

## **County of Santa Cruz Syringe Services Program Description**

Effective April 30, 2013 the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency (HSA) began administering the **Syringe Services Program (SSP)**. The primary goal of the SSP is to work in partnership with the community to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases associated with injection drug use and to address the community's concern regarding improperly discarded syringes.

An advisory group of key stakeholders has been formed and continues to meet to monitor and improve the program.

### **SSP consists of three components:**

- Syringe Exchange
- Syringe Disposal and Community Cleanup
- Community Awareness and Education

### **Syringe Exchange**

Syringe exchange is a public health intervention which reduces the number of improperly discarded used syringes and has been proven to reduce HIV and other blood borne disease transmission in the community. HSA utilizes a harm reduction approach by providing people who cannot or will not stop injecting illegal drugs with new syringes and a place to safely dispose of used syringes. Referrals are also provided to substance abuse treatment programs, mental health services, medical services along with information on disease prevention.

The [Syringe Services Program \(SSP\) Policy and Procedures](#) are based on scientific evidence and “Best Practice” recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO), Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Medical Association (AMA).

### **Syringe Disposal and Community Cleanup**

Self-service kiosks for disposal of prescription and non-prescription syringes are located outside each of the HSA clinics. The County is also enhancing cleanup efforts in the unincorporated areas in the community to alleviate the problem of improperly discarded syringes. The cleanup is a combined effort between HSA's Environmental Health Division, the Department of Public Works, the Sheriff's Department and the City of Santa Cruz.

### **Community Awareness and Education**

SSP is committed to enhancing community awareness and education through collaboration with community stakeholders. Improved understanding of the program will aid in enhancing the health of the county. This web page is an educational resource for the community and program participants to gain more information about the services and provide data on the program.