



Escuela Andaluza de Salud Pública
CONSEJERÍA DE SALUD

The Right Honorable Stephen Harper, PC, MP
Prime Minister of Canada
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Dear Prime Minister:

We are writing to express our support for the renewal of the Federal License for the Supervised Injection Facility (SIF) in Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Various experiences in Spain, with similar characteristics to those of the Vancouver SIF, have proven to be effective, efficacious and efficient, not only from the standpoint of their scientific worth, but also taking into consideration ethical, social and political aspects. Whether national or regional, the Spanish SIF are publicly funded and among their main achievements is the fact that the most socially-rejected drug users have been brought closer to available healthcare resources. Thus, the SIF have become a point of entry to the system, and when they are integrated with other harm-reduction resources, such as methadone or diacetylmorphine prescription, needle exchange programs, and soup kitchens, access to the public health system is enabled for a population that often lives in conditions of extreme social exclusion. This latter condition is associated with deteriorating health, unemployment, mental illness, the breakdown of family ties and of links with society in general. And the problem of drug addiction must be addressed in addition to all of the above.



Canada is a model society as regards public health policies, and many of us consider your country a reference point and an example to follow. Despite the political difficulties involved in such initiatives, Canada has put into practice daring, innovative projects in North America, such as the heroin prescription trial in Montreal and Vancouver, and the SIF in Vancouver, which reveal your country's sympathy towards those who have lost everything and who are ignored by many.

We are concerned that the only Supervised Injection Facility currently functioning in North America is in danger of disappearing. This resource, as in Spain and other countries, plays a significant role in making contact with drug users with greatest consumption-related problems, and it is a matter of fundamental importance to get them closer to the public healthcare system, both for their own sakes and for that of society at large.

For all the above reasons, the signatories to this letter, a group of professionals working in the field of drug dependency in Spain, wish to express our support for the Supervised Injection Facility in Vancouver, in the belief that it represents an initiative that is a crucial element, in scientific, ethical and political terms, in the approach to reducing the harm associated with drug consumption.

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