

INDCR Covid-19 statement (23 March 2020)

Dear readers

As other vulnerable communities, people who use drugs are at a high risk throughout this COVID-19 epidemic. On regular circumstance, the life of the drug user is already hard enough. During this period, it becomes extremely complicated: nobody on the streets to make money, dealers are seldom and fewer NGOs operate. People who use drugs experience vulnerability because of the physical proximity in the act of drug using/sharing/dealing. In addition, some chronically ill drug users deal with an impaired immune system that compromise their resistance to all sorts of virus (including the COVID-19).

The International Network of Drug Consumption Rooms (INDCR), ask policy makers and health authorities to use all of their immediate power and resource to protect people who use drugs by providing a pragmatic approach to this crisis:

- To guarantee continuity in the access to care (including drug consumption rooms (DCRs) overdose prevention site (OPS) and other low-threshold facilities such a drop-in centers, mobile HR units, street work and shelters)
- To increase and facilitate the access to substitution programs (methadone / heroine assisted treatments), and to establish or extend take-home regulations
- To suspend all coercive measures related to drug use crime/offences
- To provide with sufficient equipment to ensure safe environments for health care workers and the people who make use of the DCRs

The INDCR recommend to all its members, partners and allies to take the necessary measures to stay safe. Drug Consumption Rooms can be part of the solution to bring the COVID-19 outbreak to a close and to reduce harm. Therefore we call:

- To respect the measures of confinement/quarantine when asked to
- To keep physical distance (not social distance)
- To stay home when not working
- To stay home when experiencing (even slight) symptoms

Inside the DCRs, think about:

- Keeping the necessary physical distances
- Wearing disposable gloves and masks and necessary protective gears
- Adapting the amount of users per DCR when necessary, and avoid saturation of the service
- Minimizing risks by reducing surface contact and cleaning after each users visit
- Provide a safe, hygienic and stress free environment for PWUD

For more information, do not hesitate to contact us via our website expert contact

<http://www.drugconsumptionroom-international.org/index.php/contact/contact-the-network/contact-the-network>

Users Tips, local advices and international guidelines, visit the C-EHRN COVID-19 Resource Centre

<https://www.correlation-net.org/covid-19-resource-centre/>