

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 4-92

WHEREAS, HIV/AIDS presents a significant risk to the health of the citizens of Philadelphia, and the rate of HIV infection is increasing at an alarming rate;

WHEREAS, in 1991, more than one-third of persons in Philadelphia diagnosed with AIDS were injection drug users (IDUs);

WHEREAS, sharing of unclean syringes among IDUs is a major factor in the increased HIV transmission rate among IDUs;

WHEREAS, a recent study revealed that 28.5 percent of IDUs surveyed practiced high risk sex at least once per day and 31 percent had two or more non-IDU sex partners, in the same study, 28.7 percent of the non-IDU sex partners of IDUs reported having high risk sex at least once per day and a staggering 47.8 percent reported having two or more non-IDU partners;

WHEREAS, this activity spreads HIV into the non-drug using population, putting all the citizens of Philadelphia at risk;

WHEREAS, sterile syringe exchange programs are proven by clinical studies to be effective measures in reducing the spread of HIV among IDUs and their sexual partners;

WHEREAS, studies of sterile syringe exchange programs indicate they actually decrease rather than increase injection drug use by serving as a "bridge" to drug treatment for IDUs;

WHEREAS, the Philadelphia Board of Health, under the leadership of Commissioner of Public Health, Robert K. Ross, M.D., has declared that the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS among IDUs and their partners represent such a great risk to the people of Philadelphia as to necessitate the declaration of a Health Emergency under Section 6-205 of the Philadelphia Health Code;

WHEREAS, the Board and the Health Commissioner have recommended that the City institute a sterile syringe exchange program to combat this public health emergency;

THEREFORE, under the authority of the Philadelphia Health Code, Section 6-205, I, Edward G. Rendell, as Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, authorize the Commissioner of Public Health to issue orders necessary for the institution of a city-wide sterile syringe exchange program (including referral of IDUs to drug treatment programs) to combat this public health emergency.

July 27, 1992
Date

Edward G Rendell
Edward G. Rendell, Mayor