

**Benton-Franklin
Health District**
www.bfhd.wa.gov

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HEALTH DISTRICT SUPPORTS SYRINGE SERVICES PROGRAMS

Position Statement Issued on BFHD Website

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 9, 2019

KENNEWICK — Benton-Franklin Health District has released a position statement in support of syringe services programs (SSP), also referred to as syringe exchange programs (SEP). The position statement can be read in its entirety on the [Health District website](#).

The position statement emphasizes the duty of public health to support efforts proven to prevent disease and reduce deaths as well as the importance of ensuring that accurate information is available to the public and policy makers.

“Across the country, we have seen a parallel increase in opioid use disorder and hepatitis C, linked by injection drug use. Even more alarming is the rising number of fatal overdoses ” said Dr. Amy Person, Health Officer for Benton and Franklin Counties. “We have over two decades of research that show that SSPs prevent diseases and do not increase intravenous drug use. People who utilize SSPs are more likely to seek treatment for substance use disorder.”

Opioid overdoses have tripled in the last 15 years in Benton and Franklin Counties.

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