

Allegheny County Health Department

DIRECTOR
Bruce W. Dixon, M.D.



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January 16, 2002

Ms. Alice Bell
Prevention Point Coordinator
907 West Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

RE: Needle Exchange Program

Dear Ms. Bell:

On November 28, 2001, the Allegheny County Board of Health unanimously declared that a public health emergency exists in Allegheny County because of the high rates of HIV and Hepatitis C infection in injection drug abusers. Also, the Board of Health has convened an advisory committee to develop operational guidelines for a needle exchange program to operate in Allegheny County.

The results of a recent study conducted among injection drug users estimated that 8% were infected with HIV and 90% were infected with Hepatitis C.

The Needle Exchange Committee has developed operational guidelines and has authorized Prevention Point Pittsburgh to be the lead agency in implementing a needle exchange program and to pursue foundation grants to fund the program.

You have the support from the Allegheny County Health Department to apply for funding through grants to support activities of the Needle Exchange Program.

Please contact my office if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce W. Dixon M.D.".

Bruce W. Dixon, M.D.
Director, Allegheny County Health Department

Handwritten initials in black ink, possibly "ABJ", located at the bottom right of the letter.