# Supervised Injection Facility: Will it see the light of day in America?

Vishesh Agarwal MD

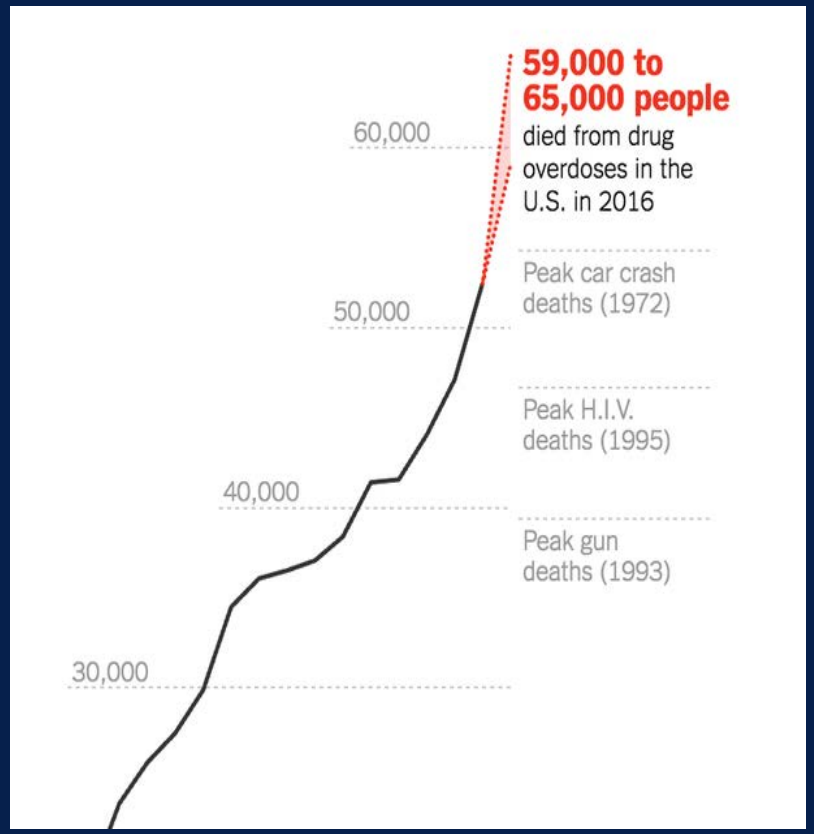
# Disclosures

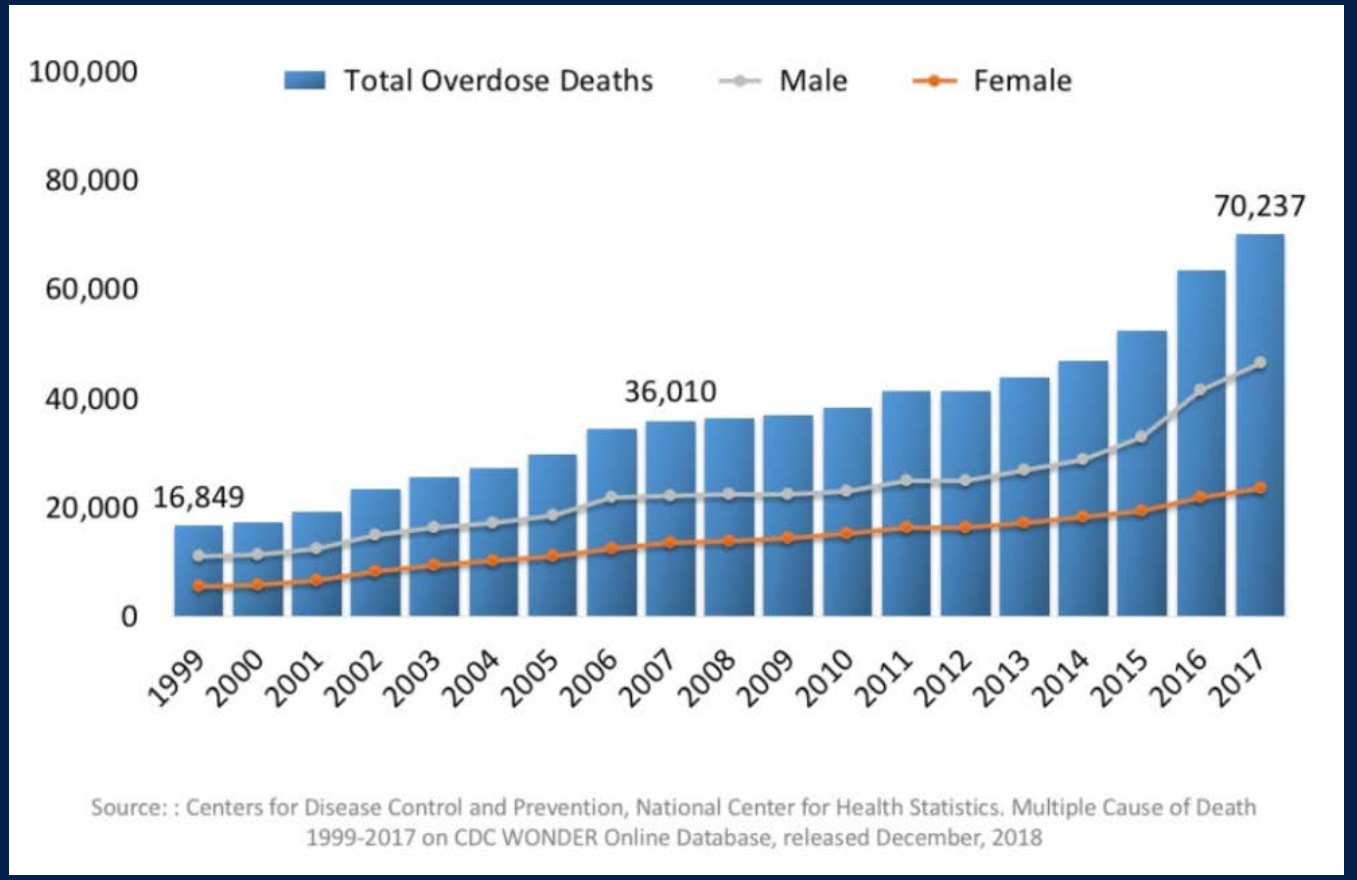
- I have no relevant disclosures

# Learning Objectives

- Define a supervised injection facility (SIF) and summarize its workflow
- Discuss the advantages and drawbacks of SIF
- Propose this intervention for appropriate regions / communities

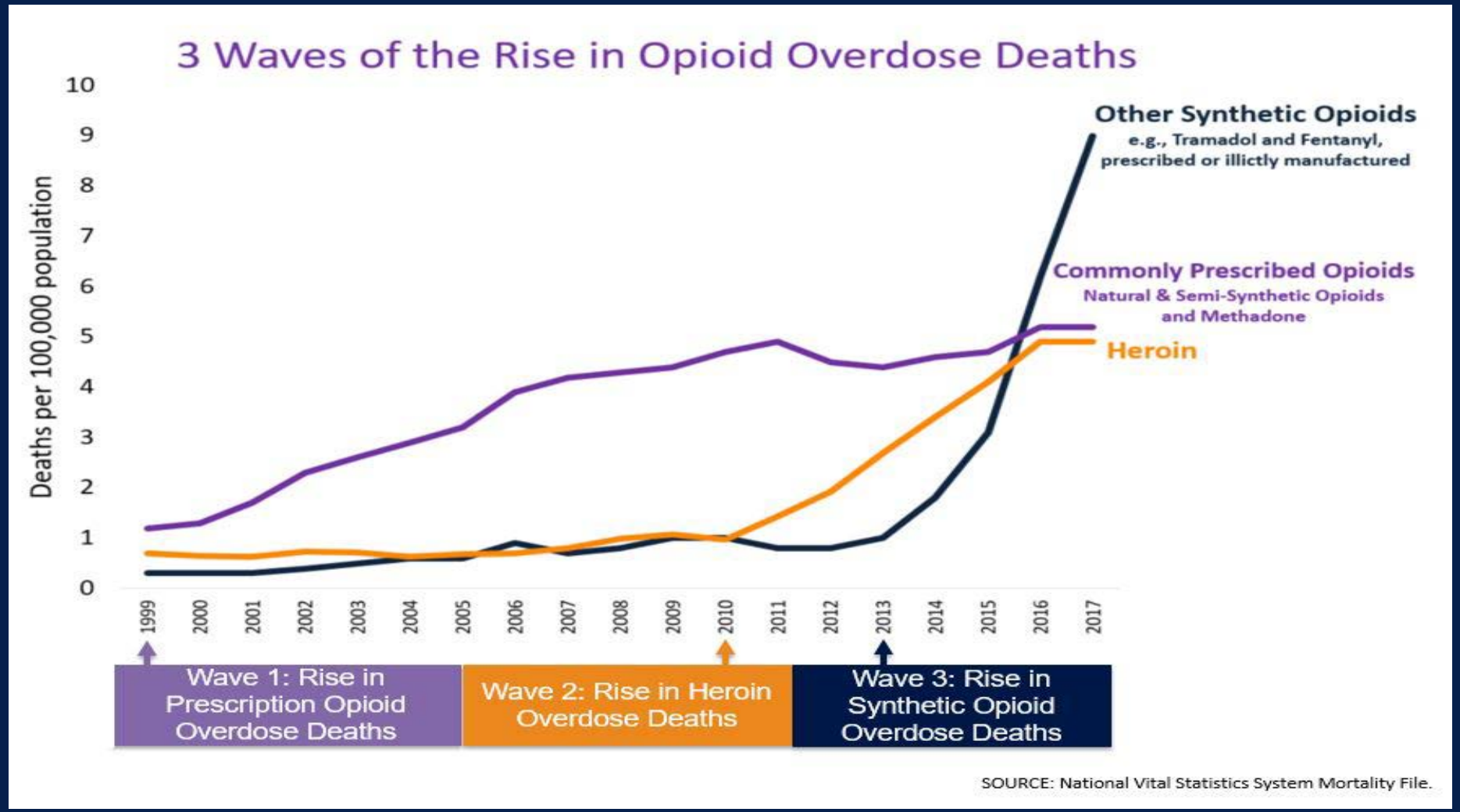
# A National Epidemic




https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/05/upshot/opioid-epidemic-drug-overdose-deaths-are-rising-faster-than-ever.html

# Ongoing Opioid Crisis

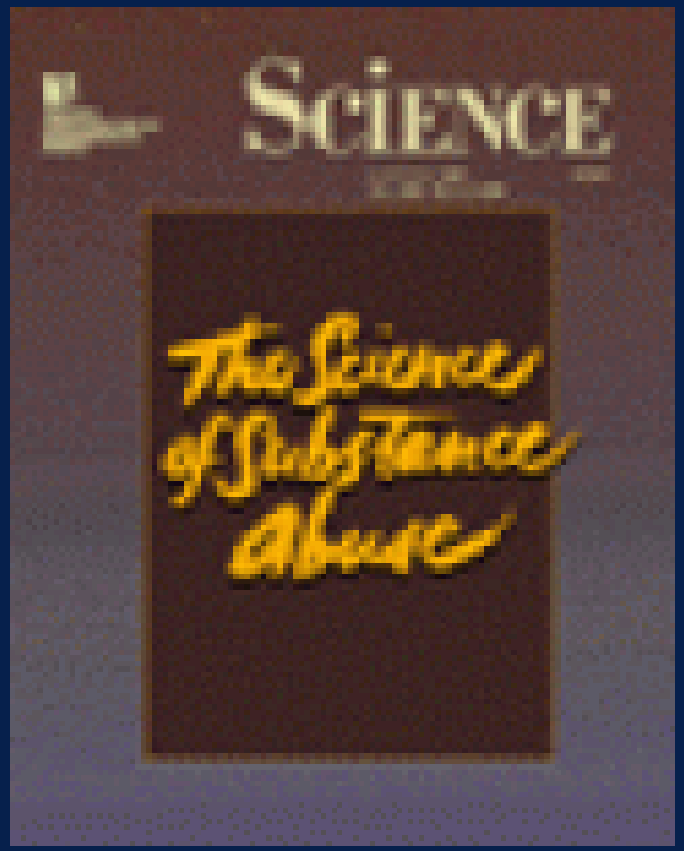


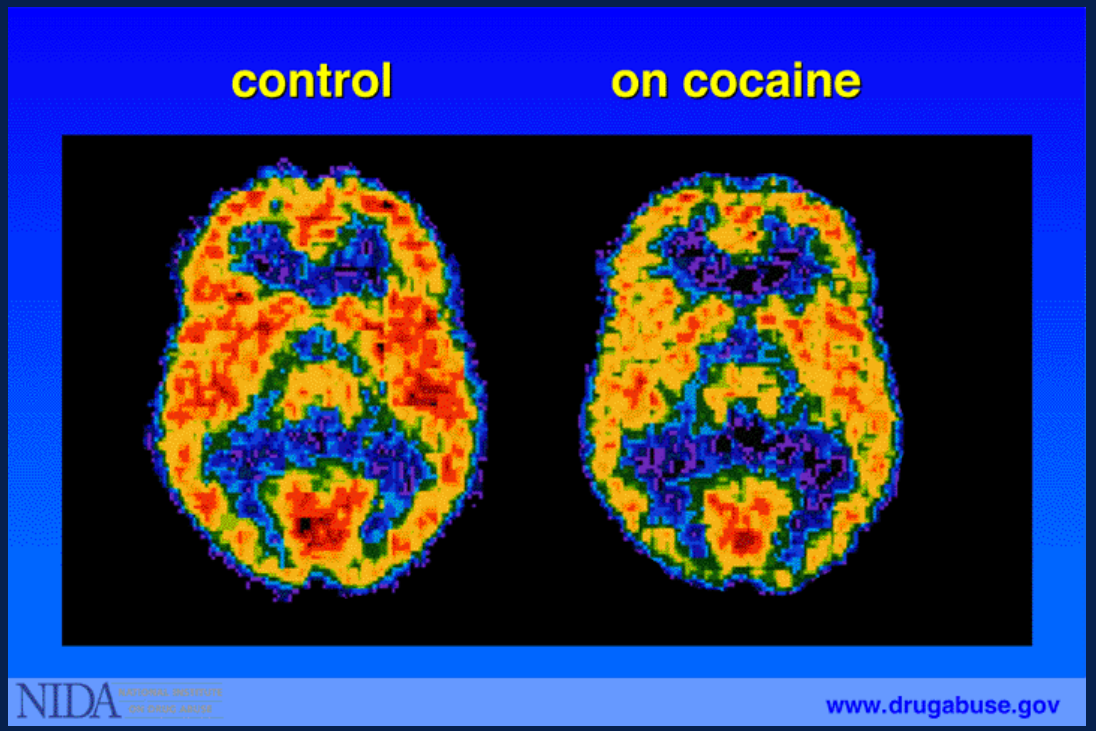

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2019 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released in 2020.

# Definitions

- Addiction
- Harm reduction
- Supervised Injection Facility (SIF)

# Addiction – Brain disease




Leshner AI. Addiction is a brain disease, and it matters. Science. 1997 Oct 3;278(5335):45-7.
http://science.sciencemag.org/content/278/5335/45.long
NIDA - https://www.drugabuse.gov/understanding-drug-abuse-addiction-what-science-says

# Harm Reduction

## INTRODUCTION

Harm reduction is a public health strategy that was developed initially for adults with substance abuse problems for whom abstinence was not feasible. Harm reduction approaches have been effective in reducing morbidity and mortality in these adult populations. In recent years, harm reduction has been successfully applied to sexual health

# Supervised Injection Facility (SIF)

About 17,500,000 results (0.52 seconds)

**Supervised injection sites** (SIS) are medically **supervised** facilities designed to provide a hygienic environment in which people are able to consume illicit recreational drugs intravenously. The legality of such a facility is dependent by **location** and political jurisdiction.

en.wikipedia.org › wiki › Supervised_injection_site

Supervised injection site - Wikipedia

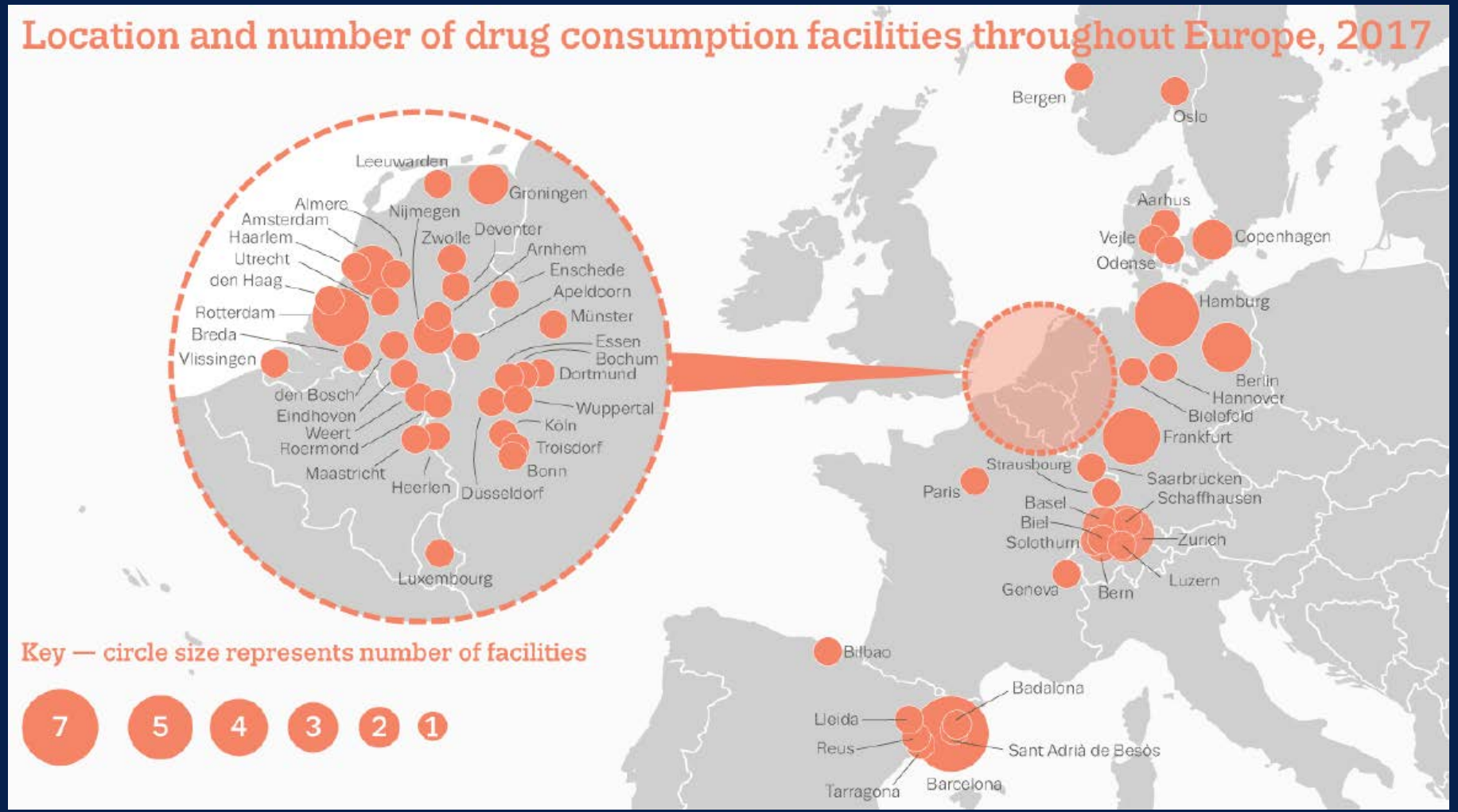
# Active SIFs - Worldwide

**Table 1. Supervised Consumption Sites around the world**

| Country | Cities with SCSs | SCSs operating |
|---|---|---|
| Netherlands | 25 | 31 |
| Germany | 15 | 24 |
| Canada* | 11 (5 more planned) | 20** (11 more planned) |
| Switzerland | 8 | 12 |
| Spain | 7 | 13 |
| Denmark | 4 | 5 |
| Norway | 2 | 2 |
| France | 2 | 2 |
| Australia | 2 | 2 |
| Luxembourg | 1 | 1 (1 more planned) |
| Ireland | 1 planned | 1 planned |
| Scotland | 1 planned | 1 planned |

Pardo et al. Assessing the Evidence on Supervised Drug Consumption Sites. RAND Health Care and RAND Social and Economic Well-Being. 2018

# Active SIFs - Europe



# SIFs

- 1986 Bern, Switzerland
- > 100 globally
- Vancouver's Insite in Canada
- Sydney's Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) in Australia

# SIFs

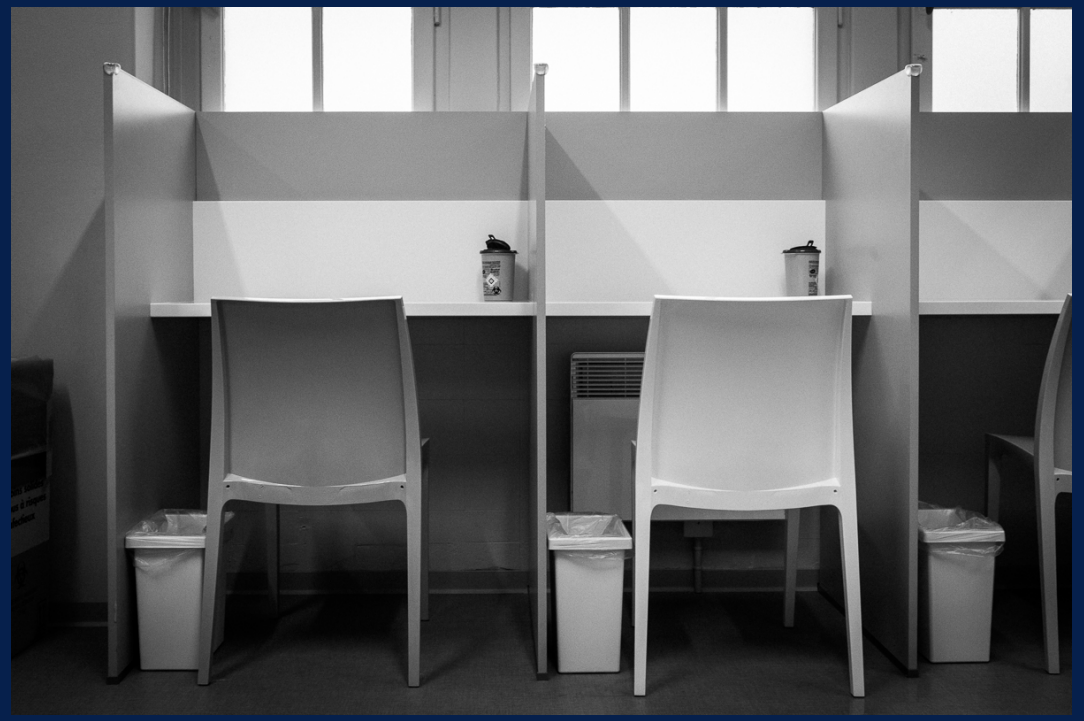
**Table 2. Characteristics of Supervised Consumption Sites in Vancouver and Sydney**

| | Medically Supervised Injecting Centre | Insite |
|---|---|---|
| Location | Kings Cross Neighborhood, Sydney | Downtown Eastside, Vancouver |
| Year opened | 2001 | 2003 |
| Hours of operation | 12 hours a day Monday-Friday and eight hours on the weekends | 18 hours, 7 days a week and 24 hours Wednesday to Friday when social assistance is disbursed |
| Number of booths | 8 | 12 |
| Injection room capacity | 16 clients | 12 clients |
| Registered clients (cumulative) | 16,142 | 12,000+ |
| Cumulative supervised injections | More than 1 million | More than 3.6 million |
| Cumulative overdoses managed | 7,428 | 6,440 |
| Estimated supervised injections per day | 180 | 415 |
| Referrals to health and rehabilitation services (cumulative) | 13,000 (Cumulative) | 443 (2017 only) |
| Annual operating cost | $2.77 million Australian in 2008 | $3 million Canadian in 2008 |

Pardo et al. Assessing the Evidence on Supervised Drug Consumption Sites. RAND Health Care and RAND Social and Economic Well-Being. 2018

# Active SIFs

Insite, North America's first legal SIF, in Vancouver, Canada.



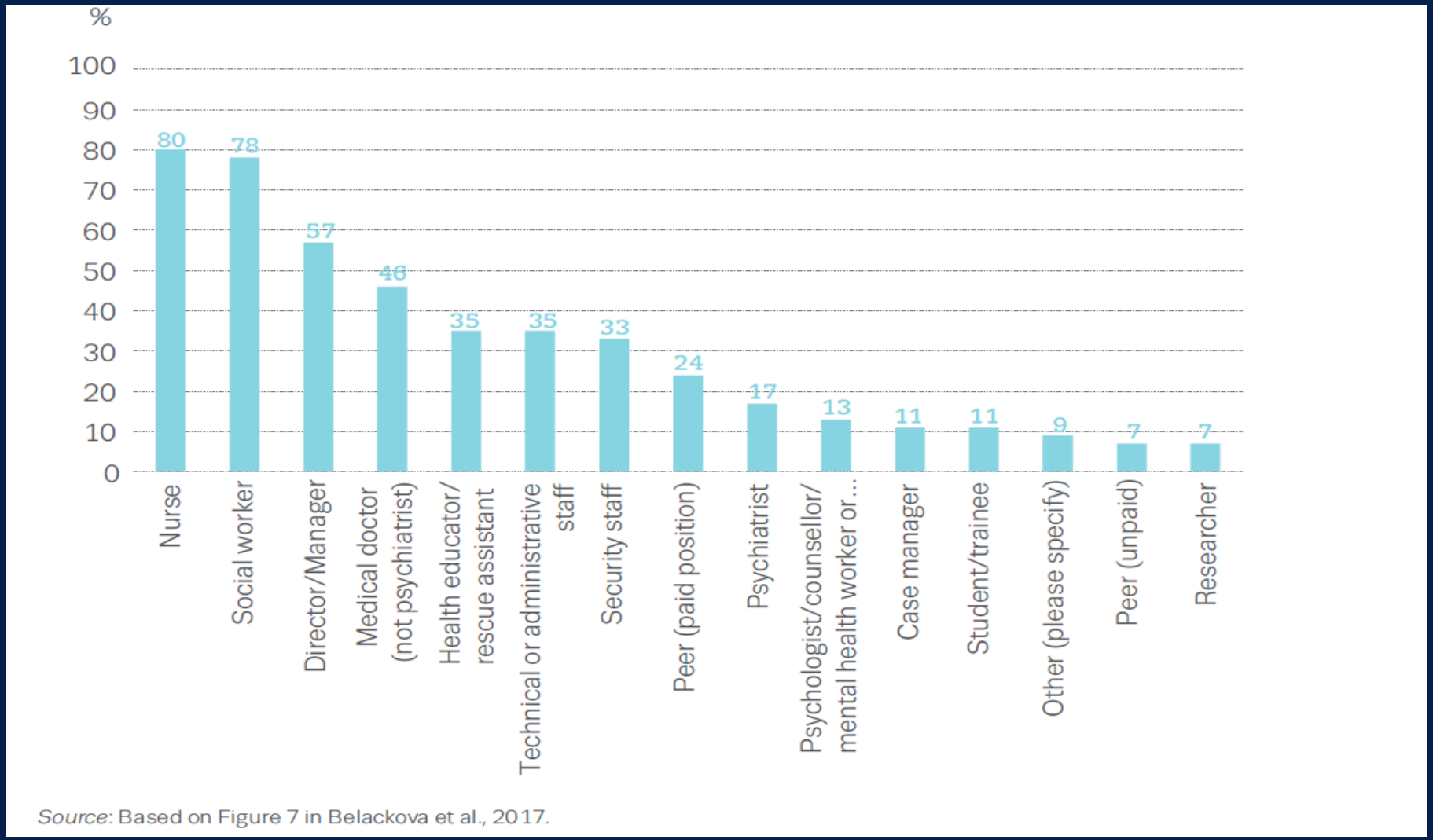
SIS in Strasbourg, France.

# Operational models

- Integrated – Most common, broad range services, “One-stop-shop”, Not ideal for patients in recovery.
- Specialized – Focus on safe use, less complex operationally Limited services.
- Mobile – Vans with 1-3 booths, broader area covered Limited services.

Pardo et al. Assessing the Evidence on Supervised Drug Consumption Sites. RAND Health Care and RAND Social and Economic Well-Being. 2018

# Staffing




*Source*: Based on Figure 7 in Belackova et al., 2017.

# Workflow

- Intake assessment – eligibility, education, assess needs
- Supervised area – reduce risk, ensure compliance, safe space
- Other provisions – crisis management, shelter, counseling
- Referral – inform and encourage to seek treatment

# Effectiveness

Tools for Practice

## Does evidence support supervised injection sites?

Jennifer Ng Christy Sutherland MD CCFP DipABAM Michael R. Kolber MD CCFP MSc

**Bottom line**

Best evidence from cohort and modeling studies suggests that SISs are associated with lower overdose mortality (88 fewer overdose deaths per 100 000 person-years [PYs]), 67% fewer ambulance calls for treating overdoses, and a decrease in HIV infections. Effects on hospitalizations are unknown.

OPEN ACCESS Freely available online PLoS one

## Estimated Drug Overdose Deaths Averted by North America's First Medically-Supervised Safer Injection Facility

M-J. S. Milloy[1,2], Thomas Kerr[1,3], Mark Tyndall[1,3], Julio Montaner[1,3], Evan Wood[1,3]*

1 British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver, Canada, 2 School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, 3 Department of Medicine, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

### Results

From the initiation of the SIF database on March 1, 2004 until February 6, 2008, there were 766,486 injections in the facility, resulting in 1004 overdose events (1.31 per 1,000 injections, or 0.63 per day) in the facility. None resulted in death. The physical manifestations, the substances consumed and the responses taken by staff to these overdose events are shown in Table 1. Of the 1004

# Data - Canada

- Special Ministerial Order M488
- 221 Overdose interventions (NO fatalities)
- 3383 Clinical treatment interventions, 5268 referrals
- 458 onsite detox admission – 43% completion (2010)
- Deaths ↓35%, 253.8 >> 165.1 / 100,000 person-years (p = 0.048)
- Prevented 1,191 new HIV infections over 10 years

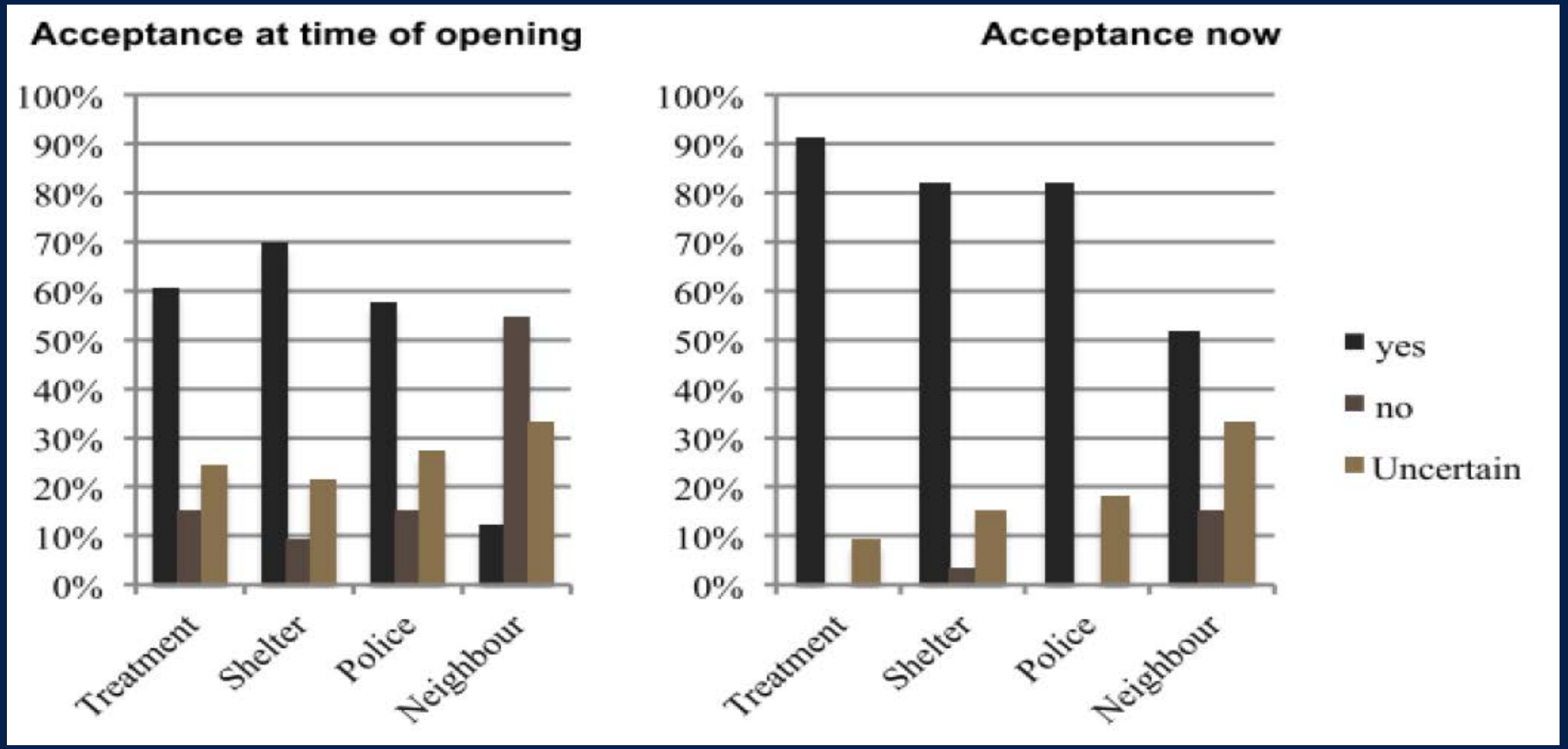
# Data – Australia

- 4400 Overdose intervention (NO fatalities)
- 9500 referrals
- Monthly ambulance service calls ↓ 80%
- Opioid emergency department episodes ↓ 35%

# Data – Europe

- 1025 Overdose intervention (NO fatalities), 9500 referrals – Luxembourg
- HIV incidence in PWID 8.6% (1986) – 0% (2000) – Netherlands
- NO drug related deaths since 1994 - Germany

# Data – Europe


Acceptance at time of opening
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Treatment
Shelter
Police
Neighbour
Acceptance now
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Treatment
Shelter
Police
Neighbour
yes
no
Uncertain

# Summary

- ↓ overdose deaths
- ↓ use
- ↓ public disorder / public injecting
- ↓ HIV and Hepatitis C risk
- ↑ entry into treatment
- ↑ medical and social service use
- ↑ health care value, ↓ cost

# United States – Current State

- Harm reduction – needle access, naloxone
- Federal Controlled Substances Act – s844, s856 (Crack house statute)
- September 2014 - unsanctioned supervised injection site
- The Journal of Global Drug Policy and Practice
- SIF - Yearly cost savings of $3.5 million year

# United States – Current State

**Table 1.** Injections, Opioid-Involved Overdoses, and Overdose Deaths at an Unsanctioned Safe Consumption Site, 2014 through 2019.*

| Year | Injection Events | Opioid Overdoses | Overdoses per 1000 Injections | Overdose Deaths |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2014 | 350 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 |
| 2015 | 1,076 | 1 | 0.93 | 0 |
| 2016 | 1,536 | 1 | 0.65 | 0 |
| 2017 | 1,759 | 3 | 1.71 | 0 |
| 2018 | 2,867 | 13 | 4.53 | 0 |
| 2019 | 2,926 | 15 | 5.13 | 0 |
| Total | 10,514 | 33 | 3.14 | 0 |

Kral AH, Lambdin BH, Wenger LD, Davidson PJ. Evaluation of an Unsanctioned Safe Consumption Site in the United States. N Engl J Med. 2020 Aug 6;383(6):589-590.

# United States – Current State

- San Francisco, CA
- Boston, MA
- New York City and Ithaca, NY
- Denver, CO
- Philadelphia, PA

# Philadelphia / Baltimore

NATIONAL

## Philadelphia Nonprofit Opening Nation's 1st Supervised Injection Site Next Week

February 26, 2020 · 12:19 PM ET
Heard on All Things Considered

BOBBY ALLYN

MICHAELA WINBERG

## In Philadelphia, Judges Rule Against Opening 'Supervised' Site To Inject Opioids

January 14, 2021 · 12:50 PM ET

FROM WHYY PBS npr

HEALTH

## Safe place to shoot up? Some say Baltimore needs supervised sites for drug use. Others say that's insane.

By JEAN MARBELLA and MEREDITH COHN
BALTIMORE SUN | JAN 24, 2020 AT 2:35 PM

# San Francisco

## San Francisco supervisors unanimously approve legislation for safe-injection sites

By Andre Torrez | Published June 23, 2020 | San Francisco |

## Bill allowing SF to open safe injection sites fails to win approval

Facilities seen as way to address drug overdoses, reduce spread of disease

JOSHUA SABATINI / Aug. 26, 2020 4:30 p.m. / NEWS / THE CITY

# Boston

## Legislative committee approves bill allowing safe injection sites in Mass.

By Felice J. Freyer Globe Staff, Updated May 15, 2020, 6:26 p.m.

A legislative committee on Friday approved a bill that would allow Massachusetts to host centers where people can safely use illicit drugs under medical supervision, to prevent them from dying of overdoses.



BREAKING NEWS | COVID-19 updates: Mass. DPH reports 1,508 new cases, 30 new deaths Sunday

## 25 Investigates: 2021 could bring safe injection sites to Mass., proponents say

By: Kerry Kavanaugh, Boston 25 News
Updated: February 4, 2021 - 11:44 PM

# COVID-19

- > 80,000 deaths - May 2020 (past 12 month data)
- Pandemic acceleration
- 37/38 jurisdictions ↑ synthetic opioid related deaths
  - 18 reported > 50 % ↑
  - 10 reported > 98% ↑

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Overdose Deaths Accelerating During COVID-19

# Challenges and Path forward

- Legal and Ideological barriers
- State and Federal drug laws
- Lack of community support

# References


- Working paper. Assessing the Evidence on Supervised Drug Consumption Sites. Bryce Pardo, Jonathan P. Caulkins, and Beau Kilmer. RAND Health Care and RAND Social and Economic Well-Being. WR-1261-RC. December 2018.
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- Kral et al. Evaluation of an Unsanctioned Safe Consumption Site in the United States. The New England Journal of Medicine. 2018.
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# Thank you!

# Q & A