



October 24, 2023

The Honourable Sylvia Jones
Ministry of Health
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777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Jones,

RE: The Spot's Funding Application to the Ministry of Health

We hope this letter finds you well.

We are writing this letter of support for The Spot and its funding application to the Ministry of Health (Addictions and Mental Health). As you may know, the mission of the HIV Legal Network is to defend the rights of people living with HIV and other populations disproportionately affected by HIV, punitive laws and policies, and criminalization. People who use drugs and access life-changing harm reduction services are among the populations we serve, and we know the positive impacts that supervised consumption sites and Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) have on communities throughout the Province of Ontario. We have also had the privilege of working with our colleagues in Sudbury and know firsthand the quality and commitment of their operations and staff.

We also know that The Spot Supervised Consumption Site is essential for Sudbury, reducing overdose deaths, reducing the transmission of infections (including HIV and hepatitis C), reducing risk, and connecting individuals with essential social and healthcare services.

- In 2023 they had almost 1,000 visits and reversed all 17 overdoses that happened on site, saving lives of people living in this province.
- Drug-checking services were utilized to identify potentially unwanted adulterants, like animal tranquilizer and benzodiazepines that were used dozens of times in 2023 alone, helping prevent the risk of drug poisoning.
- Countless referrals and wrap-around social and health services were provided, in keeping with the Government of Ontario's mission around CTS.

The Spot has been a beacon of hope and support for many in the community, providing essential services to those in need. Investing in harm reduction services is a proven cost-effective strategy that not only saves lives but also reduces healthcare expenditures and is in keeping with human rights imperatives.

We recognize how The Spot positively affects the lives of the most marginalized individuals. The Supervised Consumption Site not only meets a significant need within the Sudbury community but also aligns perfectly with the goals and priorities of the Province of Ontario, as is evident in your past contributions to initiatives with similar objectives.

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The funding provided by provincial government through the Ministry of Health, Addictions and Mental Health will be instrumental in the sustainability and expansion of The Spot. With provincial funding, The Spot would be able to not only stay open, but will expand their hours, move to a central location, and see upwards of 50 visits a day, helping to curb the drug poisoning crisis ravaging Ontario.

The impact of this investment will be felt not only in the Sudbury community but also in the lives of the individuals and families who directly benefit from the services and opportunities provided. We would like to emphasize that The Spot is led by a highly dedicated team of professionals who are committed to achieving its mission and vision. Their expertise and passion are the driving force behind the program's success, and provincial funding will significantly contribute to their continued efforts.

We request that you fully fund The Spot without delay. We hope to continue collaborating with Réseau ACCESS Network to make a lasting difference in the community through The Spot. This is not just about providing a service; it's about saving lives and strengthening a community within our province.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We would be more than willing to speak with you with regard to The Spot and our legal and policy expertise in harm reduction in Canada.

Sincerely,



Janet Butler-McPhee



Sandra Ka Hon Chu

Co-Executive Directors, HIV Legal Network

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