

Syringe Access Program

2023 Community Needs Assessment Findings | Syringe Use

The Denver Department of Public Health and Environment surveyed participants at Denver syringe access programs about syringe use. 475 participants who reported injecting drugs were surveyed.

What are syringe access programs?

Syringe access programs are places in the community that offer free supplies, like sterile (unused) syringes, to prevent infection and reduce harms of drug use; they safely dispose of used syringes; and they link participants to substance use treatment, HIV and viral hepatitis treatment, overdose prevention education, and social support services.

Less participants preferred injecting drugs compared to smoking or snorting drugs, a shift that is being seen nationally.

Assessment Results

22.4

Number of sterile syringes participants received, on average, during their program visit.

80%

Participants who reported never sharing a syringe or injecting supplies with someone else.

52%

Participants who reported all syringes received were for personal use only (N=396).

Note: 'N' means total # of participants

Almost half of participants were accessing syringes for personal use only. This suggests that many participants pick up for others and therefore programs are not servicing a large percentage of users. More information is needed to understand and address this gap in services.