Reviewer's report

Title: Syringe Access for the Prevention of Blood Borne Infections Among Injection Drug Users

Version: 1 Date: 23 September 2003

Reviewer: Maureen Miller

Reviewer's report:

General

In general, almost all of the components of a solid argument promoting multiple venues of legal syringe access and distribution are present in this manuscript. The logic of presentation is sometimes missing. A more liberal and consistent use of headings will help the authors (and the reader) better understand the underlying structure of both the logic and the argument presented in the manuscript. The only section that appears to be underdeveloped is the role of the primary care physician. Although the authors strongly believe that physicians could and should play a role in sterile syringe access, they do not provide solid examples of how this might come to pass. Particularly weak is the issue of physician training. Given the emphasis placed on this aspect of sterile syringe distribution in both the abstract and the conclusion, this section should be bolstered.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

Minor Compulsory Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. Some of the terms and abbreviations used are incomplete, i.e., hepatitis C VIRUS (HCV) and syringe exchange PROGRAM (SEP), and the use of abbreviations is sporadic.

2. There are several grammatical errors in the text, particularly in the first part of the manuscript.

3. Insert headings to correspond with the logic of presentation, particularly when integrating the 'Background' and the 'Discussion'--the only two sections of the manuscript. (This is a strange presentation in itself.) The 'Syringe Access' section would benefit from additional reorganization using the heading mechanism.

4. Provide additional argument and suggestions for the role of the primary care physician.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Advice on publication: Accept after minor compulsory revisions

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests:
None.