INFORMATION SOUGHT, INFORMATION SHARED: EXPLORING PERFORMANCE AND IMAGE ENHANCING DRUG USER-FACILITATED HARM REDUCTION INFORMATION IN ONLINE FORUMS

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Introduction and Aims:
Peers have always been an important source of information in the performance and image enhancing drug (PIED) subculture, though the rise of the internet, and the increased use of Internet forums amongst substance consumers to share harm reduction, means that PIED users may have access to a large array of views and opinions. The aim of this study was to explore the type of information that PIED users seek and share on these forums.

Method / Approach:
An online search was conducted to identify online forums that discussed PIED use. Three discussion forums were included in this study. The primary source of data for this study are the 'threads' from the online forums. Threads were thematically analysed for overall content, leading to the identification of a number of themes.

Results:
134 threads and 1,716 individual posts from 450 unique avatars were included in this analysis. Three themes were identified. Forum members wanted to take a more active role in monitoring their health and understanding the potential risk and harms of using PIEDs. Members were aware of the potential harms of PIED use and sought to increase their knowledge. They used their own language, and did not always explicitly talk about harm and harm reduction.

Discussions and Conclusions:
Members were aware of the potential harms of PIED use and sought to increase their knowledge. The engagement of health professionals within forums could prove a useful strategy for engaging with this population to provide harm reduction interventions.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:
None to declare.