

Title: Project NEXUS: Findings from a Survey among Underrepresented People Who Use Drugs – 6 U.S. Syringe Services Programs

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Format: Panel

Abstract:

With the objective of establishing a national program to measure the impact of syringe services programs (SSPs) among people who use drugs (PWUD), the University of Washington and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted a multi-site pilot survey of PWUD at six SSPs in the United States. The aim of this project was to strengthen SSP capacity to collect data for the purpose of improving local services to PWUD and understanding the health, behaviors, and challenges facing PWUD living in underrepresented areas. The SSPs were located in geographically diverse communities, many of which have not typically been included in national surveys: Ellensburg, WA, Wilmington, NC, Madison, WI, New Haven, CT, Sacramento, CA, and Missoula, MT. Each SSP invited all clients to participate with a goal of reaching 300 participants. The survey process consisted of a 40-minute behavioral survey, rapid HIV testing, and hepatitis C virus (HCV) antibody and RNA testing. Participants received a \$20 incentive for completing the survey, \$20 for completing HIV/HCV testing, and up to \$40 for referring peers to participate. The first SSP site launched data collection in June 2021 and the last site is expected to end data collection in July 2022. For the panel presentation, the first presentation will include the CDC's purpose for conducting the survey and the survey methodology. The second presentation will be an overview of the key findings from the survey including participant demographics, drug use patterns and behaviors, self-reported health outcomes, contextual factors, and HIV and HCV prevalence. Finally, we will invite a representative from each of the six participating SSP sites to highlight local findings and share their experiences implementing the survey, including garnering trust with clients, hiring and training staff to conduct survey and testing procedures, logistical considerations, and plans for data use and dissemination.

Moderator: Anthony Morgan, University of Washington

Speakers:

1. CDC Presenter TBN, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Vision and Purpose of Project NEXUS*
2. Sara Glick, PhD, University of Washington: *Key Findings from Project NEXUS*
3. Lauren Wickerath from Ellensburg, WA site
4. Voni Simpson from Wilmington, NC site
5. Mikaela Becker from Madison, WI site
6. Natalie Kil from New Haven, CT site
7. Shilo Jama from Sacramento, CA site
8. Rebecca Ramos from Missoula, MT site