MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 34-18

INTRODUCED BY: Medical Student Section
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SUBJECT: Supporting Pilot Programs of Overdose Prevention Sites in Maryland

Whereas, Maryland ranks in the top five states with the highest rates of opioid-related overdose deaths¹; and

Whereas, around 30 deaths per 100,000 in Maryland in 2016 were related to prescription opioids, heroin and fentanyl compared to the national rate of 13.3 deaths per 100,000¹; and

Whereas, Maryland experienced a 20.4% increase in overdose death rates from 2014 to 2015 and 58.9% increase from 2015 to 2016²; and

Whereas, overdosing on drugs can generally be reversed with drugs like naloxone, saving thousands of lives a year, but requires someone there to notice; and

Whereas, MedChi has existing policies and a task force to "help Maryland physicians address the opioid epidemic" and encourage expansion of treatment centers and treatment options for people with opioid use disorder; and

Whereas, a recent systematic review showed supervised injection facilities promote safer injection practices and reduce overdoses all while having no effect on overall drug use, crime, or trafficking³; and

Whereas, supervised injection facilities have been associated with health cost savings due to averted HIV and Hep C infections and skin and soft tissue infections associated with injection⁴; and

Whereas, a cost benefit analysis of a supervised injection facilities in Baltimore found it would generate $7.8 million in savings while lowering overdose related deaths, ambulance calls, emergency room visits, and hospitalizations⁵; and
Whereas, Baltimore, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle and other cities have proposed legislation for supervised injection facilities; and

Whereas, existing treatment centers in Maryland provide infrastructure to expand the scope to providing supervised injections; and

Whereas, AMA policy H-95.925 states “Our AMA supports the development and implementation of pilot supervised injection facilities (SIFs) in the United States”; therefore be it

Resolved, that MedChi support legislation for the development of pilot overdose prevention sites, also known as supervised injection facilities, in Maryland that are designed to address the opioid crisis while gathering data that can be used by lawmakers to assess the efficacy of supervised injection facilities.

As adopted by the House of Delegates at its meeting on September 22, 2018.

References

Relevant AMA Policy
Pilot Implementation of Supervised Injection Facilities H-95.925
Our AMA supports the development and implementation of pilot supervised injection facilities (SIFs) in the United States that are designed, monitored, and evaluated to generate data to inform policymakers on the feasibility, effectiveness, and legal aspects of SIFs in reducing harms and health care costs related to injection drug use.