



# Media

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# Advisory

## **Advocates form coalition to support supervised consumption sites in the state of Massachusetts**

BOSTON -- Supervised Consumption Sites (SCSs) offer a harm reduction approach to the current opioid epidemic and have been demonstrated to significantly reduce overdose deaths in cities that have established them. These facilities provide a medically supervised space for people who inject drugs (PWID) to access a range of services, including overdose monitoring and Narcan to reverse overdoses. They also sometimes include: sterile equipment, recommendations and navigation to substance use treatment, and access to medical or behavioral health staff. They do not allow the sale or purchase of recreational drugs on premise.

**What:** A diverse group of advocates have come together to support the creation of a legal framework for supervised consumption sites to save lives in Massachusetts by preventing overdose deaths, increasing access to harm reduction methods, and linking people to treatment.

Current coalition membership includes: ACCESS Drug User Health Program, AIDS Action, Fenway Health, End Hep C MA, Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP), Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA), National Association of Social Workers - MA Chapter, New England Users Union (NEUU), Harm Reduction Hedgehogs 413 (HRH413), SIFMA NOW, Tapestry, Victory Programs, Boston Users Union, Health in Justice Action Lab at Northeastern University School of Law and MGH Primary Care Leadership.

The coalition is open to new members who are part of a larger organization as well as individuals with no organizational affiliation who care about supervised consumption as a harm reduction method.

**Why:** Since 2010, the rate of fatal opiate overdoses has increased by 355 percent in Massachusetts. The opioid crisis is devastating communities all over the Commonwealth and requires a bold response by policymakers, law-enforcement, public health and medical professionals. Supervised Consumption Sites (SCSs) create a safe space where people can inject pre-obtained drugs under medical supervision. SCSs have proven to be effective in saving lives and reducing the harms associated with intravenous drug use.