

# Supervised Consumption Sites



Supervised consumption sites (SCSs) provide a supportive and connected environment for people who use substances. Between January 2016 and March 2024, more than 47,000 people in Canada died because of the unregulated drug supply. Evidence-based supports – like SCSs – that consider the needs of different groups and communities can help reduce harms and save lives. Get to know the facts about SCSs.

## What Are SCSs?

SCSs are places where people bring their own substances to use in an area where qualified staff can support them if needed. The site workers are available to make sure people aren't in distress and intervene if someone experiences an overdose or other medical emergency. These sites also serve as an entry point to other health and social services.

## How Do SCSs Help People?

These sites save lives. In Canada and around the world, no overdose death has been confirmed to have occurred in an SCS.

SCSs are critical for connecting people with other services, including primary healthcare, testing for infections like HIV and hepatitis, mental health care, and social services and supports like food, shelter, legal aid, employment assistance and housing. People who visit SCSs are more likely to connect with other substance use health supports and services.

SCSs provide sterile needles, so people are less likely to share needles, leading to fewer blood-borne diseases and injection-related wounds.

## How Do SCSs Help Communities?

Research shows that communities with an SCS see less public drug use and fewer publicly discarded needles and other litter related to substance use.

These communities also benefit from a reduced demand on emergency services and hospitals, reducing costs and increasing access to timely health services for the broader public.



This document is part of a series of [evidence briefs](#) created by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction to help people and communities understand and contextualize complex health solutions and the resources intended to address people's substance use health and wellness. Other topics in this series: [opioid agonist therapy \(OAT\)](#) and [drug checking](#).