

# Student paramedic stigma towards people who use drugs: first-year results of a three-year longitudinal study

#### Richard Armour

BParamedPrac, MSc, MParamedicine (Critical Care), MACPara

MICA Paramedic – Ambulance Victoria

PhD Candidate - Monash University



Suzanne Nielsen, Jane Buxton, Bosco Rowland, Linda Ross



## **Conflicts of Interest**

None to declare



# Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which I currently I live, work and play, as well as the Ngunnawal, Custodians of the land on which we gather today.

I would also like to acknowledge the šx<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əÿəmaʔł təməx<sup>w</sup>, Skwxwú7mesh-ulh Temíx̄w, səlïlwətaʔł təməx<sup>w</sup>, whose traditional, ancestral and unceded territories our team lived, worked and played on whilst conducting this work.

My thanks to the Australasian College of Paramedicine for funding this research, and Thomas Jefferson University for their permission to use the Jefferson Scale of Empathy.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the thousands of lives lost in the failed "War on Drugs". May their memory motivate us towards a more just society.



### **Methods**

- Three (now four!) year longitudinal study of paramedic students across Australia
- Participants complete the Jefferson Scale of Empathy (Health Professions Student Version) and Medical Condition Regard Scale at the beginning of their studies and then at the completion of each year



#### **Initial Results**

- 130 initial surveys, 80 follow-ups
- No change in JSE-HPS or MCRS scores
- No influence of gender, age, previous experience or professional placement on results
- BUT cohort has less stigma than historical controls

