

# HIV Alliance Needle Exchange Program Facing Closure

by Drs. Robert Pelz and Kialing Perez

HIV Alliance has been running the Needle Exchange Program (NEX) in our community for almost 15 years and, even though it has proven time and time again to be an essential prevention service in this community, it is facing closure in December of this year without new funding sources.

Each year, the NEX Program has provided needles, wound care and testing to more than **3000 individuals** who otherwise would be in our medical system in much more severe circumstances. These services are provided to clients disconnected from the system who often wind up ignoring chronic conditions and accessing care in the ED. While we all hope that for an addiction free society, approximately **10,000 Lane County residents are injection drug users**. Preventing these individuals from serious bacterial infections from re-using dirty needles, providing testing and care coordination for HIV and Hep C (HCV) and managing wound care saves dramatically in health care costs in the long run.

**Nationally, 64% of people who inject drugs are infected with HCV.** Needle exchange is the most effective way to prevent the transmission of HCV.

**Wound care services** provided by a doctor at street based needle exchange costs an average of **just \$15.00 per visit**. I can't think of a more cost-effective way to keep people out of the ER.

Their services are in jeopardy this year as funders have let them know they are reducing or ending their support. Needle exchange is the most effective way to prevent HIV, HCV and bacterial infections for people who inject drugs. This is a vital service and we need your support NOW. You have stood with us and with HIV Alliance many times. Your support has gone far. **Thank you!!**

Now we ask you to stand with us again. We can't afford to lessen our efforts; we must bolster HIV Alliance's prevention and education programs.

## Take a look at the amazing impact your gift can have:

- **\$5000 = one month of syringes, sharps containers and disease preventing supplies**
- **\$1,000 = wound care on the streets from a doctor for 67 visits**
- **\$500 = one year of care coordination for one person living with HCV**
- **\$250 = one day of syringes, sharps containers and disease preventing supplies**

Join us in standing with HIV Alliance to support the Needle Exchange Program in its 15th year. As leaders in ensuring that our health system works, we must come together to spend our health care dollars wisely and lend credibility to this critical organization.

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o **YES!** I will join Drs. Pelz and Perez in a Leadership Gift to HIV Alliance Needle Exchange Program providing wound care management and preventing new HIV and HCV infections in this extremely high risk population. Visit [www.hivalliance.org](http://www.hivalliance.org) and click on **DONATE** or complete this form and return to HIV Alliance.

### Please accept my gift of:

\$5,000       \$1,000       \$500       \$250       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ My check is enclosed, made payable to: **HIV Alliance**.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please charge my Visa/MC # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

**Tear off this portion and send to: HIV Alliance, 1966 Garden Ave, Eugene, OR 97403**

HIV Alliance is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization; therefore donations are tax deductible consistent with IRC Section 170. HIV Alliance will send you a receipt.