

Reviewing Harm Reduction Strategies in NSW Prisons: A Collaborative Approach to Reduce Transmission of Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections

TOM WRIGHT¹, TODD JEFFRIES², ROSIE SHEA², COLETTE MCGRATH¹, JAMES WOOD¹

¹JUSTICE HEALTH & FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK, NSW, AUSTRALIA ²CORRECTIVE SERVICES NSW, AUSTRALIA

Acknowledgements

- All people who are at an elevated risk of viral Hepatitis due to contact with a custodial environment within Australia.
- All 19 Members of the NSW JH&FMN & CSNSW joint Harm reduction reference group.

Join the Conversation @ASHMMEDIA  #VH18

BACKGROUND/AIMS & METHODS:

www.hepatitis.org.au

- ❖ NSW Prisons were an early adopter of a number of Harm Reduction (HR) strategies in the 1990's.
- ❖ However by March 2016 HR strategies appeared fragmented and there was little strategic collaboration across the system.
- ❖ The newly established NSW custodial HR reference group decided a review into the accessibility of HR resources was required.
- ❖ An audit was designed to be completed by local staff at all 35 NSW Correctional centres.
- ❖ A Checklist recorded the accessibility of Fincol/Condoms/Dental Dam dispensers and education material in all areas of a Centre.
- ❖ Completed checklist were returned to Population Health for analysis in December 2017.
- ❖ Audit results were compared to centrally held data and best practice HR guides.

Join the Conversation @ASHMMEDIA  #VH18

RESULTS:

www.hepatitis.org.au

- ❖ Of the 35 correctional centres, 28 checklists were completed and returned.
- ❖ Fincol was easily accessible in a majority of centres, despite some significant gaps.
- ❖ Condoms were less accessible than Fincol and there was less consistency in how they were distributed and monitored.
- ❖ Key Health funded HR education resources were sighted in under half of the centres.

Join the Conversation @ASHMMEDIA  #VH18**CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS:**

www.hepatitis.org.au

- ❖ The final report makes 11 key recommendations including:
 - establishing more reliable info on Fincol or consider alternative disinfectants
 - establishing a best practice condom distribution model and
 - creating a mechanism for patients to quickly report access concerns
- ❖ The report has been sent to the Commissioner and Chief Executive for endorsement.
- ❖ It is hoped the NSW HR reference Group will commence the process of implementing the recommendations in September 2018.
- ❖ The partnership approach taken to establish the reference group and complete the review is considered replicable.
- ❖ Despite challenging issues remaining, the fragmentation of HR across the NSW custodial space appears to be improving.

<https://www.facebook.com/JHFMHN>

<http://www.justicehealth.nsw.gov.au>

Join the Conversation @ASHMMEDIA  #VH18