

## **Harm reduction with nitazenes: is Australia ready?**

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**Aim:** This symposium will explore emerging preparedness strategies across different service settings in response to the growing threat posed by nitazenes. Drawing on recent experiences and practical initiatives, panellists will share insights from public health surveillance, community-based early warning systems, drug checking, and clinical frontline responses. The aim is to facilitate knowledge exchange about innovative and context-specific approaches being used to detect, communicate, and mitigate risks associated with nitazene-related harms. The session seeks to enhance sector-wide readiness through the sharing of lessons learned and by identifying opportunities for greater coordination and responsiveness.

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**Detailed Description of Topics to be Discussed:** The symposium will include discussion of the development and early implementation of a community-led early warning and drug market monitoring system designed to identify and respond to high-risk synthetic opioids. It will also explore emerging evidence regarding naloxone's effectiveness in reversing nitazene-involved overdoses. Forensic and coronial perspectives will be presented, including recent data from a state-based early warning system. Clinical and harm reduction responses will be discussed, including the role of drug checking, risk management strategies, and interagency collaborations with harm reduction services. A regional health service perspective will highlight the design and implementation of a local alert system and a frontline operational plan developed to prepare for a potential nitazene-related outbreak in a non-metropolitan area.

**Discussion Section:** The Chair will facilitate a structured discussion exploring the cross-sectoral implications of nitazene preparedness, with time allocated to audience questions and collaborative problem-solving. The interactive component will invite participants to reflect on opportunities for data sharing, early response coordination, and community engagement. Attendees will leave with practical insights into diverse approaches and key considerations for improving local and national readiness, as well as tools and ideas that could be applied or adapted within their own services or regions.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:** SN is supported a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Leadership Fellow (L2, #2025894). Cameron Francis is CEO of The Loop, a non-profit who operate drug checking in Australia. All other authors report no funding for this work or related conflicts. No pharmaceutical grants or industry funding were received in the development of this symposium.