

The 'In The Moment Pilot'. Evaluating methods of in-situ data collection during episodes of injecting drug use to improve opioid overdose response: A protocol paper

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Introduction and Aims: People who inject drugs are at increased risk of multiple negative health consequences related to injecting drug use. Opioid overdose and blood-borne virus transmission are persistent public health issues among people who inject drugs. Existing research methodologies are often only capable of providing a broad understanding of the circumstances preceding these negative health outcomes. Novel and innovative methods have been proposed to address these limitations, such as biometric monitoring and ecological momentary assessment (EMA).

In this paper, we present the protocol for the In-The-Moment (ITM) pilot, whereby multiple innovative data collection methods will be piloted among a sample of people who inject drugs to better understand the circumstances surrounding injecting drug use and drug overdose.

Design and Methods: Over a three-month study period, 50 participants will be asked to consistently wear a biometric device (similar to a wristwatch) to capture oxygen saturation and pulse rate data. Participants will also be provided with a smartphone to complete short-form, web-based electronic questionnaires following every injecting episode. Finally, participants will also be asked to return needles/syringes previously used to inject with for drug residue testing.

Results: As an exemplar study, the ITM-pilot protocol provides crucial information for the replication of similar work internationally.

Discussions and Conclusions: To better tailor public health interventions to address ongoing drug overdose and injecting risk behaviour, a more comprehensive understanding is needed of the *in-situ* circumstances surrounding injecting drug use. The ITM-pilot combined data will provide an unprecedented insight into these intractable public health issues.

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