Leveraging Federal Support for Syringe Services Programs

Emily McCloskey
US Conference on AIDS
October 4, 2014
About NASTAD

- NASTAD is an international non-profit association of U.S. state health department HIV/AIDS program directors who administer HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis programs funded by U.S. state and federal governments.

- NASTAD was established in 1992 as the voice of the states.

- NASTAD is governed by a 20 member, elected Executive Committee charged with making policy and program decisions on behalf of the full membership.

- NASTAD has a Washington, DC headquarters with 38 staff and field offices/programs in Bahamas, Botswana, Ethiopia, Guyana, Haiti, Trinidad, South Africa and Zambia with 65 staff.
About NASTAD

Mission
NASTAD strengthens state and territory-based leadership, expertise and advocacy and brings them to bear on reducing the incidence of HIV and viral hepatitis infections and on providing care and support to all who live with HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis.

Vision
NASTAD’s vision is a world free of HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis.
Agenda

- Overview and Background
- History of the Syringe Exchange Ban in Appropriations
- FY2015 Appropriations
- Future Strategy
People who inject drugs (PWID) made up about 11% of new HIV infections in 2010
- 8% of new infections are injection drug users (IDU)
- 3% are men who have sex with men (MSM) and IDUs

IDUs represent 20% of the people living with HIV in the US and more than 50% of the people living with hepatitis C infection

These epidemics among IDUs have a disproportionate impact on women and communities of color
Syringe exchange programs (SEPs) serve as a safe, effective HIV prevention method for injection drug users (IDUs) to exchange used syringes for sterile needles, thereby significantly lowering the risk of HIV transmission. Since the 1980s, SEPs in conjunction with other HIV prevention strategies have resulted in reductions of up to 80% in HIV incidence among IDUs.

- There are currently 203 exchange programs operating one or more exchange sites in 34 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Indian Nations. (NASEN)
- This map shows the location of 186 cities with syringe exchange sites.

This map was prepared by amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research. Information on syringe exchange programs was provided by the North American Syringe Exchange Network (NASEN) and the Beth Israel Medical Center from their lists of syringe exchange programs that confirmed their willingness to have this information made public.

Key:
- ≥ 10 SEPs
- 1 - 9 SEPs
- No SEPs
Syringe Exchange Bans

- Two bans of funding for syringe exchange programs (SEPs) in appropriations bills:
  - Financial Services bill – Bans the use of the District of Columbia’s local funding for SEPs
  - Labor, Health and Human Services bill (LHHS) – Bans the use of federal government funding for SEPs
History in Appropriations
History in Appropriations

- In FY2008, through the Financial Services bill, Congress removed the ban on the use of Washington D.C.’s own local tax funding for SEPs

- In FY2010, in the LHHS bill, Congress removed the ban on federal funding for SEPs
  - Localities had to certify that there were no objections from health and law enforcement before

- In 2011, the US Surgeon General certified that syringe exchange reduces both the rate of HIV infections and substance abuse
In the FY2012 LHHS bill, Congress restored the ban on federal funding for SEPs (LHHS bill)

The President proposed lifting the federal ban on syringe exchange funding in his FY2013 and FY2014 budgets

The Senate included the federal ban removal in their FY2013 and FY2014

The federal ban was maintained in the FY2013 and FY2014 appropriations
The 113th Congress has grown increasingly partisan, resulting in very little accomplishment.

- Congress has the lowest level of productivity in many years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congress</th>
<th>New Laws Enacted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>113th (2013-2014)</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112th (2011-2012)</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111th (2009-2010)</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110th (2007-2008)</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(as of July 2013)

In the 107th Congress (2000-2001), the Senate and House were controlled by different parties and still managed to enact 200 new laws.
FY2015 Outlook

- President Obama’s budget included lifting the federal ban on syringe exchange

- The Senate LHHS Subcommittee also proposed lifting the ban in their bill

- The Democrats on the House LHHS Subcommittee released their version of the FY2015 LHHS funding bill, which also lifted the ban
Currently the government is funded through a continuing resolution (CR) until December 11, 2014.

The CR does not address the syringe exchange ban.

Depending on the election outcome, could be another CR through January
- Syringe exchange funding will most likely not be addressed in this CR.
Elections Outlook
Congressional Outreach

- Congressional attention to drug user health in a new way
  - Mostly focused on opioid overdose

- Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act

- Senate Forum on Heroin and Opioid addiction and the Obstacles to Expanding Treatment
Strategy
Use of Illicit Drugs in the Past Year
Prescription Drug Overdoses
House Appropriations Committee
Community Strategy

- Syringe Exchange Strategy Work Group
  - Hill Education and Advocacy
    - Targeted State Outreach
  - Public Relations Campaign
    - Op-Eds
Community Strategy

- Law enforcement
- Faith-based initiatives
- Local control
- Safety
Questions and Answers
Contact Information

Emily McCloskey
Manager, Policy and Legislative Affairs
emccloskey@NASTAD.org

www.NASTAD.org