

## Needs Assessment &amp; Feasibility Report Summary



people  
place &  
health  
collective

## Background

**In 2020, 2104 people died from an opioid related overdose in the state of Massachusetts.**

Massachusetts has the eighth highest rate of overdose mortality in the country and the second highest in New England. Between 2012 and 2018 the number of opioid-involved overdose deaths among Somerville residents increased more than fivefold. While some progress was noted in 2019 and 2020, these data are provisional and subject to change.

## What are safe consumption sites?

SCS—also referred to as supervised injection facilities, drug consumption rooms, or overdose prevention sites—are hygienic environments where individuals can bring pre-obtained drugs to use under the supervision of health care professionals or trained staff who can respond with oxygen and naloxone in the event of an overdose.



The purpose of this needs assessment and feasibility study was to determine the conditions under which an SCS would be used by people who use drugs; the feasibility of implementing an SCS in Somerville; and to identify concerns, challenges, and barriers.

## Results

Survey with people who use drugs ( $n = 47$ ) and community members ( $n = 615$ ).

94%



of participants who use drugs said they would use a SCS



72%

of participants who use drugs reported daily drug use



87%

of participants who use drugs were unhoused at the time of the survey

8.23



average rank of community members response on a scale of 1-10 to the question of a SCS' usefulness

## Recommendations

We recommend that Somerville establish at least one integrated SCS in either Davis Square and/or East Somerville that includes harm reduction and wraparound support services for people who use drugs. People who use drugs must be meaningfully included in the planning, implementation, and operational phases of opening and running an SCS. The City of Somerville engage in transparent, community-engaged planning and implementation efforts with a range of stakeholders.

### Focus groups with people who use drugs <sup>( $n = 17$ )</sup>

What would get them to use a SCS:



Anonymity



Wraparound services



Support for multiple consumption methods



Interdisciplinary staffing model

Barriers to using a SCS:



Location



Law enforcement