

A systematic review of interventions to reduce illicit drug use in female drug-dependent street sex workers

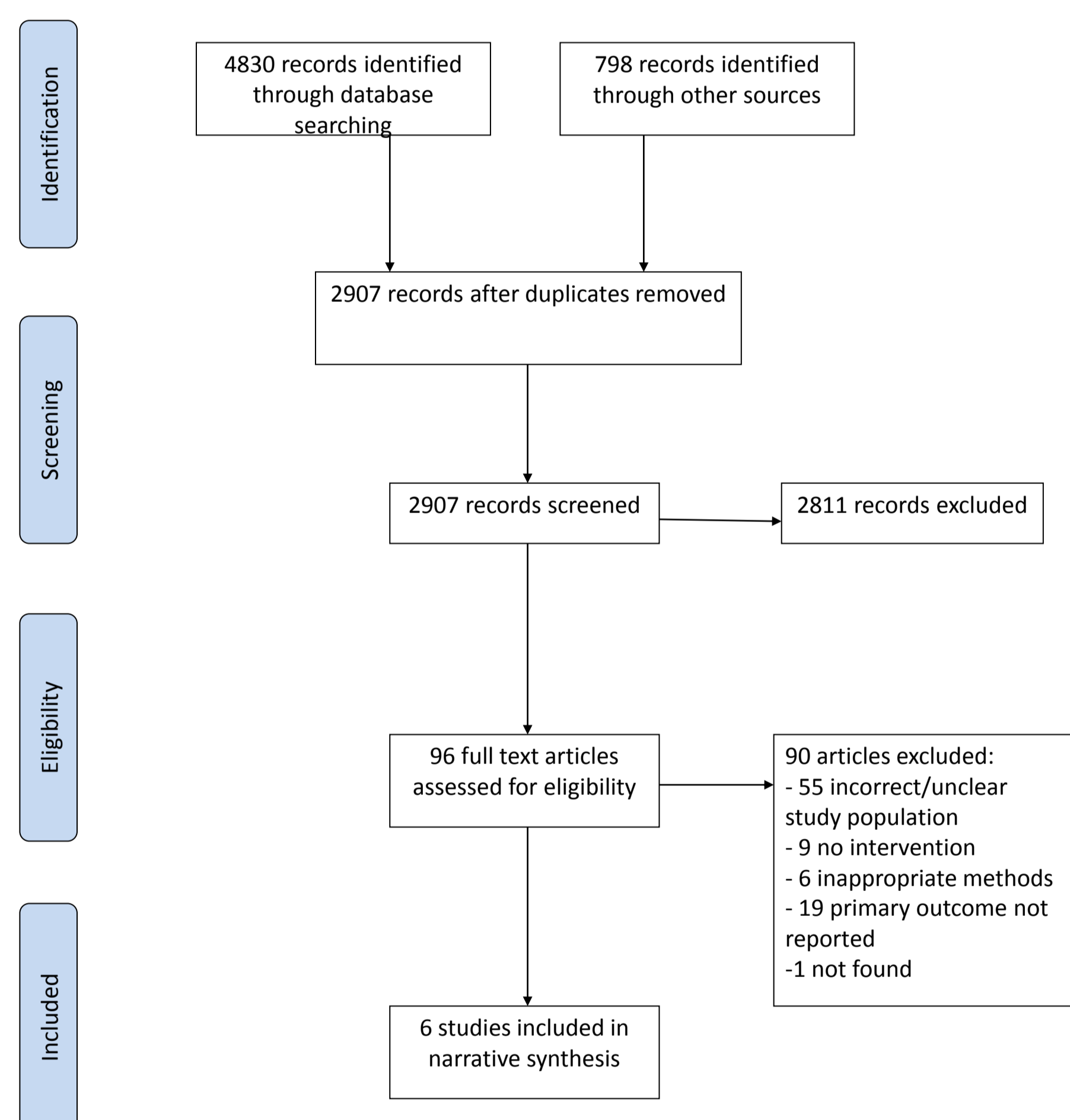
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METHODS

Medline on Ovid

1. prostitution
2. prostitut*.tw
3. sex adj1 work*.tw
4. substance-related disorders
5. amphetamine-related disorders
6. cocaine-related disorders
7. crack cocaine
8. heroin dependence
9. morphine dependence
10. opioid-related disorders
11. street drugs
12. substance abuse, intravenous
13. 1 or 2 or 3
14. 4 or 5 or 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 or 10 or 11 or 12
15. 13 and 14

Prisma flowchart



RESULTS

Included studies and risk of bias

| First author (Year) | Country | Setting | Participants | Participant age | Study design | Follow up | Risks of bias |
|---------------------|---------|------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Surrat (2010) | USA | Community | 806 410 intervention 396 control | 36.8yrs (mean) (SD 8.2) | RCT | 3 & 6 months | - no detail of randomisation or allocation process - no blinding participants or personnel - self-reported non-blinded outcome measures - unclear whether analysis decisions were prospective eg dichotomisation of outcome results - follow up rates calculated by combining attendance at either of follow up appointments which increased follow up rates - intention to treat analysis not undertaken |
| Litchfield (2010) | UK | Community | 34 | Not stated | Before/after Clinical records | 12 months | - all participants received intervention and no control group - self-reported non-blinded outcome measures - missing data not accounted for |
| Sherman (2006) | USA | Community | 54 | 39yrs (median) (IQR 34-45) | Before/after survey | 3 months | - all participants received intervention and no control group - self-reported and non-blinded outcome measures - missing data not accounted for |
| Yahne (2002) | USA | Community | 27 | 37.8yrs (mean) (SD 8.1) | Before/after survey | 4 months | - all participants received intervention and no control group - self-reported and non-blinded outcome measures - follow up in settings likely to influence outcomes and act as confounder |
| Bellis (1993) | USA | Outpatient | 41 | 31.8yrs (mean) | Before/after | 12 months | - all participants received intervention and no control group - self-reported non-blinded outcome measures - no data on participants lost to follow up |
| Gunne (1986) | Sweden | In-patient | 34 | 28.1years (mean) (SD 5.8) | Before/after Clinical records | 1 – 220 months | - all participants received intervention and no control group - self-reported non-blinded outcome measures |

Interventions

| Manuscript | Intervention focus | Intervention type | Novel aspect of intervention | Additional available elements |
|-------------------|--------------------|---|--|---|
| Surrat (2010) | HIV risk reduction | Educational (2X60min sessions 2 weeks apart) - sexual risk - drug use risk | Sex worker focussed - content: - violence - HIV myths - oral sex risks - delivery: - language - peer delivery | - hygiene risk reduction kit - blood-borne virus testing - facilitated access to health and social services in the community |
| Litchfield (2010) | Sex work reduction | Substitute prescribing - outpatient | SSW-specific service | On site access to - general & sexual healthcare - key working - psychosocial interventions |
| Sherman (2006) | HIV risk reduction | Educational (6X2hr sessions over 3 weeks) - sexual risk - drug use risk | Combined with teaching jewellery-making and marketing skills to generate alternative source of income | - opportunity to sell jewellery and make money - focussed discussion on local job training |
| Yahne (2002) | HIV risk reduction | Psychological (30min M.I. interview) | Motivational interviewing | - facilitated access to health and social services in the community |
| Bellis (1993) | HIV risk reduction | Substitute prescribing - outpatient | Free service in private-based system | On-site access to: - general & sexual healthcare - psychiatric services - individual and group counselling - education session on sexual and drug HIV risk reduction - key working |
| Gunne (1986) | HIV risk reduction | Substitute prescribing - inpatient | Methadone maintenance to support cessation of illicit drug use rather than just stopping | None listed |

Intervention effects

| | PRESCRIBING-BASED INTERVENTIONS | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | Litchfield (2010) | Bellis (1993) | Gunne (1986) |
| Number of participants | 34 | 25 | 34 |
| Study design | before/after | before/after | before/after |
| Intervention type | Substitute prescribing | Substitute prescribing | Substitute prescribing |
| Levels of illicit drug use | % urines testing positive for non-prescribed drugs at baseline: 87% (95% CI 75.7% to 98.3%) at 12 months: 72% (95% CI 56.91% to 87.09%) | % urines testing positive for non-prescribed drugs at baseline: 80% (95% CI 64.32% to 95.68%) at 12 months: 51% (95% CI 31.4% to 70.6%) | women with urine samples consistently testing negative for non-prescribed drugs at baseline: 0% (95% CI 0% to 0%) up to 220 months: 71% (55.75% to 86.25%) |
| Involvement in sex working | Women reporting sex working at baseline: 100% (95% CI 100% to 100%) at 12 months: 33% (17.19% to 48.81%) | Not reported | Women not involved in sex work at baseline: 0% (95% CI 0% to 0%) up to 220 months: 71% (55.75% to 86.25%) |
| Levels of income from sex work | | % income from sex work at baseline: 78% (95% CI 61.76% to 94.24%) at 12 months: 20% (95% CI 4.32% to 35.68%) | |
| Levels of homelessness | Not reported | Not reported | Not reported |
| | NON PRESCRIBING-BASED INTERVENTIONS | | |
| | Surrat (2010) | Sherman (2006) | Yahne (2002) |
| Number of participants | 806 | 50 | 27 |
| Study design | RCT | before/after | before/after |
| Intervention type | Educational | Educational | Psychological (MI) |
| Levels of illicit drug use | 3 months: OR 1.17 (0.84-1.66) 6 months: OR 1.14 (0.8-1.61) | % women reporting daily drug use: at baseline: 76% (95% CI 64.16% to 87.84%) at 3 months: 55% (95% CI 41.21% to 68.79%) | Reported days abstinent in last 30days at baseline: 15% (95% CI 1.53% to 28.47%) at 4 months: 51% (95% CI 32.14% to 69.86%) |
| P value (where given) | | 0.003 | <0.001 |
| Involvement in sex working | 3 months: OR 0.944 (0.67-1.32) 6 months: OR 1.14 (0.79-1.65) | Median clients/month at baseline: 9 at 3 months 3 | % days sex worked in last 30days at baseline: 59% (95% CI 40.45% to 77.55%) at 4 months: 17% (95% CI 2.83% to 31.17%) |
| P value (where given) | | 0.025 | <0.0001 |
| Levels of homelessness | Women reporting homelessness at study entry usual care: 42.9% intervention group: 41% | 27% reported homelessness in 3 months prior to study | Not reported |

CONCLUSIONS

There is currently no strong evidence for effectiveness of interventions to reduce illicit drug use in female SSWs with problematic drug use. Thus, the development and robust evaluation of effective interventions should be a priority if recovery-orientated goals are to become more achievable for this group.