

The Rock Solid Project: A peer education project to reduce methamphetamine related harms amongst people who use drugs.

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Background: Rock Solid is a peer education project which aims to reduce harms associated with methamphetamine use and respond to emerging drug trends. Funded by the WA Mental Health Commission, this harm reduction project aligns with Australia's harm minimisation approach to alcohol and other drug use. The project is implemented in the Perth metropolitan and Southwest area.

Method: Rock Solid follows a peer education model, to recruit individuals with access to large networks of people, who currently use methamphetamine and/or other drugs. Peer educators receive training to develop skills to engage peers in conversations around harm reduction, how to respond to psychosis, amphetamine toxicity, opioid overdose, and provide referral pathways to treatment and support. Peer Educators record interactions in a structured diary which are collected monthly and then collated.

Effectiveness and findings: Peer Education models are an effective method to engage people who use drugs. During the last 3 years Rock Solid has recruited and trained 39 paid Peer Educators, who provided 1455 brief interventions to peers. Peer Educators successfully provided education on a broad range of topics including: safer injecting, vein care, hydration, take-home-naloxone and crystal-sex.

Conclusion: Rock Solid consumers reported that Peer Educators effectively provided useful harm reduction education and contributed to saving lives and changed behaviour. Covid impacted the delivery of the project. Rock Solid will continue for a further 12 months.

Implications for Practice: This project highlights the integral role Peer Educators contribute to harm reduction projects and that drug education needs to include consumers in content, resource and education development and delivery.

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