


European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction



ECDC and EMCDDA Guidance:

Prevention and control of infectious diseases among people who inject drugs

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Prevention of infections

- Joint ECDC and EMCDDA guidance on the prevention and control of infections among people who inject drugs:
 - Cooperation project started Sept 2010
 - Launched 12 October 2011 at the DRID Lisbon meeting with the scientific directors
 - Event in the EP on 30 November
 - Further distribution and promotion
 - Translations underway

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Rationale

HIV and hepatitis C infection are still very relevant health problems in the EU for people who inject drugs.

In addition, several other infections affect the same group in a disproportionate manner:

hepatitis A, B and D; tuberculosis; skin and soft tissue infections (*Staph. aureus*); endocarditis (*Streptococci*); septicaemia (*Cl. novyi*, *B. anthracis*); other STIs; pneumonia, influenza; diphtheria; wound botulism; tetanus; human T-cell lymphotropic virus (HTLV)


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Complements and builds on existing guidance

ECDC Guidance on HIV Testing in the EU (2010)

EMCDDA Guidelines for testing HIV, viral hepatitis and other infections in injecting drug users (2010)

WHO, UNAIDS, UNODC global target setting guide for HIV prevention, treatment and care among injecting drug users (2009)



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Seven interventions, one aim:
no infections



Methods

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Assessing evidence for effectiveness of interventions

- Comprehensive review of evidence using "review of reviews" methodology
- Assessed the evidence for the seven key interventions and combinations thereof
- Complemented by primary literature search for selected areas
- Supported by expert assessment for areas not covered by literature (Technical Advisory Group)
- Evidence for effectiveness assessed, graded and summarized



Types of evidence statements from "review of reviews"

++ Sufficient review-level evidence to either support or discount the effectiveness of an intervention	Clear and consistent statements from one or more review articles based on multiple individual studies, or equivalent evidence across multiple review studies within one or more areas reviewed, in the absence of a clear and consistent statement in the reviewed(s).
+ Tentative review-level evidence to either support or discount the effectiveness of an intervention	A tentative statement from one or more review articles based on a small number of individual studies or multiple review articles within one or more areas reviewed, in the absence of a clear and consistent statement in the reviewed(s), or conflicting evidence from a small number of review articles, or insufficient evidence in either support or discount the effectiveness of an intervention (either because there is too little evidence or the evidence is too weak) in the absence of a clear and consistent statement of evidence from (a) area reviewed(s), or conflicting evidence from multiple (review articles within one or more supplementary reviews, in the absence of a clear review.
+/- Insufficient review-level evidence to either support or discount the effectiveness of an intervention	A statement of insufficient evidence from a review article, or insufficient evidence in either support or discount the effectiveness of an intervention (either because there is too little evidence or the evidence is too weak) in the absence of a clear and consistent statement of evidence from (a) area reviewed(s), or conflicting evidence from multiple (review articles within one or more supplementary reviews, in the absence of a clear review.
? No reviews	No data or supplementary evidence of any kind identified, possibly due to a lack of primary studies.



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Key intervention	Expert opinion/ implementation practices	Evidence from review of reviews	Findings from primary studies
Injection equipment	<i>Recommendation and considered judgement:</i> Provision of, and legal access to, clean drug injection equipment....		
Needle and syringe provision	Expert opinion in favour.	Injecting risk behaviour: ++ HIV transmission: + HCV transmission: ?	Ecological studies demonstrate .. A recently published meta-analysis indicates ...
Other injecting paraphernalia	Expert opinion in favour.	Injecting risk behaviour: + HIV transmission: ? HCV transmission: +/-	In vitro studies demonstrate ...



Components of the Joint Guidance

- Comprehensive Guidance document
 - Based on evidence and fully referenced (50 pages)
- Guidance "in brief"
 - Condensed recommendations (8 pages)
- Two part evidence assessment
 - Needle and syringe programmes and other interventions for preventing hepatitis C, HIV and injecting risk behaviour (95 pages)
 - Drug treatment for preventing hepatitis C, HIV and injecting risk behaviour (37 pages)



Scope of the guidance

- Inform development, monitoring and evaluation of national strategies and programmes to reduce and prevent infections among people who inject drugs
- Provide comprehensive overview of the best current knowledge in the field, expanding previous work to include combinations of key interventions
- People who inject drugs addressed in this guidance include adult opioid- and stimulant-injectors
- Mainly designed to address service provision in community settings



Scope of the guidance (continued)

- Relies on a foundation of "core values" guiding a set of "practical principles of prevention and service provisions"
- Is in coherence with existing EU-wide policies in the field of drugs and infectious diseases
- Does not work from the assumption that sobriety or abstinence is the ultimate goal of all drug-related public health policies, but does not exclude such a framework



Principles and core values



Principles of prevention

A pragmatic approach to health promotion

Public health objectives

The client's rights perspective

Guidance based on best available evidence



Service provision

Principles of service provision

- Ensure confidentiality.
- Promote service accessibility.
- Create a user-friendly atmosphere.
- Engage in dialogue with users and promote peer involvement.
- Adopt a practical approach to the provision of services.
- Refrain from ideological and moral judgement.
- Maintain a realistic hierarchy of goals.

A pragmatic approach to health promotion

The clients' rights perspective

Principles of prevention

Public health objectives

Guidance based on scientific evidence and expert experience



7 interventions



Seven key recommended interventions

- **INJECTION EQUIPMENT**
- **VACCINATION**
- **DRUG DEPENDENCE TREATMENT**
- **TESTING**
- **INFECTIOUS DISEASE TREATMENT**
- **HEALTH PROMOTION**
- **TARGETED DELIVERY OF SERVICES**



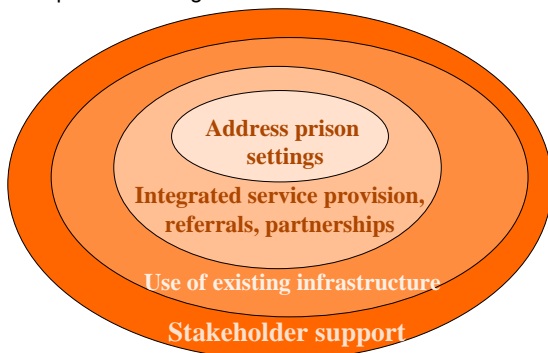
Availability and coverage of interventions

Since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic among people who inject drugs (1980s):

- Move towards a more proactive service delivery model: outreach and continuity of care
- Availability and coverage of interventions has increased
- Large rise in drug treatment provision: current estimate of 670.000 opioid substitution treatments (> 50% of target population)
- Growing involvement generic health services
 - OB-OST
 - Pharmacists
 - NSP
 - Treatment Models/Triage/DATs



Impact: which ingredients?



In conclusion

- Effective responses to infectious diseases are known
- EU policies addressing drug use and infections should be coherent and mutually supportive
- Substantial increase of drug treatment and harm reduction response achieved at EU level, but coverage remains variable between and within countries
- Key question: prison essential 'ingredient' to achieve impact



Why is this guidance important?

- Supports convergence of responses and policies to infectious diseases in EU region
- Promotes cooperation between stakeholders addressing drug use and infections
- Supports policy makers to prioritize and scale up relevant interventions
- Signal towards European neighborhood
- Forms part of growing EU framework for responding to public health and drug problems



Download at agencies' websites:

• [www.emcdda.europa.eu](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/ecdc-emcdda-guidance)
• <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/ecdc-emcdda-guidance>

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• <http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/Press%20Releases/1111-WAD-2011.pdf>

