



NEWS RELEASE

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SHARPS BUY BACK COLLECTED 11,100 SHARPS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Parry Sound, ON - The Sharps Buy Back campaign, launched by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) was a success. Roughly, 11,100 sharps (e.g. needles or syringes) were returned to the Health Unit's Parry Sound office during the campaign, which ran mid November to December 18, 2019.

The primary audience for Sharps Buy Back was individuals who use drugs. As such, the initiative also aimed to connect people with harm reduction and health services offered through the Health Unit.

"It is important that we offer safe, judgement free options for sharps disposal and other harm reduction services," said Joanna Han, Community Health Promoter at the Health Unit.

While the incentive campaign only ran mid November to December 18, 2019, the Health Unit, along with other service providers, provide sharps disposal and exchange services year round. Harm reduction programs are part of the Health Unit's mandate with the goal of reducing the harm associated with using drugs. Needle exchange services are proven to reduce the spread of infection without increasing intravenous drug use.

In addition to the sharps exchange program, the Health Unit also offers naloxone kits, safer inhalation kits, safer meth kits and a variety of other health services like free dental care for eligible adults and children, free or low-cost birth control options, and Hepatitis C, HIV, and STI testing.

For more information, call the Health Unit at 1-800-563-2808, or learn more at myhealthunit.ca.

Quick Facts

If a sharp is found in the community, follow these instructions to pick it up safely:

- Do not walk while holding the sharp object
- Bring a puncture-proof, hard-sided, leak-proof container with a lid, such as a pickle jar or bleach container, to the area where the sharp was found
- Do not recap, bend, break the needle or manipulate it by hand in any way
- Place the object in the container. Use disposable gloves or puncture-proof gloves and tongs, if available. If tongs are not available pick up the needle/sharp from the blunt end and secure the lid
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water
- Label the container "hazardous waste" and bring to the Health Unit for proper disposal

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