



July 5, 2006

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, PC, MP
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

RE: Renewal of exemption and federal Government support for InSite Facility

I write on behalf of the Board of Directors of the BC Persons With AIDS Society (BCPWA) to urge you to employ all necessary means at your disposal to ensure that

- (1) the necessary exemption granted by Health Canada under section 56 of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* be extended for an additional substantial period past its scheduled expiry at September 12, 2006; and,
- (2) the financial support by the federal Government previously enjoyed by the InSite facility be similarly extended.

By way of explanation, BCPWA is a registered charitable society run by and for persons living with HIV disease and AIDS. In the words of its mission statement, BCPWA “exists to enable persons living with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and Human Immunodeficiency Virus to empower themselves through mutual support and collective action.” BCPWA is Western Canada’s largest AIDS organization with a membership of more than 4,000 HIV+ full voting members. The Society’s services are also available to and regularly accessed by many of the 10,000 to 15,000 HIV+ individuals in BC.

The evidence accumulated to date by the research undertaken at the InSite facility (financed principally by Health Canada) is overwhelming: hundreds of overdose deaths have been prevented, various debilitating health conditions have been suppressed significantly, public disorder has been reduced, and the number of injection drug users seeking assistance in caring better for themselves and/or ceasing illegal drug injection completely – among numerous other salutary outcomes.

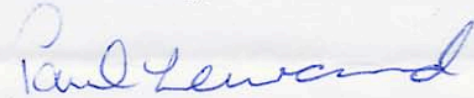
.../2

We at BCPWA know – some of us from direct personal experience – that the InSite Supervised Injection Facility works. And it works in a realm and with a population in and with which almost nothing else does.

Without a renewal of the CDSA exemption, and of the financial support previously extended, by the federal Government, the InSite Supervised Injection Facility will close. Plain and simple. And that would be a very great tragedy.

Thank you very much for your kind attention, and for your decisive action in this regard.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Lewand
Chairperson, BC Persons With AIDS Society