

## Meharry Medical College Syringe Service Program Safety and Security Plan

### Protection of Staff during Outreach:

The Meharry staff that operates the syringe service program will take significant precautions to ensure that both staff members' and participants' safety is assured. The following Safety Plan will be followed at all times:

- Rather than a fixed site, Meharry utilizes a mobile RV that has been outfitted specifically to conduct syringe exchange and related services at sites that have been specifically scouted for safety concerns and deemed to be safe by trained staff.
- There are always at least two or more staff members on the mobile unit at any time.
- Sharps containers are used for all exchanges and participants place the used syringes into the sharps container to ensure staff members do not come into direct contact with potentially hazardous materials.
- **The SSP participant will come to the mobile site and the following plan will be implemented:**
  - **Scenario 1: New SSP Participant**
    - The participant will come to the SSP mobile unit site. A sharps container will be provided to each participant. Any needles that the participant may have on person will be placed in the sharps container prior to being received by the attending person from Meharry's SSP mobile unit. The sharps container will be received by Meharry's attending person and properly discarded when back on Meharry's campus following the Meharry Medical College disposal plan for biohazardous material. The participant will receive a new unused sharps container, 30 unused syringes and a prepackaged harm reduction kit.
  - **Scenario 2: Returning SSP Participant**
    - The returning participant will come to the SSP mobile unit site with used syringe(s) securely place in the sharps container previously provided in the initial SSP encounter. The sharps container will be received by Meharry's SSP attendant. The participant will receive a new unused sharps container, 30 unused syringes or equivalent amount returned not to exceed 30 syringes and a prepackaged harm reduction kit.
    - In the event that the returning participant does not return with the sharp container, Scenario 1 plan will be followed and the participant will be encouraged to return with the sharps container for the next encounter.
- Potentially biohazardous materials are disposed of in a manner and location as required by law for medical waste.
- Most exchanges occur during the day during daylight hours, however in order to best meet our participants' needs there are some possible nighttime hours—particularly in the winter early evenings. These exchanges occur at sites that are specifically chosen with safety in mind, they are in wide-open public areas with adequate existing streetlights.
- In addition to finding well-lit areas for mobile exchanges, mobile lights are brought out to the area to both draw attention to the site and to ensure a higher level of safety.
- Surveillance cameras will be installed to the outside of the RV to ensure the safety of the staff inside. These cameras will be utilized to view any potential dangers outside of the vehicle.

### **Syringe Service Program Meharry Medical College Confidentiality Policy**

Although the risks associated with disclosure of information are minimal, every effort will be made to protect participants against improper disclosure of sensitive information. Participant confidentiality will be assured at data entry, storage, retrieval, and analysis stages. The interview data will be linked to participant identifiers only through a unique study ID. Data forms with locator information will be stored separately from other data in a double locked file in a locked room, with access restricted to evaluation staff and the PI. These risks will be further minimized through staff training and the development of specific procedures for protecting confidential information and reporting any adverse events that may occur. All staff will be/are trained on confidentiality and ethics with human subjects. Staff will also be/are educated on their responsibilities for securing and/or recording data, the rights of participants, and the confidentiality requirements of the project. All staff will review regulations regarding confidentiality, and signed agreements will be kept on file. Exceptions to these regulations include threats of imminent harm.

Data will be collected via participant interviews. Only the Project Director and Evaluators will have access to data identification codes. These codes will be held in password protected computer in a locked office during the project and destroyed after the project. We agree to maintain the confidentiality of the alcohol and drug abuse client records according to the provisions of Title 42 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part II.