“I support syringe exchange programs as a common sense tactic to address the issue of drug use in our communities. It’s clear to me that these programs do not encourage drug use and that they can work in conjunction with the continuing enforcement of drug laws.”

Chief Harold Medlock, Fayetteville Police Department

“I’m in favor of syringe exchange programs to reduce the number of HIV and hepatitis C cases in the community. This is a public health issue. These programs would help the citizens of our state who struggle with addiction and protect others from injuries with dirty needles.”

Chief Marty Sumner, High Point Police Department

“Law enforcement has been at the front lines of the drug problem and has witnessed the devastating effects of drug use and abuse. We are currently seeing more and more people use heroin, more people inject prescription drugs, and more people get sick from diseases like HIV and Hepatitis C. Although the enforcement of drug laws is and always will be an integral part of police work, we also realize that we will not solely arrest our way out of this problem. I support syringe exchange programs because they are shown to lower the rates of disease and help connect drug users to the treatment that they need to combat this epidemic.”

Chief Bill Hollingsed, Waynesville Police Department

“Over the past few years, we have seen a tragic surge in deaths due to opioid overdose. Along with the escalation of injectable drugs comes the increased opportunity for needle sticks. With preventative measures such as improving syringe access, we are protecting the health and safety of law enforcement officers. Of course, I support any measures to keep our officers safe.”

Sheriff Neil Elks, Pitt County Sheriff’s Office

“I can’t see how anyone could be against syringe exchange programs. Syringes are a public safety issue and exchange programs would cut down on the number of cases of HIV and hepatitis C. They would also reduce first responder’s exposure to needle-stick injury and connect subjects to treatment resources during contact with the exchange.”

Chief Kevin Brinkley, Nags Head Police Department

“Anyone who supports naloxone as a tool to save lives should support syringe exchange programs as well. They both give people a second chance. I would support having a syringe exchange program in my county, especially if people get treatment information along with clean syringes.”

Sheriff Doug Doughtie, Dare County Sheriff’s Office

“I used to be an officer in a city in Connecticut that ran an active, successful syringe exchange program. I saw firsthand that the program reduced the number of dirty syringes in circulation and the number of accidental needle-sticks suffered by first responders. Syringe exchange programs are a good way for those dealing with addiction to avoid diseases and to get information on treatment options.”

Chief John Cueto, Town of Duck Police Department

“I would support syringe exchange programs that provide treatment information to those participating. I can see the advantages of a program that reduces disease transmission passed from people sharing dirty needles and also cuts down on the number of people and first responders accidentally stuck with infected needles. If the program had enough merit, I would be willing to have my police station act as a drop-off point for used syringes.”

Chief Joseph Barone, Statesville Police Department

“Statistics show that syringe exchange programs greatly reduce the number of persons contracting HIV and Hepatitis and increase the safety of the officers on the street by reducing the number of them who are exposed to ‘dirty’ needles. I would also hope that the exchange programs would lead to more people to seek treatment and result in fewer persons overdosing. This epidemic of IV drug abuse has reached such dangerous levels that we should consider all options in an attempt to help the communities we serve.”

Donnie Varnell, Special Agent in Charge, North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation

“Sometimes enforcing drug laws seems like a big game of whack-a-mole. As soon as we bust one dealer, another shows up. Addict rates are increasing across the board. I see syringe exchange programs part of the solution because they connect drug users to caring individuals who will work with them on disease prevention until they are ready for treatment and then walk them through the process of finding the right treatment program to meet their needs.”

Detective Danyeal Emory, Gaston County Police Department

Syringe exchange programs make a lot of sense. I’m especially supportive of connecting people to drug treatment through these programs. I wish we had a syringe exchange here in Lenoir.

Chief Scott Brown, Lenoir Police Department

“One of the main components of a law enforcement officer’s job is to conduct searches. We search people, homes, vehicles, and storage compartments; we stick our hands in places most people wouldn’t think to touch, and in every search we are at risk for needle-sticks and contracting infectious diseases. I support harm reduction programs because I’ll advocate for anything that protects my life and the lives of my fellow officers.”

Cpl./Deputy Sheriff D.A. Jackson, Guilford County Sheriff’s Department

“I am in favor of syringe exchange programs and see no downside or negative consequences connected to these programs. By providing clean needles, a syringe exchange program would increase officer safety and benefit communities that have individuals working through problems that pertain to an addiction.”

Chief Barry Rountree, Winston Salem Police Department