

Preparing prescription opiates for injection: Understanding preferences and practices

Lise Lafferty
Presenting on behalf of Uniting Sydney MSIC

Uniting

● SYDNEY MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTING CENTRE |

Background

- Injecting prescription opioids (POs) has given rise to complex health problems associated with preparation practices
- *Hot wash* method includes heating the tablet during preparation, causing insoluble particles to enter the bloodstream
- *Cold wash* method, in conjunction with a wheel filter, breaks down particles microscopically and extracts greater quantity of active drug
- Many PO injectors continue to use the riskier hot wash method

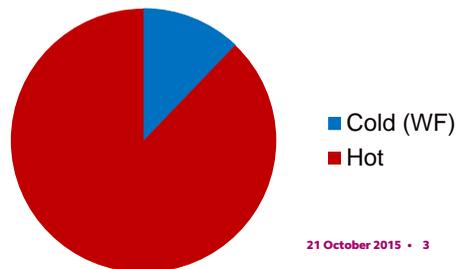


Uniting

● SYDNEY MEDICALLY SUPERVISED INJECTING CENTRE |

Method

- To understand most effective ways for delivery of health messaging...
- Qualitative interviews (n=33) completed with Sydney MSIC clients who inject prescription opiates
- 73% male
- Median age: 42 years old
- Four (12%) participants reported using cold wash method with wheel filter



Uniting

21 October 2015 • 3

Results

Barriers:

*I haven't tried cold. But I don't want to trust cold because the way I've done it with the **hot has always been perfect**, so. **I didn't want to lose all of me shot** doing it [cold] one day. [...] **I don't really trust [cold]** because you're not boiling it down to get all the shit out of it, it's like you're just crushing it and wetting it. (Les)*

Knowledge sharing:

*I think you fellas [staff at MSIC] showed a few people and it's actually been a domino effect, it's been good. [...] You know, like, **we do trust other users** when it comes to information but **you fellas have got, get the research**, the information about the difference of what happens. (Karrie)*

Uniting

21 October 2015 • 4

Conclusion

- Social connections may provide avenues for education about safer injecting of tablets, including the use of wheel filters.
- Collaborations between health education workers and peer workers would assist in knowledge dissemination regarding safer injecting practices.
- Further work is required to debunk myths about the relative potencies of cold versus hot drug solution.
- Acknowledgements: Study participants, Sarah Hiley, Maureen Steele, Nick van Breda, Prof Carla Treloar, and Dr Allison Salmon
- Thank you!

Uniting

21 October 2015 • 5