FRENCH REMOTE SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHEMSEXERS
A POLYVALENT TOOL FOR HARM REDUCTION

Authors: Hamelin K[1], Jones JC[1,2], Madesclaire T[1], Bladou F[1], Michels D[1,2], Situ J[1]
Contact: khamelin@aides.org
[1]AIDES, Pantin, France, [2]Coalition PLUS, Community-based Research Laboratory, Pantin, France.

CONTEXT

Chemsex, use of psychoactive drugs in sexual context among men who have sex with men, can cause health difficulties especially when people are isolated from medical care. Therefore, it is essential to find caring and trained peer educators with harm reduction (HR) resources. Since 2017, AIDES (a French community-based organization fighting HIV and hepatitis) has developed several remote support services to break isolation through a community-based approach creating a non-judgmental space to express needs and build customized HR strategies, to reinforce links between chemsexers, community health workers and multidisciplinary health specialists; to monitor the evolution of chemsex practices.

THE DEVICES

Listening and support line on WhatsApp
Chemsexers or their relatives contact us by message and receive a reply within 24 hours with a proposal for an individual interview

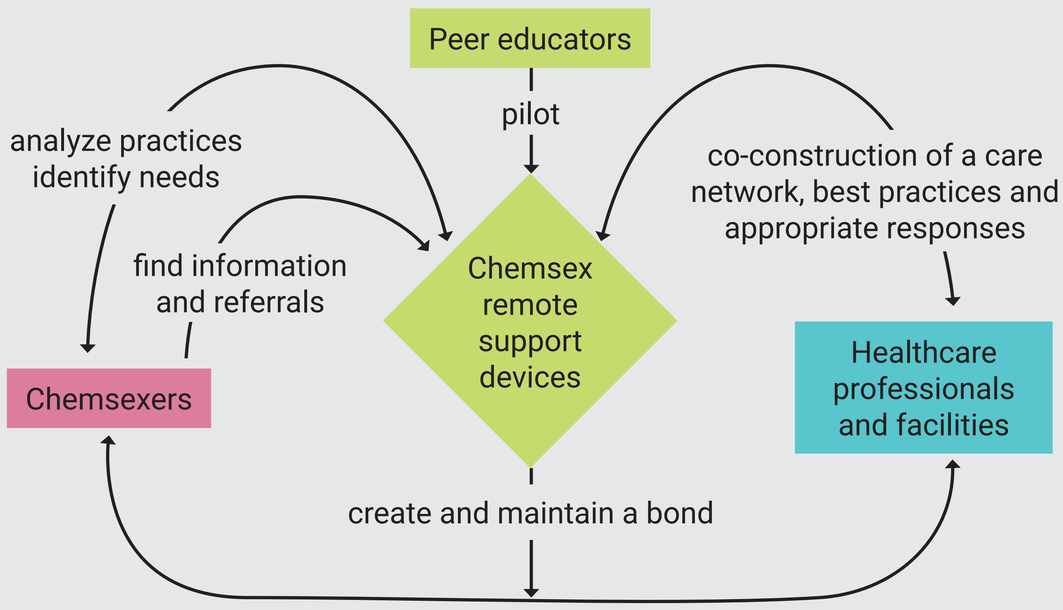
ChillOut Visio discussion group
Weekly visio discussion group for people who are abstinent, wish to be abstinent or are taking a break from chemsex consumption.

Facebook self-support group – InfoChemsex
Group for exchange, support and information on harm reduction and resuming or maintaining control over Chemsex issues, by and for Chemsexers.

Telegram self-support group – Auto-support Chemsex
Exchange, information and peer support group on chemsex harm reduction via encrypted messaging (telegram).

These devices are run by a team of community workers splitted across the whole territory. The users of these devices come from all regions of France.

How it works :



RESULTS

Device traffic on average (January to August 2023)

Listening and support line on WhatsApp
40 contacts per month

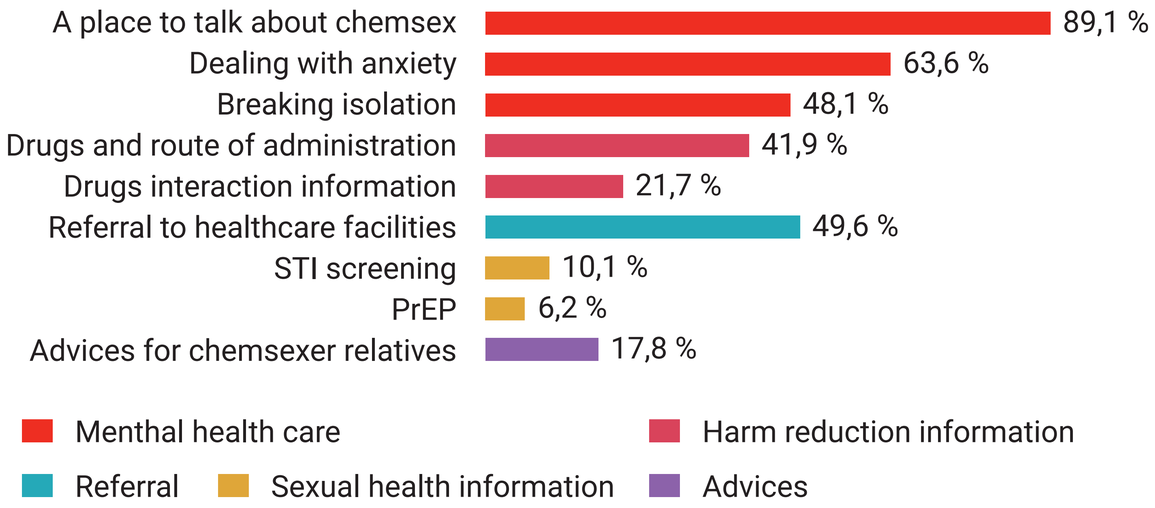
ChillOut Visio discussion group
3 people per week

Facebook self-support group – InfoChemsex
1878 members, 126 active members per day

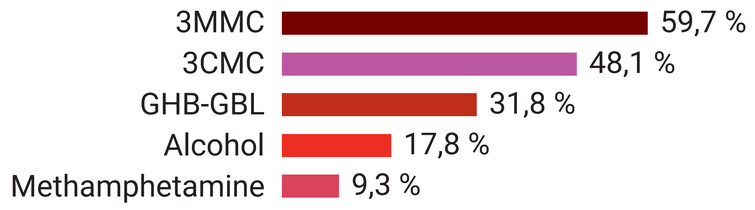
Telegram self-support group – Auto-support Chemsex
180 members, 144 messages per week

Data from 129 individual interviews conducted through the devices in 2022

a) Ratio of interviews expressing needs of



b) Ratio of interview reporting consumption of



Use of intraveinous injections were reported in 24% of interviews

94.6% of interviews resulted in at least one referral

CONCLUSION

By linking a nationwide team with local involvement, these devices are the key to creating and maintaining bonds between chemsexers, community support teams and the healthcare professionals they may need. Their global territorial anchorage also makes them a powerful tool for monitoring practices and needs in order to build coherent responses to chemsexers' problems at different scales.

THE CHEMSEX NATIONWIDE REMOTE SUPPORT DEVICES EQUATION

Creating and nurturing bonds between chemsexers, community guides and healthcare professionals + **Monitoring chemsexers' practices and needs** = **Building adapted and concerted responses**

PLUS COALITION INTERNATIONALE SIDA

AIDES MILITER · AGIR · TRANSFORMER
Membre de la Coalition Internationale Sida PLUS