

Grand Traverse County Drug Free Coalition Support for Syringe Service Program

Whereas the incidence of chronic infections related to the use of injectable drugs, including HIV and Hepatitis C, is sharply increasing among young adults in Michigan, and

Whereas it is reported by Harm Reduction Michigan that 50% of IV drug users in our area are testing positive for Hepatitis C, and containment of that disease should be a priority of our community, and

Whereas the current national crisis of opioid overuse and addiction continues to add to the number of injection drug users through progression to use of injectable heroin and other opioid drugs, and

Whereas, “Harm Reduction” programs including “Syringe Service Programs” exist to offer sterile syringes and needles, safe disposal of used injection materials, testing for HIV, hepatitis C, and STDs, referral for treatment as needed, vaccinations, overdose prevention education, and referral for mental health services, social services, medical care, and treatment of substance use disorder, and

Whereas, such programs in place elsewhere have resulted in declines in the incidence of injection-related infections among users, law enforcement and first responders, as well as increased engagement and use of treatment, and

Whereas, trained and experienced individuals in our community are ready and willing to provide such a program within our county, and

Whereas, the Michigan Public Health Code (Section 7457f) allows for distribution of injection supplies by persons “authorized by a state or local governmental agency” for the purpose of preventing “transmission of infectious agents,”

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Grand County Substance Free Coalition supports the Grand Traverse County Health Department’s proposed Safe Syringe Program and the resolution presented to the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners to implement such a program in our community.

Approved: June 14, 2018

NOTE: The Grand Traverse County Substance Free Coalition is a consortium of individuals and agencies including Catholic Human Services, Munson Health Care, Traverse City Area Public Schools, Traverse City Police Department, Grand Traverse County Sheriff, Harm Reduction Michigan, the Michigan State Police, Community Collaborative, United Way of Northwest Michigan, Addiction Treatment Services, Northern Michigan Regional Entity, NMSAS Recover Center, Community Corrections, the Grand Traverse County Regional Community Foundation, along with local physicians, pharmacists, behavioral therapists, prosecuting attorneys, clergy and many others. Law enforcement members, although supportive of the overall goals of the Safe Syringe Program, have abstained from voting in this matter due to conflict of interest. This resolution is the consensus of the Coalition and does not represent the individual opinion of any one member or organization.