

## Press Release

For Immediate Release

To All Media

Source: Union of Canadian Correctional Officers–CSN (UCCO-SACC-CSN)

### **Prison Needle Exchange Program**

#### **The Union of Canadian Correctional Officers Demands That the Program Be Suspended**

Moncton, November 2, 2018 – Over one hundred correctional officers demonstrated in front of the offices of Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor (Moncton) and Minister Ralph Goodale (Regina) to demand that the implementation of the Prison Needle Exchange Program (PNEP) be suspended.

“We are asking the government to stop the implementation of the PNEP until the findings of the first two projects, in New Brunswick and Ontario, are released,” said UCCO-SACC-CSN National President Jason Godin. “We also demand to be consulted properly, so that our reservations about the program can be heard. UCCO-SACC-CSN recently expressed its concerns to Correctional Service Canada officials, but the union hopes to be able to continue the discussions as soon as possible.”

#### **Putting Safety at Risk**

The PNEP raises a number of concerns that could compromise the safety of correctional officers in particular. “Allowing for the use of needles in cells will considerably increase risks for our members,” said Jeff Wilkins, Atlantic Region President. “The safety of inmates is also put at risk, as is that of the public.” In similar programs in some European countries, injection is not permitted in cells, but only in supervised centres by health professionals.

In recent weeks, UCCO-SACC-CSN met with a number of senators and members of parliament, including Liberal members of parliament and staff from the Prime Minister’s Office, in order to voice its concerns with regard to the PNEP. “We will continue to mobilize to ensure that the program will not be carried out at the expense of correctional officers,” concluded Jason Godin.

#### **About the Union**

The Union of Canadian Correctional Officers (UCCO-SACC-CSN) represents over 7400 members in the five major regions of Canada: the Pacific, the Prairies, Ontario, Quebec, and the Atlantic. UCCO-SACC-CSN represents correctional officers in 49 federal institutions.

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