THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE
IN NORTH AMERICA'S DRUG WAR
**INSITE BY THE NUMBERS**

**AS OF 2015**

- **3416** total referrals to detox residential treatment program directly above INSITE (open since 2006)
- **2047** estimated number of HIV infections averted since opening the site
- **2667** lives saved through overdose intervention 2003-2011
- **$1.8 million** estimated annual savings from the prevention of HIV infections alone
- **2 million** injections in the first 10 years
SEPTEMBER 30, 2011
SUPREME COURT OF CANADA RULLED UNANIMOUSLY TO KEEP INSITE OPEN

905
AVERAGE NUMBER
OF VISITS TO INSITE
EACH DAY

587
AVERAGE NUMBER
OF DAILY INJECTIONS
(LIMITED BY NUMBER OF BOOTHS)

36% HEROIN
WHAT ARE PEOPLE INJECTING?

32% COCAINE

35%
DECREASE IN OVERDOSES
IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
AROUND INSITE

9%
IN THE CITY OVERALL

12% MORPHINE
Insite is the only square footage in North America where using illicit drugs is not a crime. Drugs are consumed in one of 12 booths, where clean equipment is made available, health teaching is provided, and trained medical and non-medical staff are on-site to intervene in an overdose. The site opened in 2003, and since then over 12,000 individuals have registered to use it, and over 2 million injections that would have otherwise occurred in back alleys, on the doorways of local businesses, in parks or in precarious situations - have come indoors. Most importantly, not one of these injections has resulted in a death. Insite has a small clinic where nurses offer primary care to treat disease and infection, change dressings and offer immunizations. Staff are also able to connect people into addiction counselling and treatment, housing and supports. There is a readily available detox program immediately upstairs. Despite numerous attempts from the Federal Government to close Insite, on September 30th 2011 the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Insite protects drug users’ Charter Rights of life, liberty and security of the person, and ordered the Minister of Health to grant the exemption for it to stay open.

**SCIENTIFIC PAPERS AND REPORTS**

**A COST-BENEFIT AND COST EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS OF VANCOUVER’S SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY**  
Insite saves $6 million per year

**COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VANCOUVER SAFE INJECTION FACILITY**  
Insite saves the City, government, and health care system money

**PUBLIC ORDER AND SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITIES: VANCOUVER’S SIS**  
Neighbourhood residents and businesses view Insite as making a positive contribution to public order

*Cohen (2006) Potus Consulting, RCMP.*  
**A REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH: LITERATURE ON SUPERVISED INJECTION SITES**  
Canada’s national policing force concludes that supervised injection sites do not increase crime

*Corrado (2006) Corrado Research and Evaluation Inc. RCMP.*  
**AN ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE ON INSITE – VANCOUVER’S SUPERVISED INJECTION SITE**  
Canada’s national police force supports Insite’s methodological evaluation and results

**POLICE AND PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS: EVIDENCE FROM THE EVALUATION OF VANCOUVER’S SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY**

Vancouver police officers support the efforts of Insite and work in tandem with the facility to improve public order.

Fairbairn et al. (2008) Social Science and Medicine.

**SEEKING REFUGE FROM VIOLENCE IN STREET-BASED DRUG SCENES: WOMEN’S EXPERIENCES IN NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY**

Insite provides a refuge from violence for survival sex trade workers.


**THE PERSPECTIVES OF INJECTION DRUG USERS REGARDING SAFER INJECTING EDUCATION DELIVERED THROUGH A SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY**

Through regular access to nursing staff, Insite is successful in educating injection drug users on safer injection practices.


**CANADA’S INSITE DECISION: A VICTORY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**

The ruling that Insite remains open is an important vindication of the public health principles underlying harm reduction efforts.


**POTENTIAL USE OF SAFER INJECTING FACILITIES AMONG INJECTION DRUG USERS IN VANCOUVER’S DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE**

Downtown Eastside community demands the opening of a safer injection site and related services.


**SAFER INJECTING FACILITY USE AND SYRINGE SHARING AMONG INJECTION DRUG USERS**

Injection drug users who use Insite are 70% less likely to share syringes.


**IMPACT OF A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY ON COMMUNITY DRUG USE PATTERNS: A BEFORE AND AFTER STUDY**

Insite has not produced adverse changes in community drug use patterns.


**CIRCUMSTANCES OF FIRST INJECTION AMONG ILLICIT DRUG USERS ACCESSING A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY**

Insite does not promote drug use.


**THE ROLE OF SAFER INJECTION FACILITIES IN THE RESPONSE TO HIV/AIDS AMONG INJECTION DRUG USERS**

Insite could provide additional services, such as HIV testing.
A MICRO-ENVIRONMENTAL INTERVENTION TO REDUCE HARMS ASSOCIATED WITH DRUG-RELATED OVERDOSE: EVIDENCE FROM THE EVALUATION OF VANCOUVER’S SAFER INJECTION FACILITY
Insite addresses the social, cultural, and structural factors that contribute to overdose.

MISREPRESENTATION OF SCIENCE UNDERMINES HIV PREVENTION EFFORTS
Outdated ideology and the ‘War on Drugs’ endangers the future of Insite.

SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITIES: TIME FOR SCALE-UP?
It’s time harm reduction was a global initiative.

AN INTEGRATED SUPERVISED INJECTING PROGRAM WITHIN A CARE FACILITY FOR HIV-POSITIVE INDIVIDUALS: A QUALITATIVE EVALUATION
Supervised injection facilities have a place in comprehensive HIV care models.

RISK FACTORS FOR DEVELOPING A CUTANEOUS INJECTION-RELATED INFECTION AMONG INJECTION DRUG USERS: A COHORT STUDY
Insite reduces mortality rates from injection-related infection.

DETERMINANTS OF CUTANEOUS INJECTION-RELATED INFECTION CARE AT A SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY
Insite provides a variety of integrated health care services.

CONDOM USE AMONG INJECTION DRUG USERS ACCESSING A SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY
Insite supports safer sex practices by providing condoms to clients.

REDUCTION IN OVERDOSE MORTALITY AFTER THE OPENING OF NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY: A RETROSPECTIVE POPULATION-BASED STUDY
Insite has decreased overdose mortality by 35% generally and by nearly 50% among First Nations people and women.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH PUBLIC INJECTING AMONG USERS OF VANCOUVER’S SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY
Demand for Insite access too high for just one facility to meet.

NON-FATAL OVERDOSE AMONG A COHORT OF ACTIVE INJECTION DRUG USERS RECRUITED FROM A SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY
Insite does not increase rates of overdose.
INCARCERATION EXPERIENCES IN A COHORT OF ACTIVE INJECTION DRUG USERS
Harm reduction programming essential to reducing spread of disease in Canadian penal system

ESTIMATED DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS AVERTED BY NORTH AMERICA'S FIRST MEDICALLY-SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTION FACILITY
Insite prevents overdose deaths

EMERGING ROLE OF SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITIES IN HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS PREVENTION
Supervised Injection Facilities: an important component in the battle against HIV transmission

INJECTION DRUG USERS’ PERCEPTIONS REGARDING USE OF A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY
Users more willing to modify unsafe behaviours as a result of Insite

Reddon et al. (2011) AIDS Education and Prevention, 23 (5): 412-422.
USE OF NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY AMONG HIV-POSITIVE INJECTION DRUG USERS
Insite appears to have attracted a high-risk subpopulation of HIV-positive IDUs

POTENTIAL ROLE OF SAFER INJECTION FACILITIES IN REDUCING HIV AND HEPATITIS C INFECTIONS AND OVERDOSE MORTALITY IN THE UNITED STATES
Insite has the potential to reduce viral and bacterial infections among those who engage in high-risk injection behaviours

ACCESSING CARE FOR INJECTION-RELATED INFECTIONS THROUGH A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY
Insite reduces strain on the health care system

INJECTION DRUG USERS’ ACCESS TO A SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY IN VANCOUVER, CANADA: THE INFLUENCE OF OPERATING POLICIES AND LOCAL DRUG CULTURE
Increased access to Insite is necessary in order to meet IDU’s healthcare needs

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK AND SAFETY WITHIN INJECTION SETTINGS: INJECTION DRUG USERS’ REASONS FOR ATTENDING A SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY IN VANCOUVER, CANADA
Insite, as perceived by the drug users, provides protection from a broader range of hazards associated with injecting drugs in unregulated settings

CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG ILICIT DRUG INJECTORS WHO USE NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY

57% of drug users under 30 years of age use Insite regularly


CHANGES IN INJECTING PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY

On average Insite users three times more likely to practice safer injection

Tyndall et al. (2005) Drug and Alcohol Dependence.

ATTENDANCE, DRUG USE PATTERNS, AND REFERRALS MADE FROM NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY

Insite successfully connects drug users to detox and other support services


HIV SERO-PREVALENCE AMONG PARTICIPANTS AT A SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY IN VANCOUVER, CANADA: IMPLICATIONS FOR PREVENTION, CARE AND TREATMENT

Insite bridges the gap between hard-to-reach HIV-positive injection drug users and the health care system


CHANGES IN PUBLIC ORDER AFTER THE OPENING OF A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTION FACILITY FOR INJECTION DRUG USERS

Insite improves public order


METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATING INSITE: CANADA’S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTION FACILITY FOR INJECTION DRUG USERS

To date, Insite has been evaluated in over 50 peer-reviewed journals


RATIONALE FOR EVALUATING NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY

Insite successfully addresses the limitations of conventional drug control efforts

Wood et al. (2005) American Journal of Infectious Diseases, 1:50-54.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SYRINGE SHARING AMONG USERS OF A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY

Insite decreases likelihood of syringe sharing among HIV-positive drug users


DO SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITIES ATTRACT HIGHER-RISK INJECTION DRUG USERS?

Insite helps prevent the spread of HIV and other blood-borne diseases


SAFER INJECTING EDUCATION FOR HIV PREVENTION WITHIN A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY

Safer injecting education provided at Insite reduces the spread of HIV
PREVALENCE AND CORRELATES OF HEPATITIS C AMONG USERS OF NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTION FACILITY
Insite reduces the spread of Hepatitis-C

SERVICE UPTAKE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF INJECTION DRUG USERS UTILIZING NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTION FACILITY
Insite’s successful in attracting its target demographic: high-risk and outdoor drug users

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE EVALUATION OF A PILOT MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY
Initial evaluation conclusive: Insite is working

ATTENDANCE AT SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITIES AND USE OF DETOXIFICATION SERVICES
Insite increases the use of addiction treatment and counselling services

IMPACT OF A MEDICALLY SUPERVISED SAFER INJECTING FACILITY ON DRUG DEALING AND OTHER DRUG-RELATED CRIME
The opening of Insite did not increase drug trafficking and drug-related crime in the community

RATE OF DETOXIFICATION SERVICE USE AND ITS IMPACT AMONG A COHORT OF SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY USERS
Insite instrumental in connecting users to detox services and methadone treatment

THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT’S TREATMENT OF SCIENTIFIC PROCESS AND EVIDENCE: INSIDE THE EVALUATION OF NORTH AMERICA’S FIRST SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY
Partisan politics overshadow scientific evidence

NURSE-DELIVERED SAFER INJECTION EDUCATION AMONG A COHORT OF INJECTION DRUG USERS: EVIDENCE FROM THE EVALUATION OF VANCOUVER’S SUPERVISED INJECTION FACILITY
Insite nurses reaching high-risk female and younger injection drug users

ILICIT DRUG ADDICTION, INFECTION DISEASE SPREAD, AND THE NEED FOR AN EVIDENCE-BASED RESPONSE
Critical thinking critical to the survival of Insite
WHAT PEOPLE IN CANADA ARE SAYING

LIZ EVANS
Founder, Former Executive Director PHS Community Services Society
OSF Fellow 2015/6
Consultant with Community Insite

“It is clear the war on drugs has failed and communities all over the world are looking for alternative ways to lessen human suffering related to the use of illicit drugs. I struggled for years to open North America’s only legal site because I witnessed needless death on a daily basis in our community. This has proven an effective strategy to engage people outside of mainstream health care and services. It is pragmatic, evidence based, and most importantly saves lives.”

GREGOR ROBERTSON
Mayor of Vancouver

“As a key component of our City’s Four Pillars Drug Strategy, research confirms that Insite connects people to treatment services, counselling and medical help, at the same time as it reduces crime. The science in favour of Insite is clear, and as long as we have people suffering from addiction on our streets we need harm reduction options in place.”
Vancouver Observer, January 15, 2010

GORDON CAMPBELL
Former British Columbia Premier
Former Vancouver Mayor

“We think [Vancouver’s Supervised Injection Site] is a positive step, and we believe it should continue. We have let the federal government know that,”
Globe and Mail-August 16, 2006

KEVIN FALCON
Former British Columbia Minister of Health

“(Regarding the possibility of other supervised injection sites opening up elsewhere in BC)...Every community will have to looked at on its own. We would have to work with the community and with (city) council to be sure that if we do make a decision like that it would be based on knowledge and evidence and hopefully have the support of the community.”
Kamloops Radio NL interview, January 20, 2010

GEORGE ABBOTT
Former British Columbia Minister of Health

“I’d say that I’m quite encouraged by the results that we have seen to date from the supervised injection site. We have a range of information. Actually, it’s very interesting information [...] there are a lot of interesting results that have come out of that work to date. By and large, the results are of an encouraging nature, so I’m certainly supportive of that continuing.”
BC Legislative Assembly-May 10, 2006
SAM SULLIVAN  
*Former Mayor of Vancouver*

“We strongly believe that [Vancouver’s Supervised Injection Site] plays an important role in not only reducing harm to those who are drug addicted, but also reducing harm and costs to our communities.”

*CBC, September 1, 2006*

LARRY CAMPBELL  
*Senator, former Mayor of Vancouver and Chief Coroner for British Columbia*

“[Insite] has surpassed all expectations we had. We’ve seen a [positive] difference in the number of people injecting in the street. We’ve seen a change in the [Downtown Eastside] street-scape. We’ve seen a drop [in the area] in HIV and Hep C. Those are major changes, but they are very preliminary. I hope they [can] continue.”

PHILIP OWEN  
*Former Vancouver Mayor*

“After travelling to five international drug policy conferences and talking with experts from Europe, Afghanistan, Australia and South America, I know safe injection sites are a huge success. They all say, “We wish we’d done it sooner and had more.” There are over 45 cities with 85 safe injection sites with a proven track record over 15 years of improving public health and public safety.”

JAMIE H. GRAHAM  
*Former Chief Constable, City of Vancouver Police Department*

“My staff has been working on the front-line with the VCHA to ensure that both enforcement and health related goals are addressed in this project. We plan on continuing in the spirit of cooperation to create a more safe and healthy community.”

GLOBE AND MAIL EDITORIAL BOARD  
*(Canada’s largest national newspaper)*

*Addicts deserve treatment too, September 30, 2011*

“The nine votes cast by the Supreme Court of Canada in favour of Insite...constitute a victory for common sense over the “war on drugs”. Heroin and crack addicts have no political constituency. But their lives have value too.”

SUPREME COURT OF CANADA  

[133] The application of the possession prohibition to Insite is also grossly disproportionate in its effects. Gross disproportionality describes state actions or legislative responses to a problem that are so extreme as to be disproportionate to any legitimate government interest. Insite saves lives. Its benefits have been proven. There has been no discernable negative impact on the public safety and health objectives of Canada during its eight years of operation. The effect of denying the services of Insite to the population it serves is grossly disproportionate to any benefit that Canada might derive from presenting a uniform stance on the possession of narcotics.
Insite, North America’s only legal supervised injection site, has been subject to millions of dollars worth of scientific evaluations. Much of this has been funded by the Federal Government of Canada, who have battled to close the project, but lost in a unanimous supreme court decision. There are now over 40 peer reviewed academic papers, articles and reports that illustrate the value of supervised injection. You can view them at CommunityInsite.ca /science.html

For more details contact:

Liz Evans
(Canada) 604 720 3051
liz@lizevans.ca
https://vimeo.com/97347575