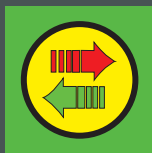


Harm reduction services for people who use drugs

**Needle and
Syringe Exchange
Service
(NSES)**



**Take Home
Naloxone
Programme
(THN)**

**NALOXONE
SAVES LIVES**

Harm reduction services aim to help and support people who use drugs, their families and the wider community. There are two main services available in Northern Ireland – the **Needle and Syringe Exchange Service** and the **Take Home Naloxone** programme.

Needle and Syringe Exchange Service

What is it?

The Needle and Syringe Exchange Service (NSES) is a free, confidential and anonymous service for people who inject drugs. The service will provide enough new, sterile injecting equipment for every injection. This reduces the risk of catching blood-borne viruses like HIV and hepatitis B and C, which can be spread through needle sharing. The service also disposes of used equipment safely, reducing the risk of needles ending up on the street. The people who work within needle exchanges are trained to give safer injecting advice which will help reduce the harm caused by injecting. They can also help to access other health services.

Who can use it?

Anyone who injects opioids, stimulants or performance and image enhancing drugs can use a needle and syringe exchange service.

What else does the service do?

We are working to provide enhanced needle exchange services across Northern Ireland. This means that services will then be able to offer blood-borne virus screening, vaccinations, Take Home Naloxone and wound care aid. They can also make referrals to other services, such as inclusion nursing teams for people experiencing homelessness or tissue viability nursing teams. Some services are based within the community and can help you access support in areas such as housing, benefits and health and wellbeing. Your local needle exchange will be able to tell you what they can offer in addition to distributing fresh kit.

What can I expect at an exchange?

You will be treated respectfully by our staff at all times and we would ask that you treat staff with respect in return. Your exchange will be confidential and anonymous.

You will be asked for non-identifiable information to register on our system including your initials, date of birth, postal district, substance used and route of administration. Once you have registered all you have to give at all follow-up visits is your initials and date of birth (this is your ID code).

You can get a wide range of injecting equipment at needle exchanges. This includes sterile needles and syringes for injecting. These come in a range of sizes (0.3ml, 0.5ml, 1ml and 2ml) and staff will be able to help you get the right needle dependent on where and what you are injecting. They will always encourage you to inject in the safest way possible using the smallest needle and injecting into the safest place, for example the arms. Some sites use an infrared device which can highlight active veins.

Needles and syringes can be dispensed individually or within injecting packs. Other injecting equipment available is citric acid/vitamin c, water for injections, pre-injecting swabs, sharps containers and cookers. Our sites also have condoms, antiseptic towels, foil, nitazene testing kits and wound care packs.

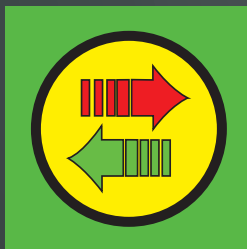
Staff will work with you to make sure you have enough equipment for every injection. The guideline for an exchange is up to 60 needles. However, if you live far away from an exchange or the service is closed over weekends/holidays you can get more to cover you. It is important that you return your used needles, sealed within the bins provided, as part of the exchange element of the service. Inappropriately discarded injecting equipment can raise concerns within the local community, so returning your used equipment is important to keep us all safe and look after our needle exchange services.

Where is my nearest service?

We have a range of service providers (community based, hostels, community addiction teams, pharmacy services) and a range of site types (client only, public or outreach). You will see the Needle and Syringe Exchange Service national logo on the window of all sites.

To find an up-to-date list of exchanges, scan the QR code or visit:

www.pha.site/harm-reduction-services



Take Home Naloxone programme

What is it?

The Take Home Naloxone (THN) programme is a free, confidential and anonymous programme which aims to supply naloxone packs to those at risk of opioid overdose, their families and professionals. Naloxone is a medicine that temporarily and rapidly reverses the effects of an opioid overdose. Naloxone has been used for many years and is very safe to use.

The naloxone products currently available in the THN programme are:

Prenoxad® 2mg/2ml
pre-filled syringe for
intramuscular injection



Nyxoid® 1.8mg nasal
naloxone spray x 2 doses



Pebble® 1.26mg
intra-nasal spray x 2 doses



Who can use the THN programme?

- 1) Anyone who uses heroin or any other opiate drugs
- 2) Friends or family members of people who use opiates
- 3) Professionals working with those at risk of opiate overdose.

What can I expect from a THN provider?

You will be treated respectfully by our staff at all times and we would ask that you treat staff with respect in return. Your interaction will be confidential and anonymous.

You will be asked to register, as with the NSES, on your first visit. You will also be given training on how to use both injectable and nasal naloxone. This takes about 5-10 minutes.

You can be given two units of naloxone in either injectable or nasal form, or one of each, at every transaction.

If you have had to use your naloxone, or if it expires or gets lost, you can come back for more. At this follow-up visit the staff will ask you what the previous units were used for. If, for example, it was used to save a life, it would be great if you could tell us. It helps us prove that our Take Home Naloxone programme is helping people.

Where is my nearest THN provider ?

Most (but not all) needle exchanges also give out naloxone, so please check your nearest THN provider on our website. You can scan the QR code or use the link:
www.pha.site/harm-reduction-services



If you have any feedback on the Needle and Syringe Exchange Service or the Take Home Naloxone programme please contact harmreduction@hscni.net



Public Health Agency

12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.

Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).

www.publichealth.hscni.net

Find us on:

