

December 28, 2010

HIV/AIDS Bureau

Dear Colleagues:

On July 7, 2010, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released an implementation guidance for HHS Programs, (including a specific guidance for some Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) funded programs) interested in implementing, with fiscal year 2010 appropriated dollars, Syringe Services Programs (SSPs). The term SSP is inclusive of syringe access, disposal, and needle exchange programs, as well as referral and linkage to HIV prevention services, HIV testing, substance abuse treatment, and medical and mental health care.

According to the [enclosed HHS guidance](#), grantees are asked to contact their relevant program office for additional information. At this time, Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Grantees are eligible to use Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program funds to support SSPs as part of a comprehensive HIV treatment program to link individuals testing positive to care and to reduce HIV transmission as a secondary prevention measure. SSPs are considered a “support service.”

The National HIV/AIDS Strategy has a goal of minimizing infections from injection drug use and states “Comprehensive, evidence-based drug prevention and treatment strategies have contributed to reducing HIV infections. In 1993, injection drug users comprised 31 percent of AIDS cases nationally compared to 17 percent by 2007. Twenty-nine studies show that comprehensive prevention and drug treatment programs, including needle exchange, have dramatically cut the number of new HIV infections among people who inject drugs by 80 percent since the mid-1990s.” When supporting SSPs with Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program funds, integration with other Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program funded services should be considered.

Please review the enclosed Guidance. If you have any questions, contact your project officer.

Sincerely,

Deborah Parham Hopson, PhD, RN, FAAN
Assistant Surgeon General
Associate Administrator

[Enclosure](#)