



A SHIFT IN DIRECTION ON PNEP

MINISTER ANNOUNCES A BLANKET EXEMPTION ALLOWING OVERDOSE PREVENTION SITES AT THE NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF UCCO-SACC-CSN.

AFTER MONTHS OF MOBILIZATION BY THE MEMBERS OF UCCO-SACC-CSN AND LOBBYING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FROM ALL POLITICAL PARTIES, MINISTER GOODALE SIGNALS THAT HE HAS CLEARLY HEARD THE UNIONS SAFETY AND SECURITY CONCERNS WITH THE CURRENT PRISON NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

On May 6th, at UCCO-SACC-CSN's National General Assembly, the Minister announced a blanket exemption from Health Canada which allows CSC to implement overdose prevention at any site, recognizing that it is a health

care issue. (See the union's website for Minister's speech.)

Although fundamentally opposed to program since the beginning, we have convinced the political leaders through our mobilization efforts and lobbying to recognize prison needle exchange as a health care issue, as in the community and not an issue for Correctional Officers to have to manage in such a volatile environment that is often subject to unpredictable human behavior.

Our position has been clear, the current program does very little with respect to harm reduction as we have already witnessed

abuses of the program. When the program is abused and inmates share needles, diseases continue to spread. The current program only increases harm for Correctional Officers.

It is now time for CSC to step up to the plate and suspend the current program and start working with UCCO-SACC-CSN to implement a program that sees needles out of cells and under the supervision of health care, where this program belongs!