DATE: October 14, 2019

TO: NORTHERN VALLEY HARM REDUCTION COALITION

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION OF THE NORTHERN VALLEY SYRINGE ACCESS AND DISPOSAL PROGRAM

In order to reduce the spread of HIV and viral hepatitis and to reduce the risk of outbreaks of hepatitis C viral infection and HIV in Butte County, the California Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS (CDPH/OA) would like to inform you that the Northern Valley Harm Reduction Coalition (NVHRC) application to provide syringe services has been approved. CDPH/OA has determined that NVHRC has met the requirements outlined in California Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 121349 to qualify for authorization. Additionally, CDPH/OA has determined that conditions exist for the rapid spread of HIV, viral hepatitis, or other blood-borne diseases in Butte County. Authorization is effective October 14, 2019 through October 14, 2021. NVHRC may apply for renewal before the end of the two-year period.

CDPH/OA has consulted with Michael O’Brien, Chief, Chico Police Department; with Kory Honea, Sheriff-Coroner, Butte County; and with Dr. Andrew Miller, Butte County Health Officer. Dr. Miller supports the program as a recommended public health intervention. Both Chief O’Brien and Sherriff Honea support the work of NVHRC but oppose the syringe exchange program, expressing concerns regarding litter and the locations.

Amendment to NVHRC Operations

In order to address the concerns conveyed during CDPH/OA consultation with local law enforcement and received during the public comment period, NVHRC has conferred with CDPH and requested that, if its application is approved, CDPH/OA amend the authorization to narrow the geographical location for services and highlight syringe litter clean-up efforts. Therefore, in accordance with Health and Safety Code section 121349, subdivision (h), CDPH/OA is administratively amending the NVHRC authorization as follows:

1. The geographical areas of service are narrowed. NVHRC is authorized to operate on Sundays between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. within the area bounded by:
• Humboldt Avenue between Highway 99 and Boucher Street
• Everett Street between Humboldt Avenue and Wisconsin Street
• Wisconsin Street between Everett Street and Davis Street
• Davis Street between Wisconsin Street and Virginia Street
• Virginia Street between Davis Street and Community Park
• Guill Street between Virginia Street and Highway 99, including the area of Ohio Street between Guill Street and Community Park.

2. As part of collaborative efforts to address syringe litter, NVHRC provides the following:
   
   a. Maintain a syringe litter hotline for the public to report improperly disposed of syringes.
   b. Maintain an online reporting form for the public to report improperly disposed of syringes.
   c. Cleanup up any reported syringe litter within a reasonable time frame.

California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Subchapter 15, Syringe Exchange Program Certification, requires that certified syringe services programs (SSPs) record both adverse incidents and positive interactions between local law enforcement and SSP staff, volunteers or participants; document concerns and positive feedback expressed by program participants, community members, neighborhood associations and/or local law enforcement officials; and document steps the program has taken to address any reasonable concerns. CDPH, OA will contact you to discuss these and other data and reporting requirements, and work with you to support your efforts to address any concerns that arise.

We appreciate the dedication of all who worked to submit this application. Thank you for your efforts in HIV and hepatitis C prevention, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

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Acting Director
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