



Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre

**Get to know  
our story.**

**Uniting**

# How we work.

**There's no quick-fix solution for drug addiction, but the people who visit Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre in Sydney's Kings Cross are making a choice to keep themselves and others safe. We believe that every person who comes through our door deserves respect and care. We take time. We build relationships, so that people know we're here when they're ready and able to seek help for their drug use.**

At Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (Uniting MSIC), we recognise that drug addiction is a long-term, relapsing condition. Since 2001, our team of registered nurses, counsellors and health education professionals have been working to minimise the harm associated with injecting drugs and treat people with dignity and compassion.

Our service doesn't support or promote drug use; rather we act to prevent injury and death by being present while someone injects, meaning we can provide immediate medical assistance

when needed. But we do more than this, we also connect people with the help they need, including referrals to treatment services.

For 17 years the Uniting MSIC has been the only service of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. Melbourne hopes to open a similar service in 2018 and we look forward to sharing our knowledge and experience. Studies of the 110 or so drug consumption rooms that operate worldwide show significant benefits to individuals and communities.



**“Following a Drug Summit in 1999, the Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre opened its doors in 2001. It was a first for Australia. The centre has saved countless lives, and has helped many onto the path of recovery and rehabilitation. It is a true expression of Christian service.”**

Peter Worland,  
Executive Director, Uniting



**“There is widespread support for supervised injecting facilities from the medical and scientific communities. The weight of evidence is clear.”**

Royal Australasian College of Physicians





# 16,142

people have registered  
to use the service.

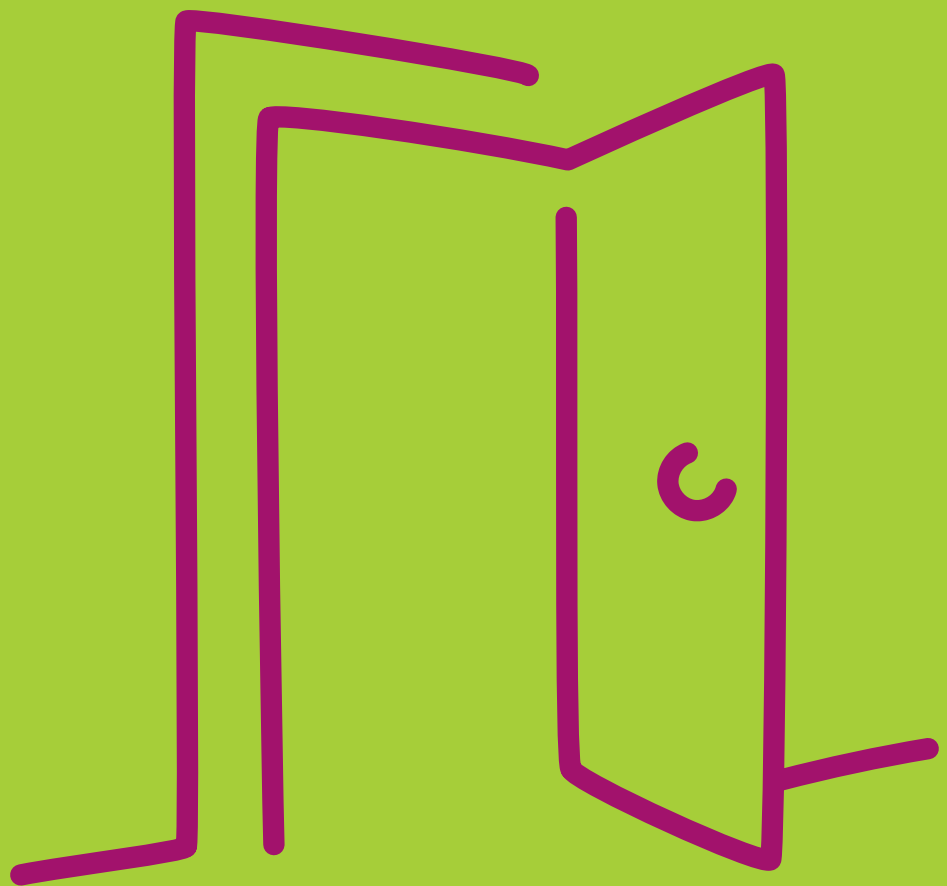
## Our Success story

- We've taken the pressure off emergency services with an early study showing the number of ambulance call-outs to Kings Cross dropping by 80%.
- We are well accepted: 70% of local businesses and 78% of local residents support the centre.
- The number of publicly discarded needles and syringes in Kings Cross almost halved when Uniting MSIC opened.
- Nearly 13,000 referrals have been made, connecting people to health, drug treatment and social welfare services.
- About 70% of the people registered with Uniting MSIC had never accessed any local health service before coming to us.
- The service has been independently evaluated multiple times. All results show it is successful and cost-effective.
- There are over 220 peer reviewed papers that show facilities like this work.

**"I have long advocated for treating drugs as a health and social issue, not a criminal issue. I was fortunate enough to visit the Uniting Sydney Medically Supervised Injecting Centre, where this principle is put into practice."**

Sir Richard Branson

**Since opening we have supervised more than a million injections and managed 7,428 overdoses without a single death.**





# Connecting people with health services and support.





**At Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre, every possible action is taken to help people in their fight against drug addiction. We have one of the highest rates of successful referral to health and drug treatment services of any supervised injecting centre in the world.**

Eighty percent of our frequent clients ultimately accept some form of referral for addiction treatment, as well as for support for mental illness, acute medical issues and other social issues. Without Uniting MSIC, these referrals may never have happened.



*“After 17 years of successfully connecting people to treatment and care, I’m delighted to see such widespread public support for the Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre. The success stories are many. Our centre reaches out to some of the most disengaged and disadvantaged members of our community who often live life on the street.*

*I’m proud to be part of this unique service that treats all people as people, with appropriate dignity and respect. We can only change the world one conversation at a time, but by reading this, asking questions, and thinking, we hope you will see the Uniting MSIC for what it is; a practical and effective harm reduction service that saves lives and makes a difference.”*

**Dr Marianne Jauncey,**  
**Medical Director, Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre**



*“Successful treatment and rehabilitation is only possible if someone is still alive. My son died in 1997, before the Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre opened, and I will always wonder what may have been.”*

**Tony Trimingham OAM,**  
founder and CEO of Family Drug Support and author of ‘Not my family, never my child’. Tony’s son Damien died of a heroin overdose aged 23.

# Police and law endorsements.

**Uniting MSIC does not supply any drugs. Local police are supportive of our service and the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force oversees our licence of operation.**

**Kings Cross has seen no negative impact on crime as a result of our service. This fact has been repeatedly confirmed by NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.**

*"I write as someone who understands the political sensitivities of establishing supervised injecting centres, but also as someone who has come to understand the clear benefits they offer. They improve outcomes not just for the individual drug user but for the local community too. I'm proud to advocate for the establishment of supervised injecting centres... Such services provide essential connections for people and send a message that all life is valuable."*

**Jeff Kennett AC**



*"The Medically Supervised Injecting Centre has my full support. MSIC is a good example of policy based on pragmatism and wisdom. We must continue to think globally and act locally, and we can teach others on the basis of our experience."*

**Hon Michael Kirby AC CMG**



# Community endorsements.

**“I am very grateful that this facility will continue to operate just down the road from where I live. Long may it continue.”**

Margaret Harvie,  
local Kings Cross resident

The local Kings Cross community has been regularly surveyed on their opinion of Uniting MSIC. These surveys show consistent and growing support for the service amongst the majority of businesses (70% in favour) and residents (78% in favour). According to the last National Drug Strategy Household Survey, over half of the Australian public actively support supervised injecting services.

*“I remember the needles in the gutter and the constant ambulances before the Medically Supervised Injecting Centre opened. MSIC helps to contain the injecting of drugs in Kings Cross in a medically supervised environment, where users are offered assistance and the option of placement in addiction rehabilitation programs.”*

**Adrian Bartels,**  
local Kings Cross resident  
and business owner





# Our objectives.



## Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre acts to:

- Provide access to health, social welfare services and treatment referrals for a marginalised and difficult to reach segment of the community.
- Uphold and promote the dignity of all people who use the service and promote awareness and understanding in the broader public.
- Contribute to the body of public health knowledge around injecting drug use.
- Contribute to the local community, for example by reducing injecting drug use and the discarding of needles in public locations.
- Effectively intervene in the event of drug overdose.
- Save lives and reduce injury from drug use.

**“Once I overdosed  
and if I was anywhere  
else, I would not still  
be here.”**

**What our  
clients have  
to say.**

**“We are all redeemable. So long as we have a pulse,  
we’re redeemable.”**

**“Without this place I would be dead. Simply, the Uniting MSIC  
saves lives.”**

**“Uniting MSIC has put a stable routine in my out-of-control life.”**

**“A totally indispensable service that has cleaned the Cross  
up, reduced street crime and the general sanitation of the  
neighbourhood streets.”**

**“The staff are extremely professional and caring, and give the  
proper care that overdosed patients need. The aftercare is  
exceptionally good – a lot of lives have been saved here.”**





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**Get in touch.**

02 9360 1191  
[uniting.org/msic](http://uniting.org/msic)

Uniting MSIC  
66 Darlinghurst Rd,  
Kings Cross NSW 2011