



SORE POINTS: Injecting related injuries & diseases from a drug user perspective

CREIDU Colloquium

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What is Harm Reduction Victoria (HRV) and what do we do?

HRV is the drug user organisation for Victoria

There is an equivalent of HRV in most other states & territories across Australia

We are part of a national network of drug user organisations headed by our peak body, AIVL.

HRV is funded primarily by the Victorian Department of Health

Our members and primary constituents are people who use/inject illicit drugs, past and present and others who support our aims & objectives.



HRV Programs



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Sore Points

In this presentation:

- What are the drivers of injecting related injuries and diseases?
- What can we do to address these sorts of issues?
 - What works?
 - What are the barriers to effective interventions?
- What more can we do?
- Addressing stigma and discrimination towards PWIDs

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Injecting related injuries & diseases

Predictors of IRID:

➤ Injecting practices:

- frequency & duration of injecting
- sharing of needles/syringes &/or other injecting equipment
- public injecting drug use.
- unhygienic injecting environments
- injecting non-powder drug forms

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Injecting related injuries & diseases

Protective Factors:

- Use of sterile injecting equipment for every injection
- Cleaning with alcohol swabs prior to injecting
- General attention to hygiene e.g. hand washing, etc.
- Safer injecting techniques
- Wound care
- Rotation of injection sites
- Filtering
- Hygienic injecting environments including SIFs

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How an abscess forms

- <http://www.aivl.org.au/veincare/?n=issues>

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Re-using a syringe

- <http://www.aivl.org.au/veincare/?n=issues>

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How veins collapse

- <http://www.aivl.org.au/veincare/?n=issues>

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Discrimination & Stigma

“Experiences of discrimination are so common and relentless many [drug] users fail to recognise they are being discriminated against - it seems normal to be treated badly and vilified if you're a user.”

“I broke my leg in three places after a motor bike accident. At the hospital they wouldn't give me anything other than Panedol® even though the bone was sticking out through the skin.”

“The morning he died (from hep C related liver failure) we were pleading with the nurses to give him some morphine. They wanted to wait another 30 minutes. When I asked why, they answered ‘because it's not good for his liver ! Ten minutes later he slipped off into the ether”.

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