

Overdose Prevention Sites (OPS)

What are Overdose Prevention Sites, or OPS?

-  **OPS** are places designed to prevent people from dying of drug overdose. At an OPS, people with substance use disorders will be able to safely use drugs, like heroin, under supervision while they are encouraged to enter treatment.
-  There are no OPS currently in the United States, but **more than 100 worldwide**.

Why is Philadelphia talking about OPS?

-  Philadelphia is in the middle of an opioid crisis. In 2016, 907 people died in Philadelphia from overdose. We had **over 1,200 overdose deaths** in 2017.
-  In 1994, 935 people died from AIDS in Philadelphia, which was the worst year of the crisis. We saw **more overdose deaths** than that between January and September 2017.
-  OPS are designed to **keep people alive** long enough for them to enter treatment.
-  Research has shown that an OPS in Philadelphia could **save up to 76 lives per year**.

What do you need to know about OPS?

-  OPS do not encourage or condone drug use. They are about making sure people can stay alive long enough to get into treatment.
-  OPS do not negatively affect the neighborhoods they are in. Studies show they lead to **fewer littered syringes and less open-air drug use**.
-  **OPS do not worsen crime or drug use**. Police in Vancouver support their site because it saves lives and doesn't create more crime.
-  **OPS are not the only thing the City is doing**. We are working with doctors to lessen prescribing, getting more people into treatment, and distributing naloxone to save lives.
-  OPS are not about just injecting drugs. **Users are offered access to treatment** and can be revived by trained staff if they overdose.

What happens next?

-  The City is working to identify groups to pay for an OPS. **The City does not plan to pay for or operate one**.
-  The City is **meeting with organizations and community members**. They will discuss how an OPS should function to help the most people.