
From: Abram Oudshoorn [mailto:aoudsho@uwo.ca]
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2012 4:45 PM
To: Saunders, Cathy
Subject: Community Services and City Council

To the City Clerk,

It is my understanding that the Community Services Committee will be reviewing the issue of recently installed additional needle collection bins, and will be bringing the issue forward to Council on January 31st. Please accept my formal submission on the issue:

To the Community Services Committee and London City Council,

I would like to make comment on the issue of recently installed additional needle collection bins. As a professor whose research covers homelessness and health, I have followed with great interest the activities around London CARES since the original report in December of 2007. I believe that it reflects very well on Council to have been proactive in addressing issues around addictions and homelessness in our community, rather than putting off the concerns to other orders of government. Needle bins are indeed an important component of a comprehensive response to addiction, while also having the added benefit of community safety. Although 'harm reduction' is not popular terminology in some circles, it does not take complex science to understand that in order to treat addictions, step one is keeping the addict alive.

I trust that the memory of Council is longer than that of the general public, and you will recall the concerns of needles found in public spaces and spaces utilized by children. Needle bins, although described by a few as 'unsightly', are both part of best practices in responding to addictions, and are a significantly better alternative to our former state of haphazard disposal. If you find yourselves requiring further research to assist you with decision-making, I would be happy to serve as a resource to your staff.

Thank you for your time,

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