AMERSA National Conference, Chicago, IL, November 2024

Harm Reduction Vending Machines: Saving Lives and Preventing Infections, One Supply Item at a Time

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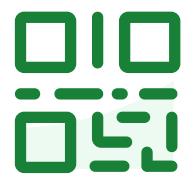
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Disclosures

- The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Veterans Affairs or the United States government.
- The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.
- This work is funded by National VA Pain Management, Opioid Safety, Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PMOP), National VA Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (OMHSP), San Francisco VA Health Care System, and VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

Learning Objectives

- Summarize the evidence for harm reduction vending machines (HRVMs)
- Describe key implementation strategies for use of HRVMs
- Design a HRVM exterior wrap, interior layout, and contents
- Devise a plan for HRVM participant access, data tracking, supply storage, inventory monitoring, and replenishment

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Do you have experience designing vending machines?

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Do you have experience stocking vending machines?

i) Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Presentation Title

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Do you have experience using Pyxis, Omnicell, or other automated dispensing system(s)?

Examples of VM Dispensing



Food & drinks

Candy, chips, cookies, granola bars

Sandwiches, prepared foods

Soda, juice, water, coffee, energy drinks



Airport

Headphones

Chargers

Neck pillows

Eye masks

Sunglasses

Makeup

Personal hygiene products



Tobacco products

Cigarettes

Cigars

Vapes

Health, Wellness, & Harm Reduction VMs¹⁻⁶

- Self-tests
 - Pregnancy
 - COVID-19
 - HIV
 - Sexually transmitted infections
- Menstrual products
- Safer sex supplies
- Syringes
- Naloxone
- Nicotine replacement therapy

Evidence for HRVMs⁶⁻¹⁴

Increased access

- Sterile syringes
- HIV and STI testing
- ◆ ↑ SSP engagement and supply distribution

Addressed barriers

- A anonymity, acceptance, accessibility, convenience, access outside business hours
- \$\subset\$ stigma, geographic, financial barriers

Positive outcomes

- V overdose deaths and hepatitis C virus incidence
- No ↑ unsafe disposal of used equipment, drug use, vandalism
- Likely cost efficient, low staffing requirements

People who may prefer HRVMs over fixed site syringe services programs (SSPs)⁶

- Women
- Young people
- Less connected to social services, methadone maintenance programs
- Newer substance/injection use
- HIV-positive
- Less financially stable

"Most people who access HRVM do so frequently, almost daily, and rely on HRVM as a primary source of supplies"

HRVM Facilitators⁶⁻⁹

- 24/7 access
- Location selection to maximize privacy, convenience, anonymity, and reduce travel time
- Design quality and packaging to "normalize" the machine
- Proper maintenance, especially when machines are broken or jammed
- Offering free or low-cost supplies

Why did we pursue HRVMs?

2019-2020

- Overdose education and naloxone pilot for Veterans in supportive housing 15
- Feedback: concern for fentanyl in drug supply, increasing overdoses

2020

- Fentanyl test kit pilot for substance treatment program¹⁶
- Feedback: expand access and supply types, bring to community

2021-2022

- Harm reduction kit pilot for Veterans in supportive housing¹⁷
- Feedback: expand types of supplies available (e.g., lotion, mouthwash)
- <u>Challenges</u>: bringing kits to housing site visits; Veterans may not want to or be available to engage; expanding reach beyond San Francisco

How did we get started with HRVMs?

- Joined the Public Health Vending Round Table (contact: Jessica Johnson, johnsonjes@SNHD.org)
- Q&A with a few community-based programs
- Conducted market research for VMs and supplies
- Prepared proposal/budget
- Sourced funding
- Many meetings
 - Hospital services (engineering, biomed, pharmacy, logistics, information security and technology)
 - Community partners (social workers, nurses, housing program staff)

Barriers & Challenges

Delivery

- Delivered in packaging to main hospital, unable to inspect
- VA logistics service delivered to VA properties
- Separate contracts required to deliver to non-VA property
- Damage during delivery process (wrap, door, base)

Location

- Some machines did not fit where intended to go
- Lack of Wi-Fi in one location
- Proximity to an outlet

Stigma

- Negative news story
- One HRVM moved to parking garage, one to bicycle room
- Complaints, comments from staff
- Increased visibility/responsibility

Barriers & Challenges

Increased workload

- Supply receiving, packaging, shipping
- Machine stocking

Cleanliness

- Soda bottles on top of machine spilled, attracted gnats
- Ketchup/food wiped on machine

Budget

- High turnover of products
- Annual fees for Wi-Fi, software, maintenance

Routine maintenance

- Machine/dispensing errors
- Need for power cycling

Practical tips



Consult participants and drug user networks to inform machine placement and supplies



Attend community meetings to address concerns, misconceptions, and barriers in advance



If required, prepare a memorandum of agreement/understanding



Measure the space for the machine AND all entryways/doorways it will need to fit through for delivery

Do this yourself if you can Re-delivery and changing plans to put in a different location is costly!

Practical tips



Inspect your machines upon delivery

Check for damages to the base, door closure, and exterior wrap



Make sure there is access to a 3-prong outlet



Determine if you will use Wi-Fi to track outcomes

You can plug into an existing Wi-Fi connection or install a cable modem

Be aware of Wi-Fi dead zones



Regularly clean your machine exterior

Glass cleaner

Paper towels

Practical tips



Assign local staff at each machine to assist with troubleshooting, questions, Provide a key concerns



Practice self-care



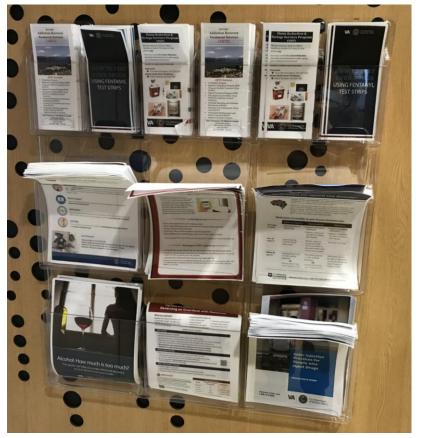
Prepare talking points to address stigma/misconceptions

Consider essentials to put near your machine









Participant Exercise 1 (5 minutes)

- Prepare a list of questions and discussion topics you would like to review with your program participants, staff, and community members/organizations to plan for implementing harm reduction vending machine(s).
- Examples:
 - Concerns, misconceptions, barriers to address in advance
 - Machine placement, electricity and Wi-Fi access

Sourcing Products

Vending machines

- VendNovation
- Intelligent Dispensing Solutions (IDS)
- Schaffer Distributing Co

Harm reduction supplies

- Safety Works
- Total Access Group
- Points of Distribution
- Smoke Works Harm Reduction
- NASEN Buyers Club
- Department of public health (e.g., naloxone, fentanyl test strips)

Supplies in our HRVMs

Safer Injection

- Syringes
- Sharps containers
- Tourniquets
- Alcohol swabs
- Wound care kits
- Cookers
- Sterile water
- Ascorbic acid powder

Other Safer Use

- Snorting kits
- Rectal use kits
- Rubber mouthpieces
- Fentanyl and xylazine test strips

Safer Sex

- Latex condoms
- Water-based lubricant

Hygiene

- Hygiene kits
- Deodorant
- Lotion
- Alcohol-free mouthwash
- Hand sanitizer
- Lip balm

Supply Packaging

We planned to package these in plastic bags (3"x5", 4"x6", 6"x6")

- Alcohol swabs
- Tourniquets
- Fentanyl and xylazine test strips
- Condoms
- Lubricant
- Sunscreen

After implementing, these also needed packaged

- Mouthpieces
- Ascorbic acid

Dispensing Issues

- Coils are un-paired
- Packaging gets stuck in, under, around, or hanging on the coils
- Items stuffed too tightly in the coils
- Items expire and do not dispense
- Power is off allow offline dispensing?









Alternative Packaging Options

Available at: https://www.uline.com



Coin envelopes



Paper bags



Barrier pouches



Reverse tuck



Paper takeout boxes



Bubble bags







Plan Ahead

- Who will:
 - Purchase your supplies
 - Package your supplies
 - Monitor inventory
 - Stock the HRVMs
- Where will you receive, unbox, re-package, and store your inventory?
- How will you get the supplies to your HRVMs?

Participant Exercise 2 (5 minutes)

- Prepare a list of harm reduction supplies you would like to include in your vending machine. Dream big!
- Examples:
 - Naloxone
 - Fentanyl test strips
 - Syringes
 - Tourniquets
 - Alcohol swabs
 - Cookers
 - Wound care kits

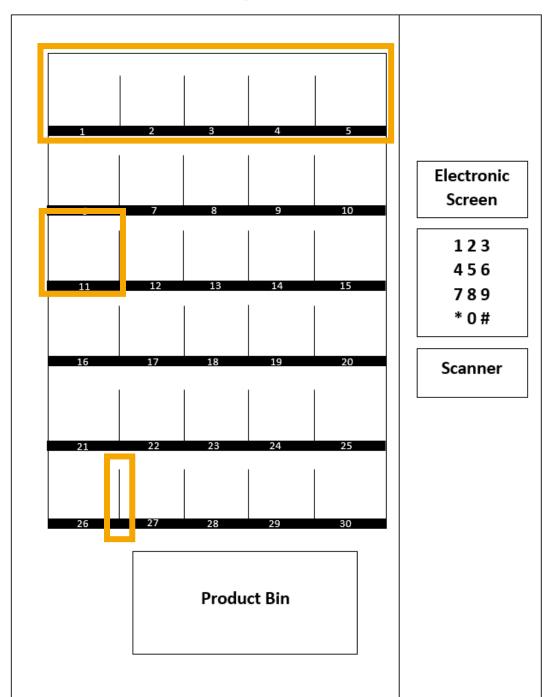
- Write down how you would like to display the items in the machine.
- Examples:
 - Paper bag or box
 - Plastic bag
 - Custom box with sticker
 - As they are when you purchase them
- Keep in mind workload needs for packaging.

Tray

Bin or slot

HRVM interior layout

Divider



Coils

- Bins with single coils spin in one direction
- Double-wide bins require two coils that spin towards each other
 - If coils spin in the same direction, the product is forced upward
 - Make sure to check calibration on coils to ensure they are "paired" and turn in the correct direction
 - "Test vend" to test proper product dispensing

Example coil size	Example coil depth (how deep an item will fit)					
4	3-3/4"					
5	3-1/4"					
6	3					
7	2-1/2"					
9	2"					
10	1-3/4"					
12	1-1/2"					
15	1-1/4"					
18	1"					
24	3/4"					
30	1/2"					

Example Plan-o-gram

Tray Number (height)	Supply Item (number that fit per coil)										
1 (7")	•	ntainer 1 qt 4)	· .	ontainer 1 qt (4)	Wound Care Kit (10)		Alcohol Swabs (24)	Alcohol Swabs (24)	Tourniquet (24)		
2 (6.75")	Sharps Containers Personal Size (6)		Sharps Containers Personal Size (6)		Wound Care Kit (10)		Sterile Water (24)	Mouthpiece (24)	Safer Snorting Kit (24)	Sunscreen Packs (24)	
3 (6.75")	Ascorbic Acid Packs (24)	Hand Sanitizer (18)	Safer Rectal Use Kit (15)	Cooker with Filter (24)	Fentanyl Test Strips (12)	Xylazine Test Strips (12)	Deodorant (15)	Lotion (9)	Mouthwash (10)	Lip Balm (24)	
4 (7.5")	Hygiene Kit (12)		Hygiene Kit (12)		Condoms (15)		XL Condoms (15)		Lubricant Packs (15)		
5 (6.5")	27G Insulin Syringes (15)		28G Insulin Syringes (15)		29G Insulin Syringes (15)		30G Insulin Syringes (15)		31G Insulin Syringes (15)		
6 (6")	27G Insulin Syringes (15)		28G Insulin Syringes (15)		29G Insulin Syringes (15)		30G Insulin Syringes (15)		31G Insulin Syringes (15)		

Additional tips

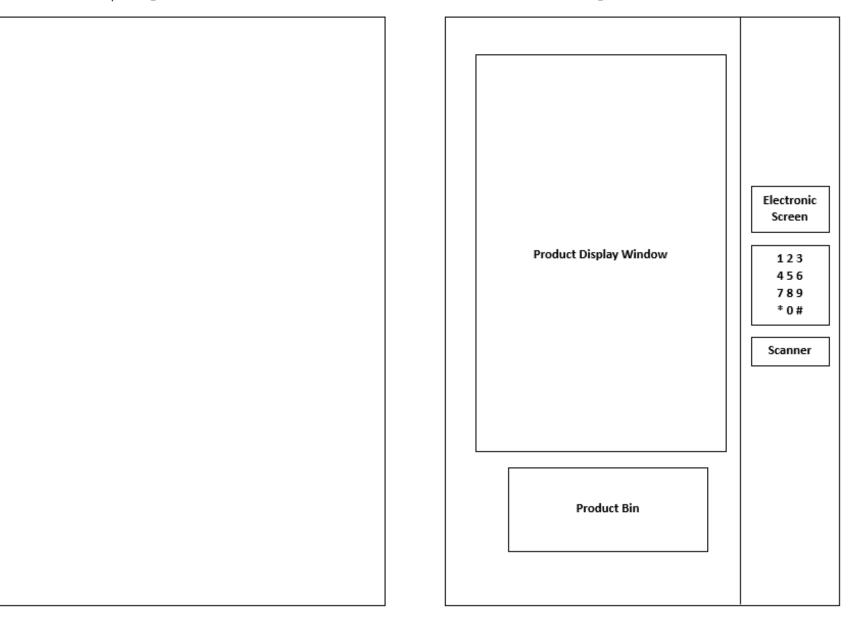
- Plastic "fins" can be added to the end of the coil to aid product dispensing
- Machines may come with numbered inserts that you can add/remove based on layout
- Determine how to label the item names
 - This was first attempt using a standard label-maker
 - It looked a bit messy, so we switched to making labels with a DYMO LabelWriter
 - One year later our labels are fading and need replaced



Participant Exercise 3 (5 minutes)

- Using the template on <u>page 3</u>, design your vending machine interior layout. Place specific harm reduction supplies in each row and coil.
- Consider which items may fit best near the top of the machine (lighter or easier to manipulate items) vs bottom (larger, heavier, or breakable items).

HRVM exterior layout



Designing a HRVM exterior "wrap"

Your Life Matters.

The San Francisco Veterans Affairs Health Care System Harm Reduction & Syringe Services Program (SSP) wants to protect <u>you</u> from:

Drug overdose

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

Hepatitis A, B, C viruses

Skin infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Tuberculosis

We have **free** resources for Veterans, such as naloxone (Narcan) to reverse an opioid overdose.

We can also refer Veterans for:

- ✓ Testing for infections
- ✓ Vaccines to prevent infections like hepatitis A and B
- ✓ Prevention and treatment for HIV
- Medications and treatment to reduce drug and alcohol cravings and use
- Medications to treat skin infections, STIs, and tuberculosis

Contact us today to get connected!

Pharmacist Tessa Rife-Pennington 415-319-1193

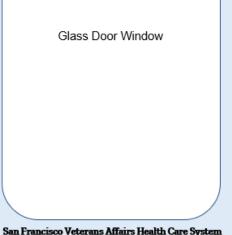
Here are some useful VA resources:

- Santa Rosa VA Clinic: 2285 Challenger Way, Santa Rosa, CA, 707-569-2300
- 24-hour nurse advice line: 800-733-0502
- San Francisco VA Infectious Disease Clinic: 415-750-6902
- San Francisco VA Opioid Treatment Program: 415-221-4810 x22814 or x22050





Your Life Matters.



Harm Reduction & Syringe Services Program (SSP)

Vend Product Door



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How it turned out

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Contact us today to get connected!

Pharmacist
Tessa Rife-Pennington
415-319-1193

Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Cedric Thurman 415-624-7382

Here are some useful VA resources:

- San Francisco Downtown Clinic: 401 3rd St, San Francisco, CA 94107, 415-281-5100
- Infectious Disease Clinic: 415-750-6902
- Walk-in Mental Health Care: San Francisco VA Mental Health Clinic, Bldg. 203, ground floor, room GA-28
- Opioid Treatment Program: 415-221-4810 x22814 or x22050
- Intensive Outpatient Program: 415-221-4810 x23147







U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Your Life Matters. San Francisco Veterans Affairs Health Care System Harm Reduction & Syringe Services Program (SSP) U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Consider adding to your HRVM wrap

- How to access the machine/enroll/register
- Phone numbers
- Points of contact
- Additional services/resources available
- Program logo, slogan, mission statement
- Education/data on harm reduction, what supplies in the machine can be used for

Participant Exercise 4 (10 minutes)

- Using the paper and colored pencils provided at your table, design a vending machine wrap on **page 5**.
- List what information you would like to include on your machine. For example:
 - How to access the machine/enroll/register
 - Phone numbers
 - Points of contact
 - Additional services/resources available
 - Program logo, slogan, mission statement
 - Education/data on harm reduction, what supplies in the machine can be used for
- Make sure to use inclusive language and avoid stigmatized terms/phrases.

Methods for HRVM access^{2,3,5,7,8,10-12}

Lowest Barrier

 Push a button and free product dispenses

Low-Moderate Barrier

- Pay for product
- Exchange used syringes for product

Moderate Barrier

- Answer demographic questions before selecting product
 - Age
 - Gender and gender of sexual partners
 - Place of residence
 - Time since last STI and HIV test

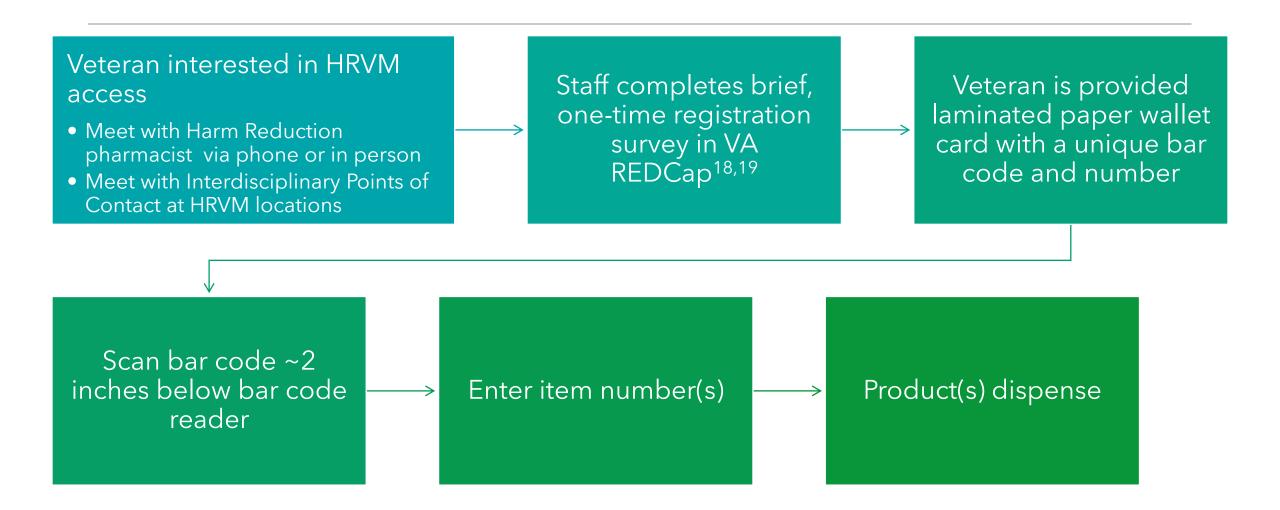
Moderate-High Barrier

- Register with SSP or outreach staff during regular business hours
- Obtain a HRVM card that does not expire
- Product limits

Highest Barrier

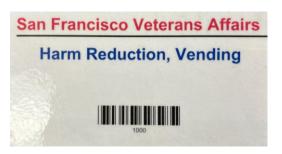
- Call Harm
 Reduction
 Coordinator
 during regular
 business hours
- Obtain an access code that is good for 90 days
- Re-enroll every 90 days
- Product limits

How Veterans access our HRVMs



Eligibility

- Veterans of any healthcare eligibility status can register for access
- All supplies are free and anonymous
- Wallet cards:
 - Do not expire
 - Work at all 15 HRVMs
- Issue new wallet card when lost/stolen/damaged



Scan bar code for free harm reduction supplies. Need naloxone (Narcan) or other resources? Contact pharmacist Tessa Rife-Pennington 415-319-1193.



HRVM Patient Education Handout

- One page front/back
- Provided when Veterans register for HRVM access
- Available at HRVM locations

San Francisco VA Health Care System Harm Reduction Vending Machines

What are they?

These are vending machines that dispense FREE harm reduction supplies to Veterans.

How do Veterans access supplies inside the machines?

Any Veteran can contact VA pharmacist Tessa Rife-Pennington at 415-319-1193 to register. Veterans will be issued a unique bar code. Scan the bar code at the machine. Then pick the number for the item needed

Where are the machines located?

San Francisco VA Medical Center

4150 Clement Street San Francisco, CA 94121-1545

One vending machine is in building 203, ground floor. mental health lobby. Another is in building 1, Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) Clinic.

San Francisco VA Downtown Clinic

401 3rd Street

San Francisco, CA 94107-1214

The vending machine is in the front lobby.

Oakland VA Clinic

2221 Martin Luther King Jr. Way Oakland CA 94612-1318

The vending machine is on the 2nd floor in the hallway between the waiting room and pharmacy.

Oakland VA 21st St Clinic

525 21st Street

Oakland, CA 94612-1605

The vending machine is in the front lobby.

South Santa Rosa VA Clinic

2285 Challenger Way

Santa Rosa, CA 95407-5418

The vending machine is in the ground floor mental health lobby.

Ukiah VA Clinic

630 Kings Court Ukiah, CA 95482-5003

The vending machine is in the primary care building behind the security guard desk.

Clearlake VA Clinic

15145 Lakeshore Drive Clearlake, CA 95422-8106

The vending machine is in the front lobby.

Eureka VA Clinic

930 West Harris Street Eureka, CA 95503-3927

The vending machine is in the front lobby.

250 Kearny Street San Francisco, CA 94108

The vending machine is in the front lobby.

Veterans Commons

150 Otis Street San Francisco, CA 94103

The vending machine is in the front lobby next to the residential elevators.

Veterans Academy

The vending machine is in the community room.

1150 3rd Street

55 Cravath Street

Colma Veterans Village

1680 Mission Road

What is in the machines?

Select 10 or 12 for a 1quart sharps container. Place used syringes inside. Once full, seal container and place in

Select 20 or 22 for a

personal sized sharps

container. Place used

syringes inside. Once full,



snorting

Single use

injection.

drugs.

water vial. Use to

dissolve drugs before

injection. Use to rinse

nostrils before and after

Select 30 for ascorbic

acid (vitamin C) powder.

Use a small amount to

Select 34 for test strips

fentanyl. Fentanyl is a

powerful opioid. It can

cause an overdose. See

FLT

to check drugs for

instructions inside

Select 38 for alcohol-

free mouthwash.

Rinse mouth

and spit. Use

regularly and

after smoking.

Do not swallow.

Select 46 for XL

external (penile)

prevent

pregnancy

and sexually

transmitted

infections.

condoms. Use to

Select 54 or 64 for 29G

12mm 1mL syringes.

package.

dissolve drug before

Select 16 or 17 for alcohol swabs. Use to clean skin before injecting drugs, surfaces before snorting drugs, or equipment such as pipes.

regularly.

package.

Select 35 for test strips to

check drugs for xylazine

(AKA Trang), Xylazine is

an animal tranquilizer. It

is harmful to humans.

Select 39 for lip balm

Select 48 for 10 packs of

water-based lubricant

Select 56 or 66 for 30G

12mm 1mL syringes

Use to hydrate the

lips. May apply to

nostrils for

Use for

lubrication

during sex.

hydration after

snorting drugs.

See instructions inside

Select 18 or 19 for a latex-free tourniquet. Use above injection site to plump up vein. Sterilize with alcohol swab before

Select 27 for a rubber Select 28 for a safer mouthpiece. Attach to snorting drug use kit. glass pipe to smoke Sterilize with alcohol drugs. Helps prevent swab before use. Avoid sharing to





Avoid

sharing and reusing to prevent infections

Select 36 for deodorant. Apply 2-3 strokes to clean dry skin of armpits after showering, bathing,





bar soap, washcloth tablets. comb.



Use for safer iniection Avoid sharing and reusing to prevent infections

Select 58 or 68 for 31G 8mm 1mL syringes

before sun exposure to prevent

Select 29 for 3 packs of

sunscreen. Apply to skin

sunburn and skin

trash.

seal up

trash.

container

and place in

cancer.

Select 33 for a cooker with a cotton pellet. Mix drug in cooker. Heat for

15+ seconds. Use cotton pellet to filter drug while

and reusing to

Use to hydrate

use only. Do not

apply to broken

Select 44 for external

(penile) condoms. Use to

prevent pregnancy and

Select 52 or 62 for 28G

12mm 1mL syringes.

skin, External

skin or rash.

sexually

transmitted

infections.

Select 37 for body lotion.

prevent infections

drawing into syringe.

Avoid sharing

1030 Girard Road

San Francisco, CA 94129

Edwin M Lee Apartments

San Francisco, CA 94158

The vending machine is in the parking garage.

Maceo May Apartments

San Francisco, CA 94130

The vending machine is in the bike room.

Daly City, CA 94014

The vending machine is in the community room.

Interdisciplinary Points of Contact (POCs)

Goal

 On-site coverage for Veteran HRVM registration at community-based outpatient clinics

Strategy

Solicit and train volunteers

Why

- Allows for diverse feedback and correction to workflow
- Increases whole system buy-in
- Engages front desk staff
- Lower barrier access
- Each clinic has unique structure, staffing, and needs

Resources & Training for POCs

- Created MS Teams group for document sharing and chat for Q&A
- Created Standard work for registration document
- Provided initial 1-hour training with individual and small groups of POCs
- Hosted regular virtual check-ins for Q&A
- POC Sarah Solis, LCSW, created custom flier for each

Would you like something in the harm reduction vending machine?





Let's get you registered!

You will meet briefly with a VA staff person to complete registration. You will then be issued a card to access the machine on your own.



Need items you dont see in the vending machine?

Let us know. We can send you many other harm reduction items in the mail.



Downtown Clinic harm reduction contact of the day

Monday-Amehed Shek Tuesday-Andrew Ruggles Wednesday-Andrew Ruggles Thursday-Jenna Ferrara Feel free to ask a front desk staff person to connect you with the contact of the day.

Staff Education

- Recognize Harm Reduction is stigmatized, even among healthcare professionals/settings
- Harm Reduction is a culture shift/normalizing of language
- Helpful to create a low-barrier touch-point education system
 - Monthly updates at town halls
 - Ongoing engagement of POCs in public spaces
 - Continuing education for various professions
 - Monthly newsletter highlighting staff/client stories and harm reduction materials
 - Listening/engaging staff for feedback

Advertising Strategies



11/15/2024 2024 AMERSA National Conference 46

Advertising Strategies

- Digital television ads around the hospital
 - Take-away cards
- Door hangers
- Education handouts/fliers placed in lobbies
- Banner and tablecloth for outreach events
- Business cards
- Stickers
- T-shirts with program logo
- AMERSA Podcast Series: Harm Reduction: Compassionate Care for People who use Drugs
 - Episode 4: Leveraging technology: Expanding Veteran access to harm reduction resources through vending machines
- Next steps: Monthly staff newsletters, more signage around the hospital







Evaluating Program Outcomes

Participant demographics

Dispensing data

- Number of participants accessing the machine
- Number of supplies dispensed
- Date/time of day supplies dispensed

Costs

- Machines
- Software
- Wi-Fi
- Electricity
- Supplies, packaging
- Staffing

Potential cost-benefit

- Preventing drug overdose/death, HIV, HCV, STIs
- Engagement in substance use care

Participant Exercise 5 (10 minutes)

- Prepare a list of data/outcomes you would like to utilize to evaluate your HRVM program.
- Examples:
 - Participant demographics
 - Number of participants accessing the machine
 - Number of supplies dispensed
 - Date/time of day supplies dispensed

1-year outcomes (8/1/23 -7/31/24)

Go live timeline

- 10 HRVMs August 2023
- 4 HRVMs September 2023
- 1 HRVM March 2024

Access

• >400 Veterans registered

Top locations utilized

- Veterans Commons (supportive housing)
- San Francisco VA Downtown Clinic
- Stanford Hotel (supportive housing)
- San Francisco VA Medical Center (mental health/PT/OT Clinic)

>6200 products dispensed, most common include

- Insulin syringes (bags of 10; 5 sizes), n=777
- Hygiene kits, n=632
- External/penile condoms (bags of 10; 2 sizes), n=586
- Wound care kits, n=534

References

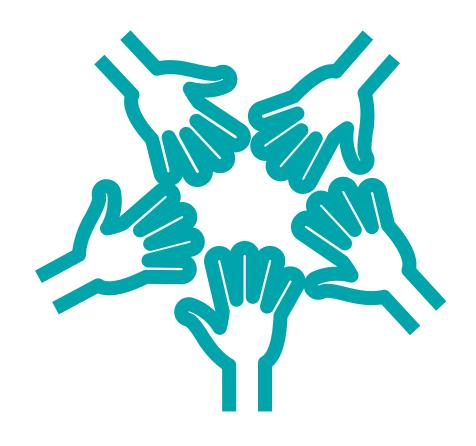
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Acknowledgements

- Workshop submission team members: Jenna Ferrara, LCSW; Shannon Stevens, LCSW; Amehed Shek, LISW
- Donna Dare, PharmD, and Pharmacy Service
- Logistics Service
- Susan Dugdale, Visual Information Specialist
- HRVM Points of Contact
- HUD-VASH staff





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