

Drug Policy Modelling Program Symposium

Monday 1st December, 2014

Kirby Institute Seminar Room, Level 6, Wallace Wurth Building, UNSW

9.30am Tea, coffee

9.45am Welcome Prof Alison Ritter, Director, Drug Policy Modelling Program

9.50am Session 1 Treatment as Prevention: Implications for drug policy?
Chair: Prof Lisa Maher, Kirby Institute, UNSW

The treatment of HIV has now moved into the PrEP era (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) – that is providing treatment to people who are sero-negative as a way of preventing HIV. In addition, treating more people earlier in the disease is seen as an important strategy for preventing the spread of the virus. For HCV we now have the promise of new, more effective and shorter treatment regimes. Both of these initiatives, covered by the term ‘Treatment as Prevention’ (TasP), in theory provide the possibility for substantially reducing or eliminating these diseases. No wonder people are excited and enthusiastic. But the devil is in the detail; both PrEP and TasP bring with them significant promise along with complexities and unanswered questions.

As we meet today on World AIDS Day, this session aims to provide a diverse set of perspectives on the issues associated with HIV and HCV treatment as prevention, and an opportunity for policy-makers to consider and make commitments to how this new world of TasP will play out.

Our expert speakers for this topic are:

9.50am Dr Christy Newman, Centre for Social Research in Health, UNSW
10.10am Prof David Wilson, Kirby Institute, UNSW
10.30am Annie Madden, Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League
10.50 am Karen Price, ACON
11.10am Panel discussion, policy implications

12.15pm LUNCH

1.00pm Session 2 Drug Policy Modelling Program research

1.00pm Generating evidence-informed drug law reform: Reflections on new threshold limits for drug trafficking in the ACT

Dr Caitlin Hughes, DPMP, and Carrie Fowlie, ATODA

1.20pm The politics of conducting research around compulsory treatment in Vietnam
Thu Vuong, DPMP

1.40pm The review of AOD treatment services in Australia
Prof Alison Ritter, DPMP

2.00pm "Their life is about the drugs": The cost of heroin use to families
Dr Marian Shanahan and Dr Jenny Seddon, DPMP

2.20pm Afternoon tea

2.45pm Session 3 Perspectives on methamphetamine

There is a cacophony of voices talking about methamphetamine at present. Are we on the cusp of another putative 'ice epidemic'? What is the evidence for changes in methamphetamine markets and methamphetamine use? How are we going with developing treatments for methamphetamine? Does how we talk about the problem constitute the problem?

This panel of experts will provide their perspectives on these issues and more in relation to methamphetamine. Brief summary statements from each panellist will be followed by dialogue, questions and debate between panellists and with symposium participants.

Chair Prof Alison Ritter

Panellists Prof Paul Dietze, Burnet Institute

Representative from NSW Users & AIDS Association

Angela Matheson, NSW Police

Prof David Moore, National Drug Research Institute

Prof Robert Ali, DASSA WHO Collaborating Centre for the Treatment of Drug and Alcohol Problems

4.00pm Close