



# Idaho Safer Syringe Programs

## 2021 Annual Report

### What are Safer Syringe Programs?

Safer syringe programs (SSPs) are a practical approach to address substance use in Idaho. SSPs are community-based prevention programs that protect people by providing safe disposal of used syringes. SSPs are also places where individuals who inject drugs can go to access sterile syringes, get health exams, and get connected to substance use disorder treatment.

Substance use is complex. The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare is focused on prevention and treatment options for people with substance use disorder. But we also need a way to safely dispose of used syringes to protect the sanitation and safety workforce and community members from injury, prevent the spread of infections such as HIV and viral hepatitis, and connect individuals to substance use disorder treatment.

### Services offered at Idaho's Safer Syringe Programs include:



Safe syringe disposal & access to sterile syringes



Connection to substance use disorder treatment



Opioid overdose reversal medications (naloxone)



HIV and viral hepatitis testing, STD testing, condoms



Housing assistance, food banks

### Annual Survey

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, HIV, STD, and Hepatitis Section (HSHS) provides Idaho SSPs with guidance and training. HSHS measures their impact by conducting an annual survey. Between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021, Idaho's six SSP report serving 964 unique participants from 34 counties, demonstrating the continued impact that substance use has in communities throughout the state.

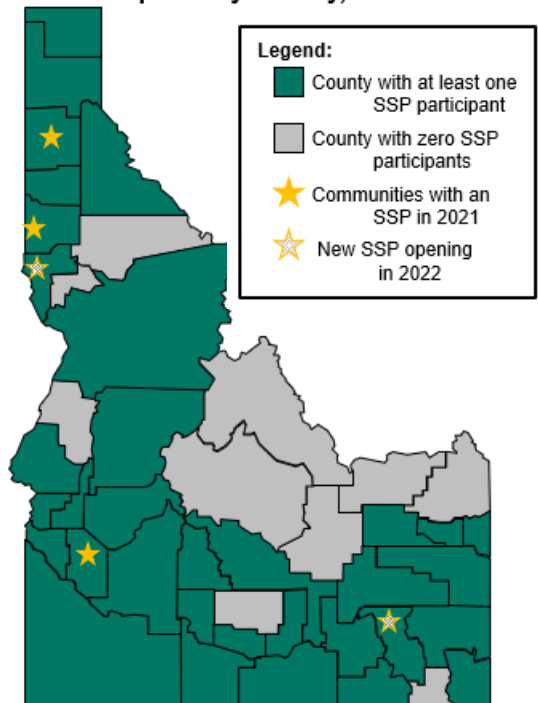


**964** participants accessed services



**3,712** visits or encounters occurred

### SSP Participants by County, Idaho - 2021





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### Impact

Between January 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021, Idaho's six SSPs made the following impact:



#### Communities Are Safer

- 699,388 used syringes safely disposed of (return ratio 0.91), preventing injury.
- Five community safe sharps disposal collection boxes installed in publicly accessible spaces.
- Two "Found syringe hotlines" operating.
- Four community clean-up events held.



#### Spread of Infections Are Reduced

- 633,174 sterile syringes provided, preventing the spread of HIV and hepatitis C.
- 29,658 condoms distributed, preventing the spread of sexually transmitted infections.
- An estimated 116 hepatitis C and 35 HIV infections averted, saving \$22 million in associated lifetime healthcare costs.



#### Lives Are Being Saved

- 5,192 naloxone kits distributed by SSPs directly to people who use drugs, their friends, or family members.
- At least 628 opioid-related overdoses reversed with naloxone.
- 1 life is saved for 8 doses of naloxone distributed.



#### Pathway to Healthcare & Recovery Are Provided

- 498 HIV tests performed, 86% of which were HIV Home Test Kits.
- 25 hepatitis C tests performed.
- No new HIV or hepatitis C infections identified.
- 915 recovery referrals requested.

**The opposite of addiction is connection.**

**Idaho's SSPs are a life-saving connection for people who use drugs.**

*"I just wanted to share with you what happened today at a local shelter. There was an overdose (presumably fentanyl) and before the staff could respond with the supply of NARCAN that they had, guests had already given a dose with NARCAN provided through SSP outreach. They waited the prescribed time and provided further doses, a total of 4 doses before the person started to come out of it, and the paramedics arrived. Everyone was shaken up, but the person was taken by paramedics stable and conscious." **The individual survived.***

- SSP Outreach Worker

*"We have heard countless stories from participants of Opioid Overdose reversals. Even just one life saved from harm reduction services we provide motivates us to continue doing the important work we are doing. One participant reported saving their partner's life after an opiate overdose in their home. That individual was able to get connected directly to our SSP and is now connected to community resources they needed. We have also educated and connected with our community in a way in which we were not able to prior to launching our SSP."*

- Substance Use Treatment Clinic Manager

### Program Contact

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