

Findings from year 1 of the MySafe study

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BACKGROUND:



MySafe provides prescribed safer supply (hydromorphone tablets) via a dispensing machine as an alternative to illicit drugs.

46 interviews conducted between Nov. 2021-Apr. 2022 to understand program pros/cons and what outcomes participants' experienced.



STUDY FINDINGS:

+ Pros:

- **Accessibility and choice** – the machines were conveniently located, improving access around when individuals could access their safer supply
- **Non-witnessed use** – not requiring clinicians to witness medication taking reduced stigma and shame that was often experienced in other settings (e.g., methadone clinics) and provided participants more choice
- **Contingency planning** – stockpiling medications for use at a later date (e.g., for vacations, for days requiring higher dosages, in case the machine broke down) which provided participants more freedom

"I got a bit of a stockpile...I was saving them up in case I went on vacation."



Outcomes:

- **Reduced use of unregulated opioids** – most individuals reported reduced use of unregulated drugs though many continued to purchase them

"I've cut street supply right out...it's definitely thanks to the machine, and MySafe Program."

- **Decreased overdose risk** – individuals reported reductions in overdoses
- **Positive financial impacts** – spending less money on unregulated opioids and less involvement in criminalized/ stigmatized work such as sex work and boosting
- **Improvements to health and wellbeing** – overall positive impact on health and wellbeing such as improved relationships and diet, more free time, and more health service engagement

Cons:

- **Technological issues** – difficulties using the machine (e.g., frozen screens, palm print scanning problems, damaged machines) potentially leading to withdrawal or the use of unregulated opioids

"It is a pain when it breaks down...You suffer. If I've got money, I go look for [drugs] on the street."

- **Dosing challenges** – hydromorphone doses did not match the strength of unregulated opioids and this created challenges with addressing withdrawal
- **Dedicated machine** – prescriptions were tied to one machine, requiring individuals to be in close proximity to the machine

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