COMMUNITY INFORMED EVALUATION OF THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF IRELAND'S FIRST MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTING FACILITY

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Background:
Supervised injecting facilities (SIFs) reduce harm among people who inject drugs. We evaluated Ireland's first SIF to assess fidelity to intended implementation, early health and community impacts, and service engagement within its first six months of operation (22 December 2024–30 June 2025).

Methods:
A mixed-methods design integrated documentary analysis of planning and operational records; anonymised clinical activity data; semi-structured interviews with people who use drugs (n=35, onsite and street-based) who use the service and people who use drugs who don't use the service, which were supported and facilitated by peer outreach workers; and staff voice notes. Core outcomes included service use patterns, overdose responses, safer injecting behaviours, connections to health and social services, and local community effects.

Results:
The facility operated as intended with structured intake, seven supervised booths, aftercare space, clinical support, naloxone provision, oxygen administration, and community engagement. There were >5,000 visits by >800 unique clients, with 91 non-fatal overdoses managed on-site and no fatalities. Participants reported enhanced safety through hygienic conditions and access to sterile equipment, reduced public injecting and drug-related litter, and strengthened engagement with treatment, primary care, housing and social supports. Staff described trust-building and person-centred care as central to service engagement. Constraints included restricted hours, geographic coverage, and needs for safer inhalation services.

Conclusion:
Early findings demonstrate high fidelity to implementation alongside positive health and community outcomes. The SIF serves as low-threshold gateway to broader care and enhances public safety. An 18-month follow-up is planned using the same methods to examine longitudinal trends and evolving impacts. Findings will inform licence extension and service optimisation across Ireland and comparable settings.

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