



September 26, 2012

To the Editor: *The Globe and Mail*

**RE: “Inmates take Ottawa to court over access to clean needles,” September 25, 2012, *The Globe and Mail***

The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) supports the advocacy and inmate groups who have launched a lawsuit contesting that sterilized needles should be provided in prisons. The basis of this lawsuit is prisoners’ rights to health care.

Having clean needles in the prison system is a public health approach that helps prevent the spread of blood-borne diseases such as hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS, which are more prevalent in prisons than in the general population.

There is much evidence and a wealth of studies that show the benefits of providing clean needles.

Drug users living outside prison walls have access to needle programs, so why not inmates?

Sincerely,

Barb Mildon, RN, PhD, CHE, CCHN(C)  
President, Canadian Nurses Association