

ARCHES
Medically Supervised Consumption Services
Impact of Status Quo on Health System Spending

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Context

Adding medically Supervised Consumption Services to the spectrum of health services entails up-front capital and ongoing operational costs. However, the cost of maintaining the status quo is high. The impact of injection drug use on current spending in the health system alone is indicative of the need for a significant shift. The impact is also felt by individuals and their families through the immeasurable personal cost of infections, diseases, and overdose deaths. An effective response to injection drug use is built on a comprehensive investment in prevention, harm reduction, and treatment.

Costs

Health condition	Incidence within South Zone, AHS (2015)	Costs per person
HIV	6 new cases Estimate 25% due to injection drug use (needle-sharing is a major risk factor; a portion is associated with public injecting)	Lifetime treatment cost: \$210,555¹
Hepatitis C	70 new cases Estimate 95% due to injection drug use (a portion is associated with public injecting)	Lifetime treatment cost: \$64,694²
Opiate and heroin poisonings³	200 presentations in Emergency (estimate) 55 admissions (estimate)	Emergency room visit ⁴ \$200 Hospital admission: \$1,605/day for bed, support services, and overhead (RAH)
Serious skin and soft tissue infections	Injection drug use related	Average hospital admission: 5 days x \$1,605/day (RAH) = \$8,025 + physician costs and multiple visits to Emergency
Blood stream infections, e.g., Endocarditis, Septic joints	Injection drug use related	Average hospital admission: 30 days x \$1,605/day (RAH) = \$48,950 + physician costs

¹ Jozaghi, E., Reid, A. A., & Andresen, A. M. (2014). A cost-benefit/cost-effectiveness analysis of proposed supervised injection facilities in Ottawa, Canada, <http://www.substanceabusepolicy.com/content/9/1/31>

² Myers, R.P., Krajden, M., Bilodeau, M., Kaita, K., Marotta, P., Peltekian, K., Ramji, A., Estes, C., Razavi, H., Sherman, M. (2014). Burden of disease and cost of chronic hepatitis C infection in Canada. Canadian Journal of Gastroenterol Hepatology 28 (5), 243-50.

³ See also Fentanyl Facts and Figures, Edmonton Zone (2015): Poisoning by other opioid, including fentanyl – 470 presentations to Emergency.

⁴ Emergency room and hospital admission costs provided by Business Advisory Services, Alberta Health Services.