

Sent: Friday, April 27, 2018 8:36 AM

To: Turner, Stephen <sturner@london.ca>; Hopkins, Anna <ahopkins@london.ca>; Cassidy, Maureen <mcassidy@london.ca>; Helmer, Jesse <jhelmer@london.ca>; tanya@tanyapark.ca; Lysynski, Heather <hlysynsk@London.ca>

Cc: Mackie, Dr. Christopher

Subject:

Fellow Londoners, city council members and interested parties,

I am writing you to ask that you endorse the initiative to open supervised injection sites at 241 Simcoe Street and 446 York Street in London Ontario. I ask that you also endorse the implementation of a mobile supervised injection site for our community.

I am a homeowner in the Rectory and Hamilton Road neighborhood and I moved to said area from a neighborhood bordering the Downtown Eastside, in Vancouver B.C. I have spent a great deal of time in direct contact with neighbors battling addictions and I witnessed the battles the city of Vancouver went through in the 80's, 90's and early 2000. I buried friends, fought addiction myself and I have very personal experiences with all that comes with addiction, poverty and mental illness.

Currently I believe our neighborhood is unsafe for young children. The parks, sidewalks, trails and school grounds are littered with used needles. Our neighbors live in daily peril with the recent influx of dangerous opiates. People we know and love, face life and death decisions every day as they try and live with addiction. Hidden away in their most vulnerable moments. Denying vulnerable citizens of this community access to lifesaving services seems only acceptable when we can group them together under labels such as 'addict'.

Our neighborhood has paid a heavy price and continues to. I now ask the rest of the community to bear a portion of that load and open Supervised Injection Sites immediately. To ignore the HUNDREDS OF DEATHS that have occurred and will continue, is morally unacceptable. To ignore the MILLIONS OF DISCARDED, DIRTY NEEDLES in our community is morally unacceptable.

London does not want to go through what Vancouver did, in the 1990's, before the harm reduction strategies began to be implemented. Leading up to that the market for heroin in the city became bloated with oversupply. As a result, heroin was being sold on the street uncut and cheap. Hundreds of Vancouverites lost their lives to overdoses. Hidden away in the back alleys and dark corners of the Downtown Eastside. I lost friends. My neighbors lost family members and loved ones. It was a dark time in the city and most frustratingly, it was preventable. We don't want this to happen in London and currently, all the pieces are lining up for this to occur.

Please be brave in your decision making. Separate personal beliefs and assumptions from our currently, desperate reality. Endorse the supervised injection site initiative now, before more lives are lost

John Densky
documentary photographer