

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR COLLABORATING WITH PEOPLE WHO USE METH

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Description of session:

The objective is to make clinicians and researchers more comfortable engaging with people who use meth and arm them with practical strategies to talk about meth use and create collaborative research and care plans. Presenters will share how they've developed programs that meet the needs of people who use meth, as well as their personal challenges and successes seeking care while using meth.

How will the session encourage debate and idea sharing:

This session will allow participants to share their challenges working with people who use meth and work through potential solutions with a facilitator who has decades of experience using meth and advising harm reduction, street medicine, and research teams. Doctors and researchers often say that it is difficult or impossible to work with people who use meth because of challenges with keeping appointments, consistent communication, medication compliance, paranoia, and psychosis. As meth becomes more common worldwide, professionals need to adapt their methods to ensure people who use meth have access to treatment and can participate in programs and research.

How will the session meet the aims of the conference / align with the conference themes?

This session will advance INHSU's mission to ensure people who use drugs are equal partners in the work. Since meth use is particularly prevalent in South Africa, this session will be engaging for local attendees and relevant to international attendees as meth becomes increasingly common worldwide. HCV elimination is not possible without engaging people who use meth. This session will empower providers to work collaboratively with an often stigmatized and excluded population.

Speakers/Facilitators:

Dee Chavez is a Board Member at the Yuba Harm Reduction Collective. She has used meth for forty years, was incarcerated for ten years, experienced homelessness for over fifteen years, and is living with Hepatitis C. She has advised many street medicine and research teams and was the first person to do community based needle exchange in Sacramento, USA.

Sarah Whipple is a Co-Director at the Yuba Harm Reduction Collective, a community organizer for the Sacramento Sex Workers Outreach Project, a Board Member for the Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness, and a Steering Committee Member for the California Syringe Exchange Programs Network. She received the Jude Byrne Award in 2024 and has lived experience using meth.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

We have no conflicts to disclose.