

Pharmacy Sales of Over-the-Counter Syringes: Regional Successes and Challenges in California

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Background

- **Injection drug use is the 2nd leading risk category for HIV/AIDS in California**
 - 19% of cumulative AIDS cases related to injection drug use
 - More than 1500 incident HIV and over 5,000 incident HCV cases are attributed to injection drug use annually
- **HIV infection rates among IDUs were twice as high in cities that required Rx (n=36) for syringe purchase as compared to cities that did not (n=60).**
 - Holmberg, SD. (1996). *Am J Public Health* 86:642-654.
- **Increased use of pharmacies as a syringe source is associated with a decline in syringe sharing**
 - Pouget et al. (2005). *JAIDS*. 2005; 39(4):471-477.

Background:

Senate Bill 1159 (2005)

- Permits local health jurisdictions (LHJs) to authorize a Disease Prevention Demonstration Project (DPDP)
 - Allows individuals to purchase up to 10 OTC syringes
 - Decriminalizes possession of 10 or fewer syringes obtained from authorized source
- Dual opt-in requirements
- Requires pharmacists to sell or provide sharps containers and info on HIV, HCV, drug Tx
- Sunsets in 2010
- Mandates evaluation

Methods:

SB 1159 LHJ Survey

- Survey administered by State Office of AIDS and UC San Diego April-August 2006
- LHJ survey to learn about status of OTC pharmacy syringe sales across the state
- Survey forwarded to public health officials in all 61 LHJs
- Surveys e-mailed and non-responders followed-up by telephone & e-mail
- Surveys completed by 55 (90%) of 61 LHJs

LHJ Survey Respondents (n=55)

- Local Health Officers
- HIV/AIDS Prevention Coordinators
- Public Health Nurses
- Deputy Health Officers
- Health Executives

Variables of Interest

- Program characteristics
- Implementation status
- Facilitators and inhibitors to implementation
- Program coverage
- Pharmacists' willingness to participate
- Syringe disposal mechanisms

Survey Results: Local DPDP Coalitions

- 20% of the LHJs reported that they had formed a DPDP coalition
- Generally, coalitions were formed in LHJs that approved or are in the process of approving a DPDP
- Coalitions → Public Health staff, HIV prevention staff, waste management, pharmacists, etc.
- Discussions with law enforcement taking place in some LHJs

Status of pharmacy syringe sales in California LHJs, 2005-2006

Status	2005 ¹	2006
Approved Pharmacy Sales	9	14
In process of approving	9	5
Plan to approve	17	8
Approval process on hold	2	0
No plans to approve	18	25
Status Unknown	2	3
Did not complete survey	4	6

¹Stopka, TJ, Garfein, R, Ross, A, Truax, SR. *J Urban Health*. 2007;84(1):116-25

LHJs Authorizing OTC Pharmacy Sales of Syringes

- As of August 2006
 - Alameda
 - Contra Costa
 - Humboldt
 - Los Angeles
 - Marin
 - Santa Cruz
(unincorporated areas)
 - San Francisco
 - San Luis Obispo
 - San Mateo
 - Santa Clara
 - Solano
 - Sonoma
 - Yolo
 - Yuba
- Authorized more recently
 - Santa Barbara

ALAMEDA
 CITY OF LOS ANGELES
 CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
 CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD
 CONTRA COSTA
 HUMBOLDT
 LOS ANGELES
 MARIN
 SAN FRANCISCO
 SAN LUIS OBISPO
 SAN MATEO
 SANTA BARBARA
 SANTA CLARA
 SANTA CRUZ
 SOLANO
 SONOMA
 YOLO
 YUBA



CALIFORNIA

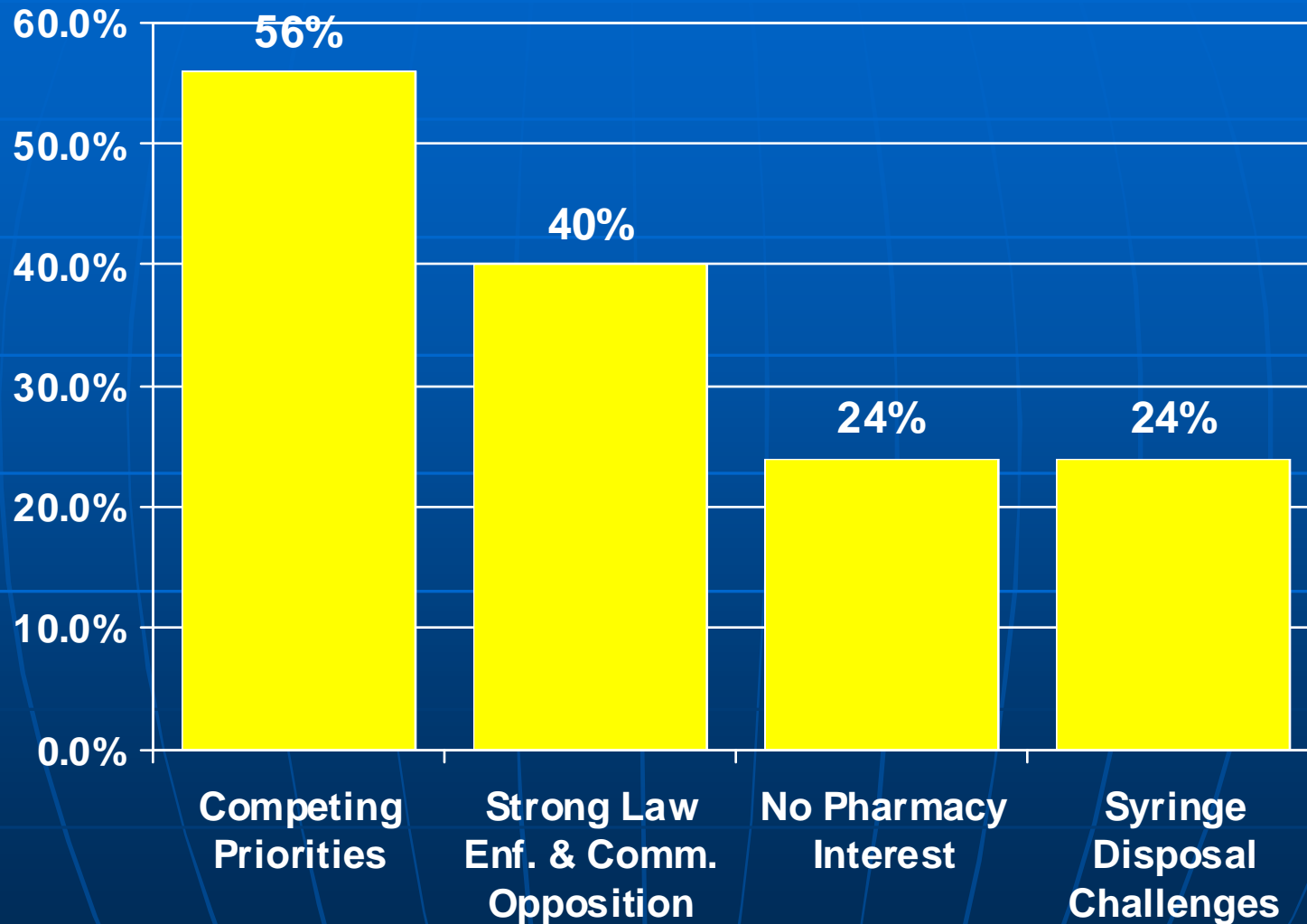


Pharmacy Sale of Syringes

APPROVED
 As of November 7, 2006



Reasons for Not Approving OTC Pharmacy Sales of Syringes (n=25)



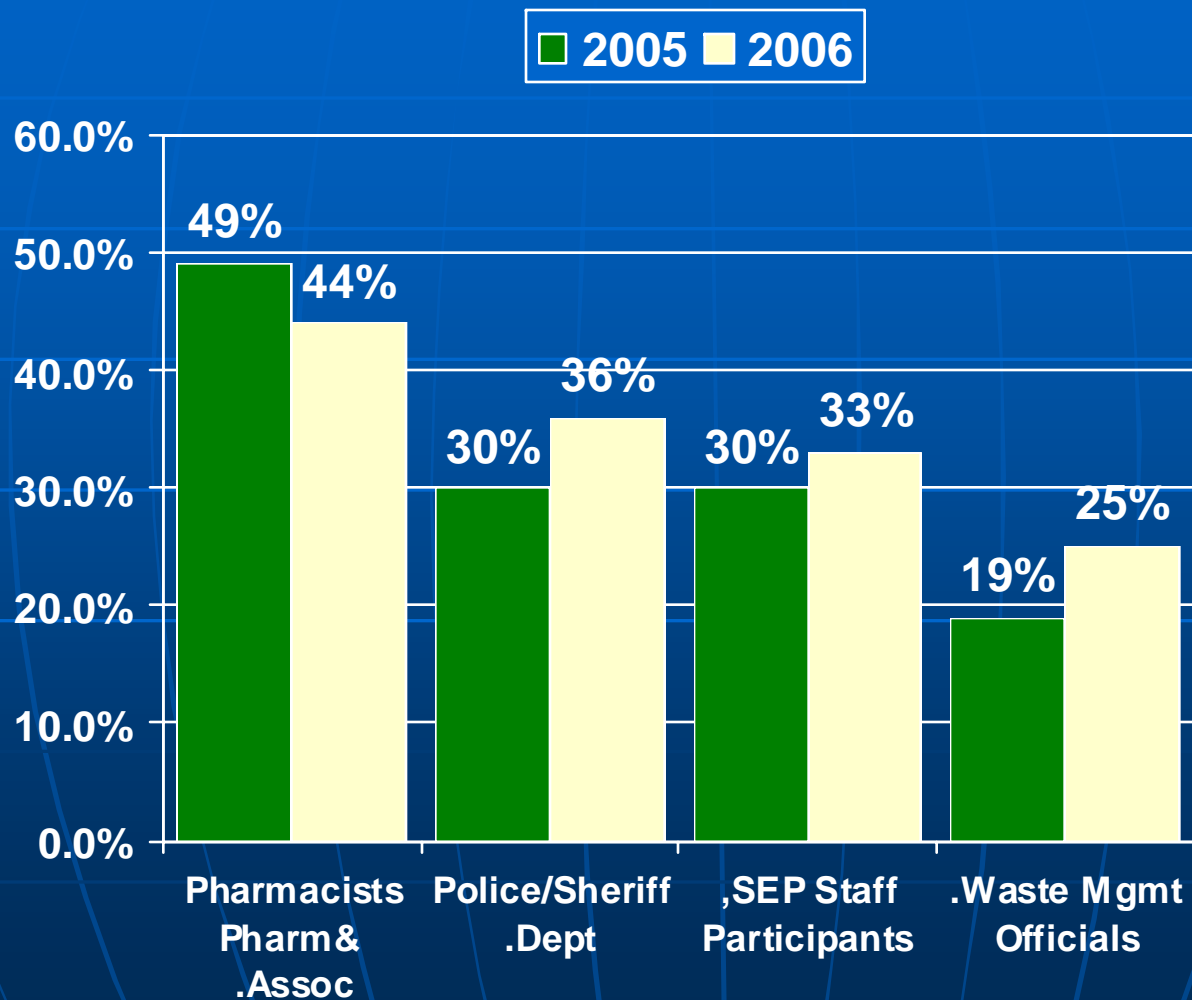
Source: CDPH Office of AIDS, UCSD



Provision of Education on Pharmacy Syringe Sales, 2006

- Among the 55 surveyed LHJs, 36 (66%) reported that they had provided education to local stakeholders. Of these:
 - 44% provided education and information to pharmacists
 - 36% provided education to law enforcement
 - 33% provided education to SEP staff and participants, and
 - 25% provided education to waste management officials

Provision of Education on Pharmacy Syringe Sales, 2005 - 2006



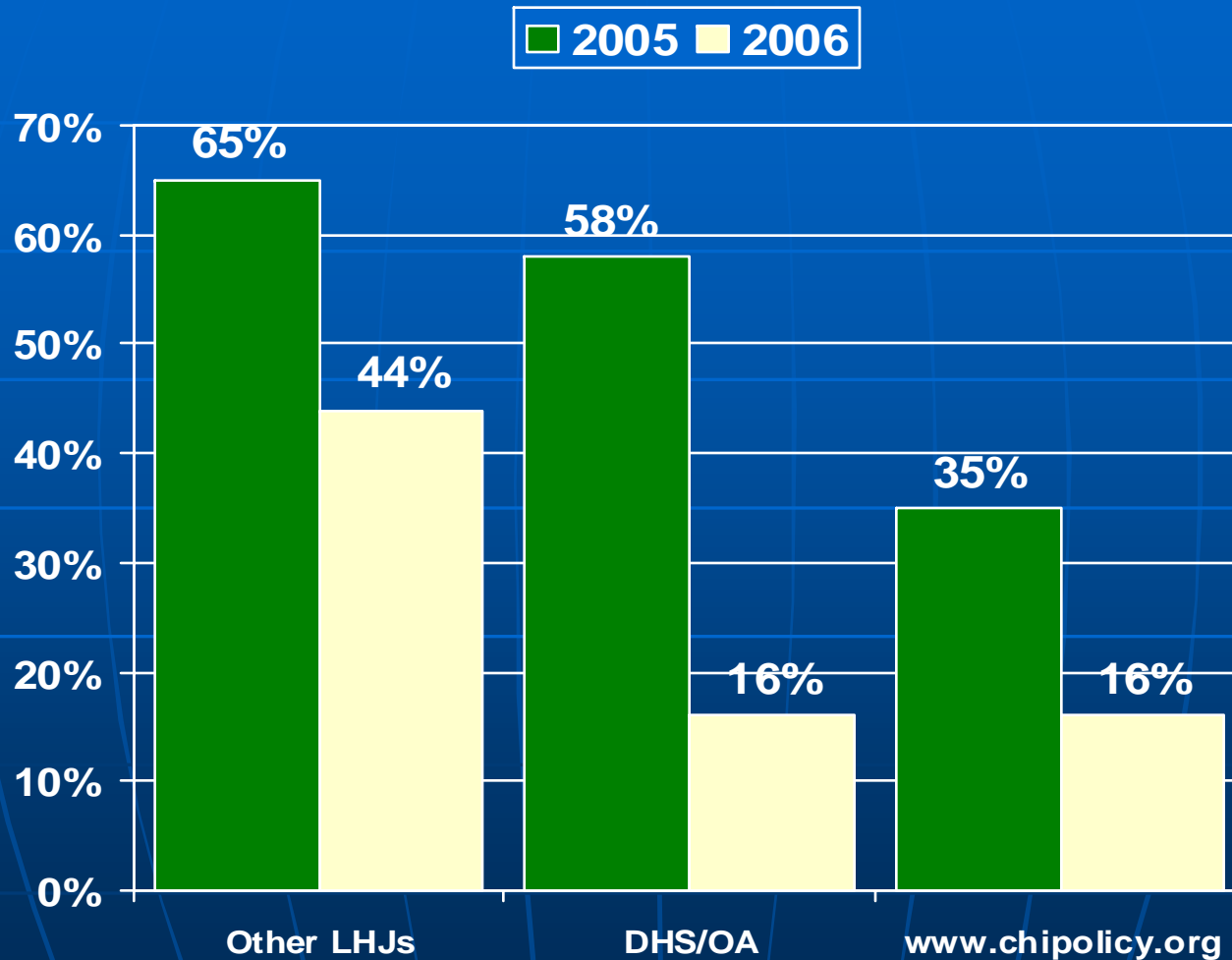
Source: CA DPH Office of AIDS, UCSD



SB1159 Technical Assistance (TA) Received

- 25 LHJs (45%) reported that they had received SB1159 TA during the previous year. TA sources included:
 - Peers in local LHJs (44%)
 - California State Office of AIDS (16%)
 - Website (16%) hosted by the Center for Health Improvement with content developed by the State Office of AIDS (www.chipolicy.org)

Sources of SB 1159 Technical Assistance, 2005 – 2006



Source: CA DPH Office of AIDS, UCSD



Number and Percentage of Registered Pharmacies – August 2006

LHJ	# of Reg. Pharmacies (2005 #s)	Total Pharms. in LHJ*	% of Pharms. Registered
Alameda	75 (41)	218	34%
Contra Costa	62 (32)	146	42%
Marin	13 (12)	35	37%
S.F.	64 (35)	132	48%
Santa Clara	6	250	2%
Solano	15	52	29%
Sonoma	6	68	9%
Yolo	19 (10)	25	76%
Yuba	3 (3)	8	38%
Total	263 (133)	934	28.2%

Biggest Challenges to Implementing SB1159 (n=16)

- Time management (56%)
 - Most authorizing LHJs report spending <10 hours/week on SB1159 activities
- Developing policies, procedures and materials (44%)
- Enlisting participation of pharmacists (44%)

Conclusions

- California's dual opt-in approach to legalizing OTC syringe sales has led to a measured response.
 - As of November 2006, 15 of 61 (25%) LHJs in California permit OTC pharmacy sales of syringes
 - 263 of 934 (28%) eligible pharmacies registered to sell OTC syringes in 9 counties; up 98% from 2005
- LHJs reported providing education on SB1159 most often to pharmacists, law enforcement, SEPs and waste management. In some LHJs this lead to broader discussion of:
 - syringe access
 - disposal issues
- LHJs reported receiving TA most often from their peers in other LHJs.

Future Research

- LHJ Survey: Wave III currently in field
- CDPH-funded SB1159 Study initiated in 2007 (Bluthenthal et al.)
 - Cross-sectional surveys with: pharmacists, IDUs and community members
 - Systematic observation of syringe disposal
 - Accidental needle-stick assessments
- Additional research needed to assess outcomes of OTC pharmacy sales of syringes in California

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www.syringeaccess.com