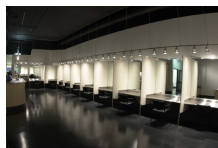


19 November 2008

By: Tudor Vieru, Science Editor



A picture of the injection room at Insite vca

## [Safe Injection Site Saves Canadian Dollars](#)

*Vancouver's Insite saves the government millions of dollars*

Canada's only safe injection site, Vancouver's Insite, saves the government 14 million Canadian dollars each year, a recent study shows. In addition, the national health system says that, over 10 years, some 920 life-years will be saved, for people who would otherwise succumb to [AIDS](#), hepatitis C, or other infectious medical conditions that are transmissible via used needles. A safe injection site is a clinic of sorts, where people who are addicted to illicit substances are allowed to inject their drugs, under careful medical supervision. Although the practice may seem like it's encouraging drug use at first glance, the reality couldn't be more different. The terrible diseases that are transmitted among fiends, when they shoot up illegally and use the same needle, cost the Canadian health system infinitely more than it takes to manage the clinic. In European countries such as Switzerland and the Netherlands, drug use has spiked to such levels, that setting up this type of clinics became a necessity. In Amsterdam, for example, special vehicles patrol the streets, giving away free needles to drug addicts, in an attempt to limit the spread of AIDS and hepatitis C. University of Toronto scientist, Dr. Ahmed Bayoumi, also with Saint Michael's Hospital, and University of Western Ontario The Ivey School of Business researcher, Gregory Zaric, say that "Vancouver's supervised injection site is associated with improved health and cost savings, even under conservative estimates of efficacy." Considering the fact that treating a single case of AIDS costs, on average, C\$150,000, it's safe to say that these estimates are correct. In addition to reducing the numbers of infectious disease cases, this practice also makes it possible for authorities to identify fiends and to refer them to rehabilitation centers. The numbers of those who can quit drugs after going to the clinic are constantly increasing, considering the fact that, in several cases, simple discussions are enough to convince the addicts to go to rehab.