

## **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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### **Background:**

People who inject drugs are at increased risk of multiple negative health consequences related to injecting drug use, including blood-borne virus transmission via the sharing of injecting equipment and opioid drug overdose risk. Australian surveillance data reports prevalence of hepatitis C virus and HIV at 16% and 2.5% respectively, with 17% of respondents reporting past 12-month non-fatal overdose.

Despite decades of research, opioid overdose and blood-borne virus transmission are persistent public health issues among people who inject drugs. Novel and innovative methods, such as biometric monitoring and ecological momentary assessment, have been proposed to address the inherent limitations of retrospective data collection based on participant recall.

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.

### **Methods:**

Over a three-month study period (planned for August-October), 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 to capture information related to drug use and injecting risk. Finally, participants will also be asked to return their used needles/syringes for drug residue testing.

### **Results:**

The ITM-pilot protocol provides crucial information on the feasibility of innovative measurements of drug use behaviours and their relationship to a range of biological measures.

### **Conclusion:**

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 will provide new insights into risks associated with injecting drug use behaviours.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

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