

TO: The Honorable Helen M. Thomson, Chairwoman
And Members of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Bette G. Hinton M.D. Director/Health Officer
Cheryl Boney, Deputy Director for Public Health Programs

DATE: May 3, 2005

SUBJECT: Resolution to support the implementation of a Disease Prevention
Demonstration Project for Yolo County

RECOMMENDED ACTION

That your Board approve and authorize the Chairwoman to sign resolution No. _____ to support the implementation of the Disease Prevention Demonstration Project, formerly SB 1159, for Yolo County. This bill was signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2004 to assist in the fight the spread of HIV, hepatitis and other blood-borne diseases.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the General Fund. The cost of implementation is not expected to be significant but would entail maintaining a list of registered pharmacies; providing referral information to the pharmacies and providing any new data to support the evaluation of the project to the California Department of Health Services. These functions will be maintained under current program funding.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDED ACTION

This resolution authorizes the Yolo County Health Department to develop and implement a local Disease Prevention Demonstration Project as authorized by SB 1159. This allow pharmacists to sell or furnish 10 or fewer hypodermic needles at any one time to a person 18 years of age or older without a prescription providing that the pharmacist works for a pharmacy that is registered with the Yolo County Health Department. It would direct the Yolo County Health Department to develop a project consistent with the legislation, including:

- Informing Yolo County pharmacies of the project;
- Maintaining a directory of participating pharmacies;
- Making available to the participating pharmacies written health education and referral information and materials that may be provided or reproduced to provide written or verbal counseling at the time of sale or furnishing of syringes under this project.

BACKGROUND

The United States Public Health Service recommends that individuals who inject drugs use a new sterile syringe for each injection to prevent the transmission of blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis C. The consequences of sharing contaminated needles have taken a significant toll on the public's health. Numerous health and law enforcement studies concur that improved syringe access reduces the rate of HIV transmission without increasing the rates of drug use, drug injection or crime. In the United States, approximately 20 percent of all reported AIDS cases are associated with injection drug use. In Yolo County, 32% of all HIV/AIDS cases and 63% of all women with AIDS attribute their infection to injection drug use. There is an estimated 1.8% of the Yolo County population who has HCV (Hepatitis C).

The State of California passed Senate Bill 1159 (Vasconcellos) to allow for the development of a time-limited demonstration project that would allow a participating pharmacist to sell or furnish up to 10 syringes without a prescription to an adult. On September 20, 2004, this bill was chaptered by the Secretary of State and signed by Governor Schwarzenegger. A resolution from each county Board of Supervisors is needed to participate in this demonstration project.

.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The Health Council, DATAC, and Sexual Health Advisory Committee unanimously supported this resolution. Original sponsors of SB 1159 include the California Pharmacists Association, California Retailers Association, Walgreen's, California Medical Association, AIDS Project Los Angeles, San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the American Liver Foundation.