

Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) Information

“Reducing the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C through harm reduction”

5% of HIV cases in the U.S. are due to intravenous (IV) drug users. Hepatitis C infections are also common.

Yearly cost of HIV treatment varies between \$14,000 – 20,000.

Yearly cost of Hep C treatment varies between \$44,000 – 55,000.

Alachua County (2018 data):

- 157 persons living with HIV identified IV drug use as a risk.
- 247 persons with Hepatitis C.

The **Infectious Disease Elimination Act (IDEA)** Exchange pilot program was initiated in Miami in 2015. The first in the State of Florida.

The goals of SEPs are:

- provide new syringes in exchange for used
- provide Naloxone (Narcan) to individuals; Naloxone is a life-saving opioid overdose reversal
- linkage to rehabilitation and treatment
- educate patients on safe needle use and the harms involved with IV drug use
- connect individuals with HIV and Hepatitis C testing

SB366 – IDEA Exchange Expansion Bill (passed July 2019)

- Allows county commission to authorize SEPs via ordinance.
- State, county, or municipal funds may not be used to operate an exchange program.
- Exchange programs shall be funded through grants and donations from private resources and funds.

County Commission Responsibilities:

- Authorize the program via county ordinance.
- Enter into a letter of agreement with the Department of Health.
- Enlist the county health department (CHD) to provide ongoing operational advice, consultation, and recommendations.

SEP Responsibilities – Data Collection

- Participants served
- Needles/syringes received/distributed
- Demographic profiles
- Participants entering drug counseling or treatment
- Participants receiving testing for HIV, viral hepatitis
- Personal identifying information may not be collected for any purpose.
- Compile SEP data for annual reporting.
- Submit annual report to the Governor, President of Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives.