



**Jim Hart
Sheriff – Coroner
County of Santa Cruz**

January 7, 2020

California Department of Public Health
CDPH Office of Aids – MS7700
P.O. Box 997426
Sacramento, CA 95899-7426

Dear Ms. Katz,

I am writing to you about the Harm Reduction Coalition's application to operate a mobile syringe delivery program in Santa Cruz County. Our county has an existing syringe waste problem that plagues our cities, parks and beaches. Our county is the second smallest in the state geographically and has about 275,000 residents. The County currently operates a robust SSP from two locations that adequately meets the needs of our I.V. drug-using population and provides wrap-around services.

A secondary program, with little to no oversight and no services other than handing out syringes, is not needed and will only exasperate our syringe waste problem. Approving the HRC's application will negatively impact public safety by putting our community members at risk from exposure to even more syringe litter.

Recently, there have been concerns about HRC staff using local parks as a dispersal point. In their application, the HRC stated they would not operate in local parks; however, there does not appear to be a legal prohibition from the state that restricts services in public parks and open spaces. Additionally, it is my understanding that should the HRC receive state certification; they can apply to the state to expand services and amend their role without seeking approval from the county health officer, local law enforcement, or the public.

The HRC's lack of transparency and full disclosure in their first application has eroded community confidence and trust in this organization, and concern exists that the HRC will not operate within the parameters outlined in their application or seek input/public comment about changes to the program should licensing approval occur.

I have received well over 100 emails from concerned community members opposing this application. I have not received a single email supporting the application. This program is not wanted or needed in our community, it poses a public safety and health concern, and I strongly urge the Department of Health to deny the HRC's application.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jim Hart', written over the printed name.

Jim Hart, Sheriff-Coroner