Preparation of prescription opiates for injection: Understanding preferences and practices

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Presenting on behalf of Uniting Sydney MSIC

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
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

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)
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.

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