

# Overdose Prevention Centers

Overdose prevention centers are public health facilities that provide people with a non-judgmental, hygienic, supervised space to use their drugs. Centers are staffed by peers and usually also healthcare professionals who are trained to intervene immediately in the event of an adverse drug event, such as an overdose. People who visit the centers to use drugs receive safer use supplies free of charge, such as sterile syringes, tourniquets, cookers, and cotton.

There are close to 200 overdose prevention centers (OPCs) operating around the world.

Studies find that overdose prevention centers reduce overdose deaths, improve access to healthcare, and do not increase crime in the surrounding community. Despite these proven benefits, systemic barriers such as limited funding, legal issues, punitive drug policies, and racism prevent the establishment of overdose prevention centers.

## 35% ↓

A Canadian OPC saw a **35% reduction in local fatal overdoses.**

Research conclusively supports overdose prevention centers as an effective and life-saving harm reduction strategy.

### OPCs reduce drug overdose deaths.

- [No fatal overdose has ever been recorded](#) at any overdose prevention center operating anywhere in the world.
- In the first four months of operation, two overdose prevention centers launched in late 2021 in New York City reported [nearly 200 overdose reversals](#).
- There was a [35% reduction in local fatal overdoses](#) after the establishment of an overdose prevention center in Canada.

# 69% ↓

Some OPC have helped **reduce syringe sharing by 69%**, and improper syringe disposal by 56%.

OPCs improve health outcomes by connecting participants with health services and decreasing high-risk drug use behaviors.

- Overdose prevention center use is associated with a [69% decline in syringe sharing](#).
- Overdose prevention centers are linked to a dramatic decrease in new HIV infections, and related medical costs. One center [prevented more than 80 HIV infections](#) annually, which saved over \$13 million annually in additional medical costs.
- People who access overdose prevention centers are [more likely to seek out substance use disorder treatment](#), including medication for opioid use disorders (MOUD).
- By providing low-threshold basic healthcare services, overdose prevention centers improve [access to health services and treatment of injection-related infection](#).



Photo of Overdose Prevention Center, East Harlem, New York. Photo Credit: OnPoint

**Overdose prevention centers do not increase crime, and have a positive impact on public safety.**

- Consistent evidence shows that overdose prevention centers [do not increase crime](#), including no increases in theft, robbery, or drug-related offenses.
- Overdose prevention centers are associated with a local [decline in vehicle break-ins and vehicle theft](#).

- Over a nine-year period, [no increase in crime](#) was observed within the vicinity of an overdose prevention center in Sydney, Australia.
- Individuals utilizing services at an overdose prevention center self-reported a [56% decrease in unsafe disposal of syringes](#), and a [71% reduction in injecting drug use in public](#).

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### Vision

A world where everyone is protected by equitable and effective public health systems.

### Mission

We work in partnership to reimagine evidence-based, locally driven policies and practices to advance public health.