



APR 26 2006

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

Dear Ms. Pieteron:

As Deputy Minister of Health for British Columbia, I would like to express my support for the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) application for an exemption under Section 56 of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*.

The Supervised Injection Site Scientific Research Project is an important step in implementing the four-pillar approach that is widely supported and is experiencing success in addressing the health and safety issues of the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver.

The VCH has been working with our governmental and community partners to address the social, economic and human impacts of addiction. This project is an effective part of the harm reduction strategy of the Downtown Eastside and should be continued.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny Ballem".

Penny Ballem, MD
Deputy Minister