Needle Exchange Bill Reaches Florida Governor?s Desk

May 09, 2019

May 09, 2019 -
The bill that would allow the expansion of needle exchange programs throughout Florida has reached the governor?s desk. Its fate now rests on Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Florida State Senator Oscar Braynon and Dr. Hansel Tookes worked on the bill in order to create better opportunities for needle exchanges around the state. Needle exchange programs can go a long way in the fight against the opioid epidemic that is currently killing thousands of Americans each year. Beyond that, it could also aid in the fight against other types of drug addiction.

The bill, called the Infectious Disease Elimination Programs bill, creates a legal mechanism for counties to authorize programs that swap clean syringes for dirty ones. Needle exchanges have previously proven effective in terms of reducing the spread of blood-borne infections such as HIV and hepatitis C. It also works wonders when it comes to helping people who inject drugs directly into their bloodstream.

Miami-Dade County currently has the only legal needle exchange program in the state. But the new bill can finally expand on that by enabling other counties to do the same. The legislative proposal that has passed in

the House and Senate would allow the rest of the counties to authorize such programs The bill passed 111-3 in the Florida House. Meanwhile, it passed unanimously in the Florida Senate.

?And that's because the numbers don't lie,? said Democratic state senator Oscar Braynon, the Senate sponsor of the bill. ?We are actually stopping the spread of HIV. We're actually reducing the overdoses. We are saving the state and saving the county money.?

In fact, the bill was modeled after the IDEA Exchange in Miami-Dade County, which was given a five-year trial approval by the legislature in 2016. In the three years, it has been around, the program has reported to the health department that it has pulled more than a quarter million used needles out of circulation.

In addition to exchanging needles, it also hands out Narcan?the drug that reverses opioid overdoses. According to the IDEA Exchange, making the drug available has prevented more than a thousand opioid overdoses. The program also offers testing for HIV and hepatitis C. On top of all these benefits, addicted individuals also get to access medical care and drug rehab by getting connected to service providers, medical professionals, and caregivers.

?We have to help the new programs get started,? said Dr. Hansel Tookes. He has been pushing for this legislation since he was a medical student at the University of Miami. Tookes is now an assistant professor of medicine at UM and serves as the head of the IDEA Exchange.

?We have a few-year head start on [other counties],? he said. ?We'll host them down here, we'll help them learn about ways to get funding, ways to partner with the county and the health departments.?

Historically, the distribution of needles without prescriptions violated the drug paraphernalia possession laws as interpreted in Florida. But the Infectious Disease Elimination Programs bill creates clear guidelines that counties need to follow so that it could legally serve as a public health intervention. Click the link to see San Francisco's top rehab placement programs.

Miami?s pilot project, the IDEA Exchange, relies on private funding and the support of the University of Miami. The bill prohibits the use of state and municipal funds for needle exchange.

If someone in the family is struggling with opioid or alcohol addiction, it is important to seek help. A combination of medical detox and behavioral therapy can go a long way in the fight against drug abuse. But because every individual is affected by addiction differently, a comprehensive program tailored to their specific needs is necessary. Look for a nearby addiction treatment facility today and find out how drug treatment programs work.

###

For more information about Rehab Near Me: San Francisco, contact the company here:Rehab Near Me: San Francisco(415) 936-8222

Rehab Near Me: San Francisco

Rehab Near Me: San Francisco is California's best addiction treatment center for alcohol, drugs and prescription drug addiction.

Website: https://rehab-near-me-san-francisco.business.site/

Phone: (415) 936-8222