

# HEALTH OFFICERS COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

c/o Dr. James Lu, 7000 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC V6X 1A2

May 4, 2006

Ms. Beth Pieteron  
Director General  
Drug Strategy and Controlled Substances Program  
Health Canada  
123 Slater Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
K1A 0K9

Dear Ms. Pieteron:

## **Re: Vancouver Supervised Injection Site Research Project**

This letter is to indicate Health Officers Council (HOC) support for the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) application for an exemption under Section 56 of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act.

HOC members are public health physicians practicing in BC. We are on record as being in support of comprehensive approaches to reducing the harms of psychoactive substances. The Supervised Injection Site Scientific Research Project is providing important evidence regarding this approach to preventing death and illness from injecting street drugs and improving quality of life. Early indications are that this project is beneficial in this regard.

This project has involved a large number of partners, and the leadership of Vancouver Coastal Health has been critical to implementation. In view of the importance of this project to protecting and improving health in the Downtown Eastside, as well as providing a potential model for other cities in North America, we request that the exemption be granted.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

  
James Lu MD, MHSc  
Chair, Health Officers Council

Cc Dr Perry Kendall, Provincial Health Officer  
Dr John Blatherwick, Chief Medical health Officer, VCH