

VANCOUVER RESIDENTS SUPPORT SUBSTITUTION TREATMENT: POLL

Vancouver – Justason Market Intelligence today released poll results that show many Vancouver residents believe traditional abstinence-based drug treatment programs are not working. Of those polled, 71% believe less than one quarter of addicts stay off drugs after traditional treatment programs.

Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan commented: "The public appears to be aware that large numbers of addicted people will continue to be involved in crime and disorder as a result of long term drug use. We know that many drug users do not respond, in the long term, to traditional abstinence-based treatment programs."

Residents also appear willing to try some innovative solutions. When asked: "Would you support a prescription drug program to address the drug problem?" fully 61% say they would (strong support 31%, somewhat support 30%, 36% opposes and 3% say neither or don't know.)

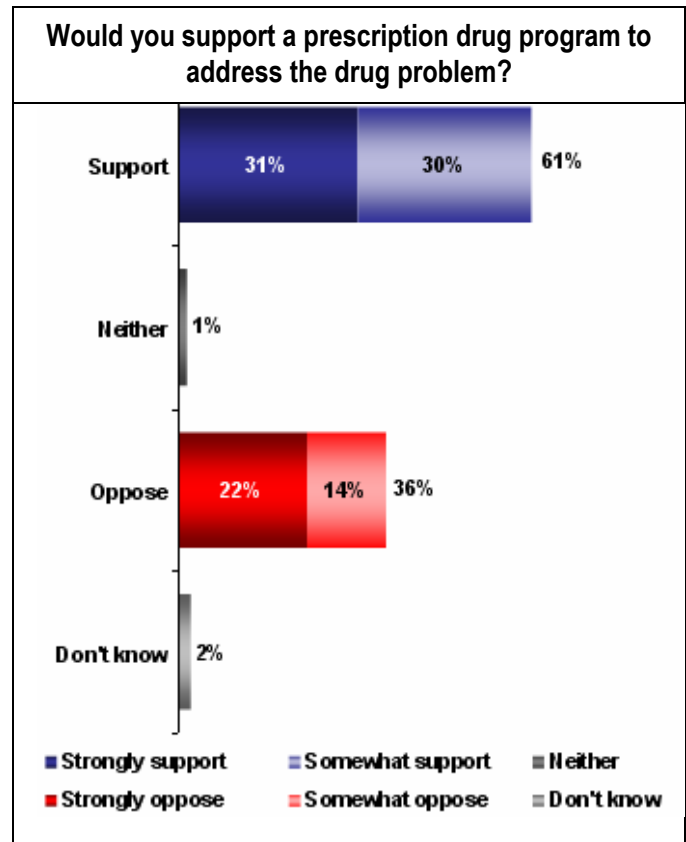
Mayor Sullivan has been playing a leadership role in the formation of a group that is seeking a Health Canada exemption to allow substitution treatment for people with chronic addictions. The exemption would allow doctors to prescribe legally available oral medications as substitutes for illegal addictive injection drugs.

The poll finds that three-in-four residents (76%) believe that solving the City's drug problem is a "very" important priority.

Substitution treatment is a continuation of the Four Pillars concept pioneered by former Mayor Philip Owen, which advocates enforcement, education, treatment and harm reduction.

The random telephone poll of 303 Vancouver residents was conducted by Justason Market Intelligence from November 23 to 26, 2006. The poll carries a margin of error of +/- 5.7 percentage points 95% of the time.

Dr. David Marsh, the head of Addictions Services at Vancouver Coastal Health, is available for comment on substitution treatment programs.



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For more information contact:

Barb Justason
Justason Market Intelligence
(604) 783-4165

Dr. David Marsh
Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
(604) 730-7622

Anna Lilly
Mayor's Office
(604) 873-7410