

GENDER-RESPONSIVE COMMUNITY-LED MONITORING OF OPIOID AGONIST TREATMENT IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: WORKSHOP

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Bios

Christos is a harm reduction advocate and human rights activist for the DU community from Athens, Greece. With 40 years of lived experience and over a decade in the international movement, he advances the rights of DUs across Europe. As EuroNPUD OAMT Team PM, he promotes: OAMT reform, peer participation, evidence-based policy, and informed choices through community-led services.

Justyna is an Associate Professor at the Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, specializing in critical drug studies, queer theory, and social movements. An activist-researcher and PoliNPUD member, she combines participatory methods with harm reduction advocacy. Her award-winning book *Solidarność queerowa* (Queer Solidarity) explores intersections of identity, resistance, and solidarity. She leads international research projects on criminalization, LGBTQI+ youth wellbeing, and inclusive education.

Kaś is a peer outreach worker at Prekursor in Warsaw, currently working on their master's thesis in Bioethics (University of Warsaw). Member of the Polish Network of People who Use Drugs (since 2022), EuroNPUD, and INHSU (since 2024). Their interests include the ethics of harm reduction and drug policy from a gender-based perspective.

Aden McCracken studies Medical Anthropology at Stanford University. As a trans person who uses drugs, her work centers on queer drug user advocacy and OAMT reform. Aden currently works with Youth Rise, C-EHRN and EuroNPUD. She was featured in the International Journal of Drug Policy for research on carceral and punitive practices on the bodily autonomy of womxn-patients within OAMT.

Background and aims

Opioid Agonist Maintenance Treatment (OAMT) is one of the most effective and life-saving interventions for opioid dependence and a cornerstone of harm reduction. However, women in OAMT remain invisible, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Much of the existing research is gender-insensitive, overlooking how stigma, motherhood, reproductive health needs, experiences of violence and caregiving responsibilities shape women's access to and experiences within treatment services.

This lack of gender-specific data has major consequences. When policies and services designed without understanding women's realities, OAMT programmes risk reinforcing barriers rather than ending them. In countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Lithuania, systematic data on women's experiences of OAMT are extremely limited. As a result, services often do not recognize the complex social and health needs women face.

Description of workshop

The session will present comparative research findings focusing on gender disparities in access, treatment conditions, autonomy, stigma and the retention challenges in treatment and vocational rehabilitation of service users. Participants will also focus on the greater health and mental health challenges faced by women in OAMT. The workshops will address how rigid models and limited reforms impact users and providers.

Methods and format

The workshop will include 15-minute structured presentation describing research design, sampling, and key findings. Participants will then engage in small group discussions to analyze gender-sensitive indicators and health care gaps related to women in their national context. A wrap up discussion will combine recommendations for reform- and community-driven monitoring frameworks. The format prioritizes interactivity, applied learning, and collaborative dialogue.

Ideal number and type of delegate, how many people can the workshop accommodate and who is this workshop designed for?

Minimum 20; maximum 60 participants. Designed for people on OAMT services, researchers, clinicians, policymakers, harm reduction providers, and community organisations working in OAMT, women's health, and wider drug policy reform.

Disclosure of Interest Statement

No pharmaceutical or industry funding have been received for the development of this study.