Floor Debate on SSB 5223, March 2, 2017*

PATTY KUDERER  
*Washington State Senator*

“The evidence that safe injection sites work is there. . . They’re actually saving lives. And when you’re saving lives you’re helping them get off the drugs that they’re addicted to.”

- *Washington State Senate Floor Debate on SSB 5223, March 2, 2017*

DR. JIM WALSH  
*Medical Director of Addiction Recovery Services at Swedish Hospital*

“Some of us might be too young to remember, but the Reagan administration did everything they could to stop needle exchanges. But communities created them anyway. This is a life or death effort.”

- *Press Conference on Task Force Recommendations, January 27, 2017*

BRAD FINEGOOD  
*Assistant Division Director of the King County Department of Community and Human Services*

“This is just an intervention that says, you do not need to use alone. You do not need to be stigmatized, or have prejudice, or discrimination because of your illness. Come indoors, talk to a healthcare worker, and we can help.”

- *Seattle and King County Facebook Live Event, June 9, 2017*
PETE HOLMES  
**Seattle City Attorney**

“I think at some point, once we have helped switch this bad course that we went down of criminalizing public health problems, then I think we’re going to start seeing people get it... if you want to deal with that compassionately and effectively of course we’ve got to have this.”

- Seattle and King County Facebook Live Event, June 9, 2017

KSHAMA SAWANT  
**Seattle City Councilmember**

“We need to provide an SCS for people who are dealing with drug addiction issues because the first statement you make by doing that is that you’re not shunning them. Harm reduction strategies [also] have a better record of leading to sobriety than programs that require abstinence from the get-go.”


ROD DEMBOWSKI  
**King County Councilmember**

“Growing up in the 80s, I saw a national administration that ignored a national public health crisis while people died day after day after day. Because they were somebody else... or it was too scary to talk about, or the solution was too hard. I can’t be on the Board of Health, I can’t be a King County Councilmember and participate in a reenactment of what was done there... so I’ll be very proudly supporting this work going forward from the County Council side.”

- King County Board of Health Meeting, January 19, 2017

JEFF DUCHIN  
**Health Officer for King County**

“Giving people a safe place to inject who are already injecting in unsafe ways, doesn’t in any way invite more drug use.”


PATRICE A. HARRIS, M.D.  
**Chair of the AMA Board of Trustees and AMA Task Force on Opioid Abuse**

“Pilot facilities will help inform U.S. policymakers on the feasibility, effectiveness and legal aspects of supervised injection facilities in reducing harms and health care costs associated with injection drug use.”

- AMA Press Release, June 12, 2017
SUSAN SHERMAN, PhD MPH, BA
Professor, Bloomberg School of Public Health

“Having a place to go and not being on a dirty street corner is foundational for dignity and respect, which can transfer into other aspects of their lives.”
- Reuters, January 2, 2017

DR. BARBARA HERBERT
President, MA Chapter of the American Society of Addiction Medicine

“You have to stay alive to get better... The idea that someone would show up and inject in front of me is not an appealing idea, but the idea that they would go two blocks away and die is so much worse.”
- NBC Boston, May 2, 2017

SVANTE MYRICK
Mayor, City of Ithaca, New York

“I have watched for 20 years this system that just doesn’t work. We can’t wait anymore for the federal government. We have people shooting up in alleys. In bathroom stalls. And too many of them are dying.”

VITKA EISEN
CEO, HealthRight 360

“Safe injection services can be a gateway to recovery, with nonjudgmental staff equipped with linkages to detox and treatment for anyone with a desire for change.”
- San Francisco Chronicle, May 23, 2017

JUSTIN TRUDEAU
Prime Minister of Canada

“I think that there is much that we can and should be doing around harm reduction. Insite is a great model of that, and I certainly want to see more safe injection sites opened around the country.”
- Speech at the University of British Columbia, March 4, 2015
MAKE SEATTLE SAFER

SOME OF THE ORGANIZATIONS AND ENTITIES ENDORSING SCS:

American Medical Association
Washington Academy of Family Physicians
Seattle Area Community Law Center
University of Washington School of Nursing
University of Washington School of Public Health
American Public Health Association
Infectious Diseases Society of America
HIV Medicine Association
AIDS United
King County Department of Public Defense
Evergreen Treatment Services - REACH Program
Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness
Recovery Cafe
Lifelong AIDS

King County Medical Society
North Helpline
Entre Hermanos
Plymouth Housing
Legal Voice
Gay City
VOCAL-WA
Real Change
Project NEON
Amber’s H.O.P.E.
ACLU-Washington
BABES Network-YWCA
Heroes for the Homeless
Radical Public Health - UW
Seattle LGBTQ Commission
King County Board of Health
Tenants Union of Washington
Seattle Human Rights Commission
Capitol Hill Community Council
Seattle Area Support Groups and Community Center
43rd District Democrats
Seattle Nurses for Social Justice (SU)
Aurora Commons
Health Care Workers for SCSs
Hepatitis Education Project

King County Prosecutor Dan Satterberg
Public Defender Association
Kelley Ross Pharmacy Group
Community Oriented Public Health Practice - UW
Imagine Housing
Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC)
University District Street Medicine
Gender Justice League
Be: Seattle Organizing
Seattle Area Counseling Services
Incarcerated Mothers Advocacy Project (IMAP)
Civil Survival
Seattle Commission for People with disAbilities

SAFER IS BETTER
yestoscs.org
There is some misinformation regarding Safe Consumption Spaces. We encourage people to look at the wide range of research available. There is an enormous amount of studies and articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, such as the Lancet, British Medical Journal and New England Journal of Medicine, describing the many benefits of Safe Consumption Spaces. Find links to journal articles at yestoscs.org.
Across the street from my home, I saw a young woman searching for a vein. If we do not have safe consumption spaces, who then will wait beside her and make sure her lungs keep breathing? Who then will show her the path to recovery? Who then will tell her she is loved? As long as there is breath, there is hope.”

– Lauren Davis, Director of the King County Recovery Coalition
SAFER IS BETTER
Yes To SCS

Find out how you can help at:
YESTOSCS.ORG

Follow us on social media:

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