

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Caitlin Molina

**Date Submitted:** 03/20/2024 09:47 AM

**Council File No:** 23-0670-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** I am writing in support of the use of Opioid Settlement Funds for harm reduction purposes, including the creation, maintenance, and staffing of a Macarthur Park Harm Reduction Center. Harm reductionists work with the most marginalized people in society and are expected to respond to the poverty, racial injustices, gender based violence, discrimination, and mistreatment so many turn a blind eye to. These funds are crucial to support existing staff, as well as hiring and training additional peer workers. Oxygen therapy is increasingly being used by trained non-clinical staff in overdose response. In an environment where a person could be overdosing for a few minutes before a team or bystander responds, it is important to utilize all the tools we can to increase the chance of survival and minimize damage to long term health outcomes. No program in Macarthur Park currently has the funding to provide this lifesaving resource. Macarthur Park also has a large Spanish-speaking population, including Central American immigrants. These funds should help harm reduction teams provide targeted, culturally sensitive care, including in hiring and training Spanish-speaking lived experience staff. Finally, these funds could also be used for medical services, such as wound care kits and supplies for outreach teams and to provide healthcare at the Macarthur Park Harm Reduction Center. I applaud the current organizations working on the ground in Macarthur Park, including Community Health Project LA, Sidewalk Project, and street medicine teams, and implore you to utilize these funds wisely and strategically to support the local unhoused community living in the park, those passing through, and individuals living in the nearby area.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Soma Snakeoil

**Date Submitted:** 03/20/2024 12:28 PM

**Council File No:** 23-0670-S2

**Comments for Public Posting:** Good afternoon, the purpose of Opioid Settlement funds was to be a restorative process for impacted people. On behalf of The Sidewalk Project and our participants we respectfully request that the city's opioid settlement funds be prioritized for evidence-based harm reduction approaches to strengthen the city's response in addressing the ongoing overdose crisis, primarily in underserved areas substantially affected by overdose fatalities. The financial resources stemming from settlements holding the pharmaceutical companies accountable for their problematic business practice in fueling an unprecedented overdose crisis, and provides the City of Los Angeles with the opportunity to fund proven solutions to address the needs of people with substance use. We want to see these dollars invested in support and expansion of syringe service programs, funding for a harm reduction center for MacArthur Park, investment in drug checking services such a what UCLA has begun doing, funds for exisiting SSPs to open overdose prevention centers, and supportive, voluntary, wrap around services for people who use drugs in every step of their experience from engaging with harm reduction programs, to warm hand off to other providers including drug treatment-at the guidance and self determination of the individual engaged in services. The only way to end drug overdose and the complex social and physical needs of PWUD is to invest in harm reduction. Thank you.