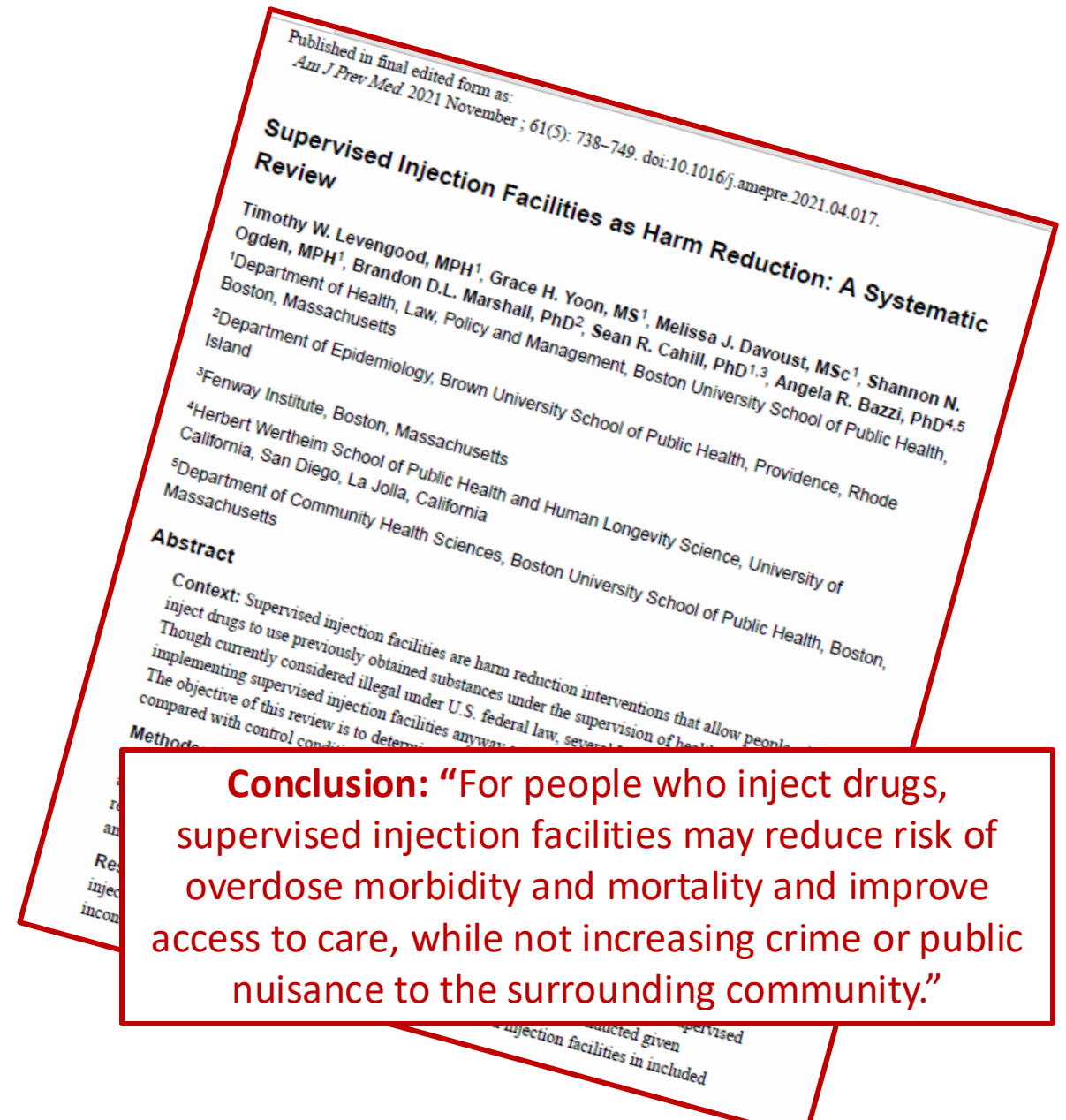


SDF's ANNUAL #STOPTHEDEATHS CONFERENCE 2025

Driving Change in Safer Consumption : What outcomes can we expect and measure?

International evidence base

- Extensive – multiple evidence reviews concluding beneficial effects of safer drug consumption facilities (SDCFs)
- Previous studies have tended to focus on health impact of those using facilities; with less evidence on the wider community
- Much of the robust evidence to date has centred on two facilities in Australia (Sydney) and Canada (Vancouver) dating back to the late 1990s/early 2000s
- Emerging evidence from multiple sites introduced in North America in recent years

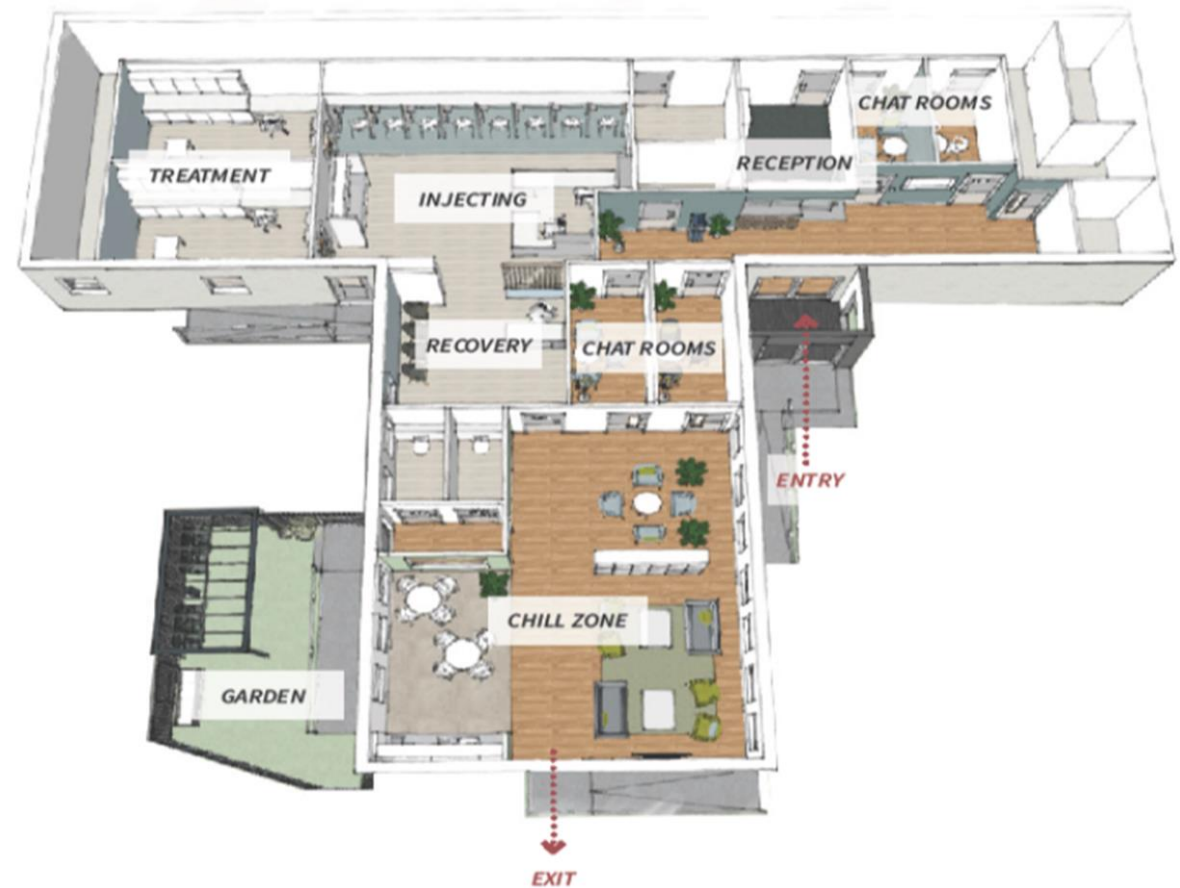


Why do we need an evaluation?



“I have anticipated that the facility would operate as a pilot and that there would be careful and rigorous evaluation of the facility and its effects.”

The Lord Advocate Dorothy Bain KC



Context and setting of the UK's first sanctioned SDCF : Glasgow City

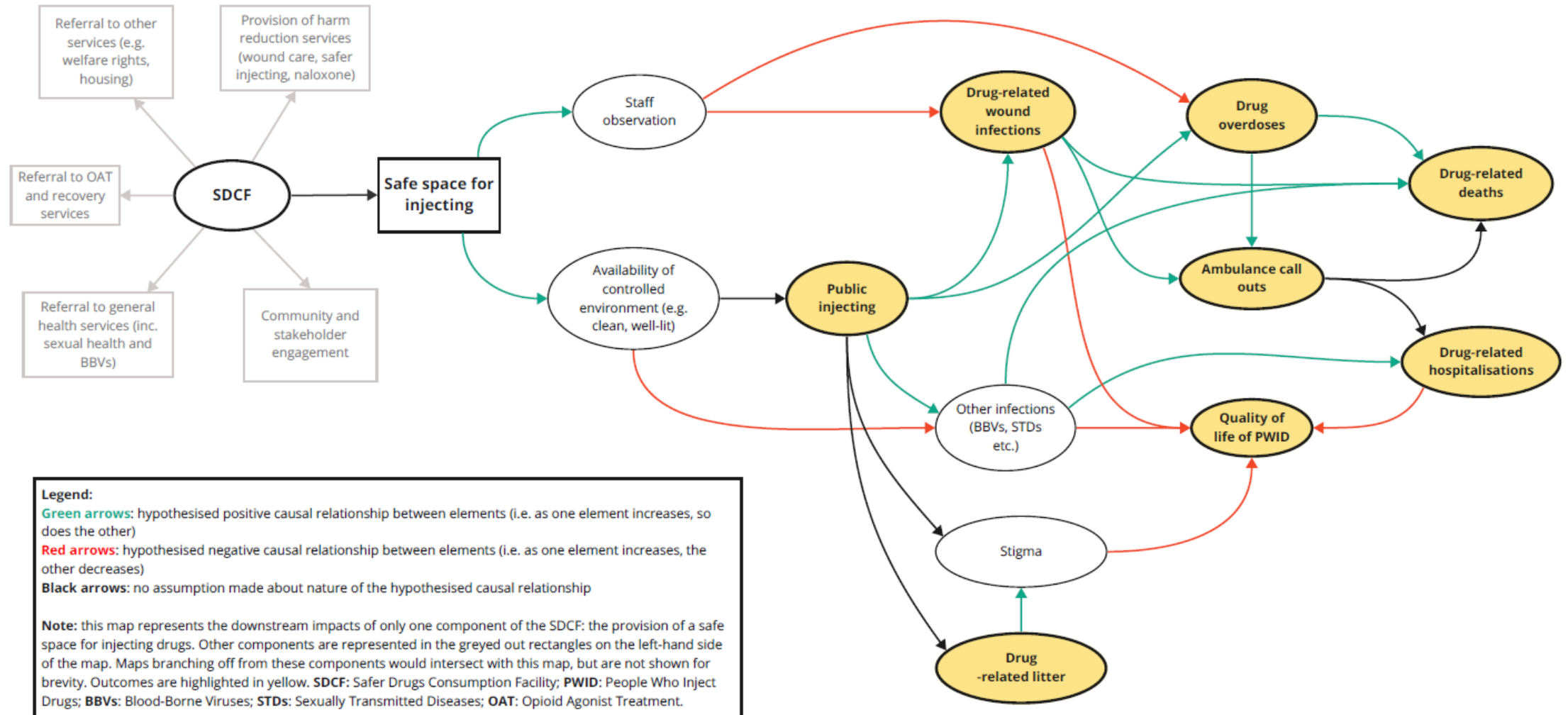
- **Large outbreak of HIV among people who inject drugs**
 - 10-fold rise in prevalence of HIV infection in Glasgow City (11% by 2017)
- **Multiple factors associated with HIV outbreak**, including cocaine injecting, homelessness, injecting in public places and frequent incarceration
 - 47% of those interviewed in Glasgow City (2017-18) reported injecting in public places
- **Considerable change in drugs used/injected**
 - Injecting powder cocaine: 60% nationally and 85% in Glasgow City by 2023
- **Drug-related death rates among the highest globally**
 - 24 per 100,000 across Scotland and 45 per 100,000 in Glasgow City

Evaluating the impact of the UK's first sanctioned SDCF: the ENACT study

- **Independent evaluation funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)**
- Collaboration between multiple institutions (listed below)
- **Aims to evaluate the impact of the Thistle service on health, social, community, environmental, and economic outcomes**
- April 2025 to Sept 2029 (interim results mid 2027)
- **Living experience embedded within the evaluation**, advising the research team on all stages (including design, conduct, interpretation of findings and dissemination)

What outcomes can we expect ?

Provisional systems map illustrating potential impacts of one key component of the Thistle: Provision of a safe space for injecting drugs



What outcomes will we examine in the evaluation?

➤ Health

Reach of people at risk of drug harm

Public injecting

Sharing of injecting equipment

Use of other health services:
drug treatment, mental health

Fatal overdose

HIV, Hep C and other infections

General health and wellbeing

➤ Social

Use of social services: housing, welfare

Homelessness

Prison

➤ Community

Drug-related litter

Crime

Attitudes and wellbeing of community

House prices

➤ Economic

Cost of The Thistle

Costs of ambulance call-outs,
and other services

Potential unintended consequences (e.g. drug dealing or anti-social behaviour; stigmatisation of SDCF clients)

What questions do we plan to answer?

Service

- How is the Thistle delivered and what helped or hindered delivery?

People who inject drugs

- What are the effects of the Thistle on health and social outcomes of people using it?

Local community

- What are the adverse or beneficial impacts on residents and businesses?

Economic

- Is the Thistle a worthwhile investment and do the benefits of it outweigh costs?

How do we plan to measure outcomes? (1 of 2)

Large Surveys

People who
inject drugs



Pharmacy



Residents



"And finally, would you say your fear
of crime had increased?"



Environment



People at risk of drug harm
(using / not using the Thistle)



Staff in the Thistle

In-depth interviews

Local residents
& businesses



Staff in
other health
& related services

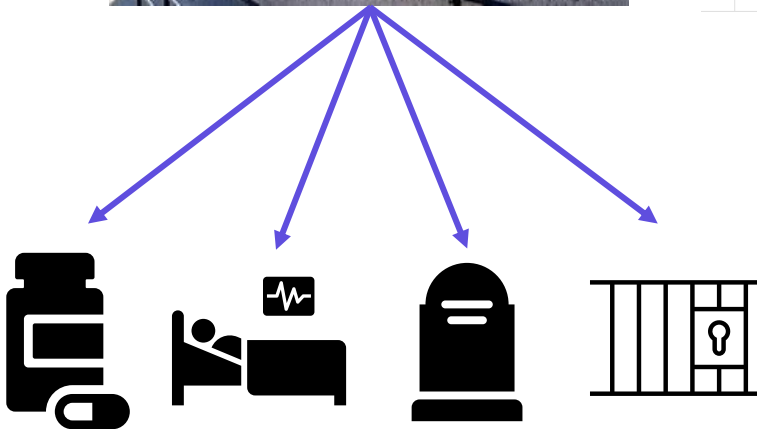


How do we plan to measure outcomes? (2 of 2)

Routine administrative data



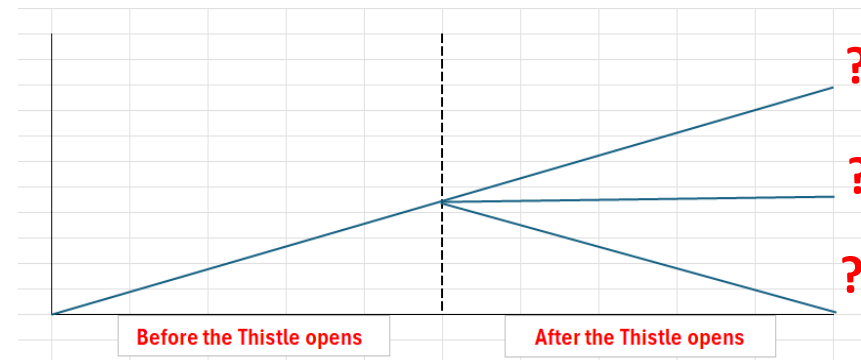
Data-linkage



Public Health
Scotland



Analysis



Summary

- **In the context of considerable drug-related harms and concerns regarding public injecting, Glasgow City represents a compelling case for the setting of the UK's first sanctioned SDCF**
- The evaluation of the Thistle service will consider a broad range of outcomes examining its impact on health, social, community, environmental and economic outcomes
- **Mixed methods approach will be adopted, involving multiple data sources (both qualitative and quantitative) and controlled study design (enabling comparison to control areas/subjects not exposed to the Thistle)**
- All stages of the evaluation will be reviewed by an independent expert committee
- **People with living experience will input to the design, implementation, interpretation and dissemination of the evaluation**

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