

National councils launch report 'Dealing with risk'



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Today, the Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) and the Australian National Council on AIDS, Hepatitis and Related Diseases (ANCAHRD) launched a research report 'Dealing With Risk', a report that looks carefully at risks for blood-borne viral infection among injecting drug users.

Major Brian Watters & Professor Margaret Hamilton of the ANCD launched the Report at the Australian Professional Society of Alcohol and other Drugs Conference in Brisbane.

Some of the key findings of the Report include:

- Most injecting drug users preferred not to take risks and attempted to minimise risk, providing opportunities for intervention
- Messages about hepatitis C are not well understood by injecting drug users and need to be clearer
- More needs to be done in prisons to reduce the risk of blood borne virus transmission among the prison population
- Many injecting drug users have a good understanding about infection risks from sharing injecting equipment, but are not as clear about risks from other sources
- The severe social and economic marginalisation experienced by some injecting drug users mean that more immediate priorities such as shelter and safety take precedence over other things such as safer injecting

Major Brian Watters and Professor Margaret Hamilton stated, "'Dealing with Risk' is a report that provides a case for thinking about risks in a more sophisticated way. It is an excellent basis for thoughtful consideration of how the Australian community can reduce HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and other infection amongst its injecting drug user population, and consequently, the broader, population. The Report powerfully demonstrates that risk taking must be understood in the context of how and where drugs are used and the circumstances of those that use them. The ANCD encourages those who read this report to do so with a view to working together on these very complex and deeply concerning issues." The ANCD congratulated the research team for their work.

Copies of the Report can be obtained [via the ANCD web site](#) or from the ANCD Secretariat.

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The ANCD is the principal advisory body to Government on drug and alcohol issues.

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