

mumsDU

moms united and mandated to saving the lives of Drug Users

because a substance user could be anyone's child

April 5, 2017

The Honourable Dr Jane Philpott, MP
Minister of Health
Health Canada
70 Colombine Driveway
Tunney's Pasture
Postal Location: 0906C
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

Dear Minister Philpott:

RE: SECTION 56 EXEMPTION TO PROVIDE THE EMERGENCY SERVICE OF AN OVERDOSE PREVENTION TENT

The Opioid overdose crisis has hit Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, Canada - my home town and my daughter Jac's place of residence as she herself became addicted to opioids. It is also the residence of my eldest son, nine grandchildren and 4 great grandsons.

I am concerned about the lack of public health response to this crisis by local health services, as well as, a generalized fear of stigma and ostracization on behalf of other governing community members when providing any services that have proven to be effective in keeping substance users alive and well - namely, the provision of harm reduction supplies and services.

Of late, Sault Ste Marie has witnessed an increasing number of opioid-related overdoses, some of them fatal. The community does not have a supervised injection site or an overdose prevention site. Neither is the distribution of harm reduction supplies, including sterile injection equipment sufficiently accessible to the community of people who inject drugs.

Therefore, I intend to provide necessary temporary services on an interim basis by opening and operating an overdose prevention tent in an area of the city known to be already frequented by opioid-injecting substance users in order to work proactively to keep these people alive and well.

772 Ajyn Court, Mississauga, ON L4Y 4E9 416.357.6578

Supervised injection has a number of proven health and safety benefits. Evaluations of Insite, North America's first supervised injection site, have revealed declines in public drug use, fewer fatal overdoses, improved access to and use of addiction treatment services, improved public order, and enhanced safety for women who inject drugs. Furthermore, individuals who have access to clean injection equipment are significantly less likely to engage in HIV-risk behavior (such as needle-sharing and the use of non-sterile equipment). For these reasons, I would like apply within the law for a Section 56 exemption.

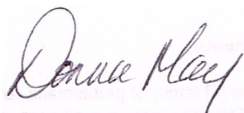
Given the proposed legislation under Bill C-37, I know you appreciate the barriers created by the existing 26 criteria. For this reason I will be applying under the new criteria and under the proposed legislation.

I will be providing emergency services and I therefore request that you expedite my forthcoming application.

I will be public about this process and will be doing so by providing public education around the necessity of these services with the community and beyond.

Timeliness and appropriate services are the difference between the life and death of substance users.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donna May", written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Donna May for her daughter Jac (**DOD 08/21/2012**) at the age of 35

Founding member & facilitator of mumsDU

cc: Hilary Geller, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health