

## **Safe(r) access for an Australian context: starting a conversation**

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**Aim:** The aim of this panel symposium is to:

- (i) bring the Australasian alcohol and other drug field into an ongoing conversation on safe(r) access approaches for Australia.
- (iii) consider language and diverse perspectives relating to different access approaches
- (iii) provide the opportunity for a broader discussion of how different safe(r) access approaches might work in an Australian context, and next steps for the field.

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**Detailed description of topics to be discussed:** In response to a rapidly evolving toxic drug supply, a continuum of safe(r) access models - that facilitate access to a drug of known composition as an alternative to illicit market sources - have been rapidly upscaled in different parts of the world. Approaches that have been considered under the broad umbrella of safe(r) access models range from highly structured and supervised medical treatments (such as injectable opioid agonist treatment), through to community driven models of drug acquisition, regulation and distribution provided in the context of civil disobedience.

This session will be an interactive conversation with people in the alcohol and other drug field about the readiness of Australia for considering safe(r) access models and reflecting on the evolving approaches taken locally and internationally to respond to an increasingly toxic drug supply.

- 1) The session will start with an introduction to safe(r) access approaches and background on an informally convened 'Safe(r) Supply Network' in Australia, which began meeting in December 2022, covering a brief history of the meetings and an overview of the discussion and issues that have been canvassed by the network to date.
- 2) Next, panel members (people who participated in the network meetings) will speak for 5 minutes each, providing a diverse range of perspectives on the issues of safe(r) access and reflecting on their priorities in progressing a conversation on safe(r) access in Australia.

**Discussion Section:**

- 3) Finally, the session will end with an interactive discussion providing an opportunity for attendees to ask questions, share their views and discuss possibilities and considerations for safe(r) access in an Australian context.

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