



Monday, April 30th, 2018

Dear London City Councillors,

I am writing to you in support of Dr. Christopher Mackie's recommendation that two identified sites (446 York St. and 241 Simcoe St.) for a Supervised Consumption Facility (SCF) be endorsed and zoned according to the appropriate bylaws.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area serves thousands of families across the London-Middlesex community, and while we primarily deliver equitable mentoring services to children and youth we are also honoured to support families who may be struggling with other challenges, including connecting them to resources for substance use. Our team has experienced more than one moment of frustration with the lack of equitable services for those who wish to engage in either harm reduction or strategies for recovery.

Further to this, several members of our team have received Naloxone and safe needle disposal trainings as our site at 543 Ridout St. N. is a common space for community members to gather and use substances. Staff see on a regular basis out our own windows citizens struggling and using public and private property to manage their addictions.

Beyond these frustrations we are also aware of the wealth of evidence that shows that SCFs work. No longer should we be concerned or questioning whether or not this type of intervention is effective, but rather we should be asking why we are not making our community safer and stronger for our most vulnerable citizens by confirming and opening SCFs.

Over the past several weeks there has been a tenor of unfortunate and disappointing reaction to the developments and site selection for the SCFs by Dr. Mackie and his team. It is in these moments that we must hold one another accountable to do not only what is morally right, but what is best according to hard facts and data.

To put it simply: SCFs will save lives.

I trust that you will lend your strong voice to create a safe city for all citizens, no matter their station.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Rodger'.

Jessie Rodger, M.S.W., R.S.W.
Executive Director, Big Brothers Big Sisters of London and Area