



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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The Honorable John Carney,
Governor

John McNeal, Director
SCPD

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 27, 2023

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Mr. Benjamin Shrader, Chairperson 
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: SB 52 (Amendments to Title 29 Relating to Sterile Needle and Syringe
Exchange Program)

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed SB 52 which seeks to amend the current law governing needle exchange programs to support a need-based program, by changing the name of the program from “exchange” to “service” and by removing the requirement of a 1:1 exchange, to dispensing sterile needles and syringes based on need and usage.

SCPD has the following observations:

- Needle Exchange Programs began in 2006 as a five-year pilot in parts of Wilmington and was made permanent in 2011 and expanded in 2017. Brandywine Counseling runs the needle exchange program.¹ Over the years, Brandywine Counseling has enrolled 5200 IV drug users in the program and dispensed 1.5 million sterile needles.²

¹ <https://www.brandywinecounseling.com/ssp/>

² https://www.healthmanagement.com/wp-content/uploads/HMA_Delaware_Report_Final_2022.pdf

- The CDC issued a comprehensive report on the efficacy and success of needle programs in 2022. “Nearly 30 years of research has shown that comprehensive SSPs are safe, effective, and cost saving, do not increase illegal drug use or crime, and play an important role in reducing the transmission of viral hepatitis, HIV and other infections. Research shows that new users of SSPs are five times more likely to enter drug treatment and about three times more likely to stop using drugs than those who don’t use the programs.”³ CDS and Brandywine Counseling both refer to these programs as Needle Service programs, not exchanges.
- A Sterile Needle and Syringe Service Program is an important component in the state’s response to the opioid crisis, while helping to prevent Hepatitis and HIV infections, preventing disability and death.

SCPD strongly endorses this legislation as a critical substance abuse prevention and public health initiative.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions or comments regarding our position or observations on the proposed legislation.

cc: Ms. Laura Waterland, Esq.
Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council

SB 52 Sterile Needle and Syringe Exchange Program 3-27-23

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/ssp/syringe-services-programs-summary.html#print>