Creating Opportunities For Innovation Across the Lifespan

Project DHARMA: Evolution of Drug Checking in Maine

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Continuing Education Credits

CME

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of the Maine Medical Education Trust and CCSME. The Maine Medical Education Trust is accredited by the Maine Medical Association Committee on Continuing Medical Education and Accreditation to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Maine Medical Education Trust designates this regularly scheduled series for a maximum of 1 AMA PRA Category™ 1 Credit(s) . Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

This activity qualifies for 0 credit(s) of the 3 CME credit requirement for opioid medication education found in P.L. 2015, Chapter 488, Maine's legislation to address the opioid drug crisis.

Other

1 contact hour for social workers, licensed clinical professional counselors, and behavioral health professionals

1 Category I contact hour for psychologists. CCSME is a pre-approved sponsor and provider of Professional Education Activities for Psychologists.

1 contact hour CHES. CCSME is a designated provider of continuing education contact hours (CECH) in health education by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc.

1 contact hour pending for alcohol and drug counselors from the Maine Board of Alcohol and Drug Counselors

Disclosures

Maine Substance Use Disorders Learning Community

Together increasing access to OUD/SUD Care

- Neither the presenters nor the program planners have any relevant financial conflicts of interest to disclose.

Project DHARMA

Distribution of **Ha**rm **R**eduction Access in **R**ural **M**aine **A**reas

Panel: Evolution of Drug Checking in Maine

May 16, 2025

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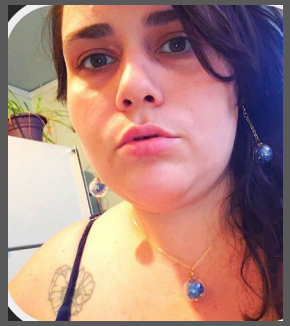
Professor of Chemistry
Colby College

Project DHARMA

A collaborative and multi-disciplinary approach to harm reduction

In Honor of…



Jessi Gilbert

Kari Morissette

Learning Objectives

1) Review brief history of drug checking, what it entails, and the principles of drug checking
2) Describe key partners for drug checking initiatives
3) Illustrate how harm reduction program staff and chemistry experts interpret drug checking results
4) Outline plan for examining feasibility and acceptability of drug checking programs in Maine

What is Drug Checking?

Guiding HR Principles of Drug Checking

1. Informed Decision Making
2. Participation of PWUD & PWLLE
3. Public Health Approach
4. Promotion of Human Rights
5. Value Neutrality
6. Practical & Pragmatic
7. Adaptive & Innovative

Things we know about drugs….

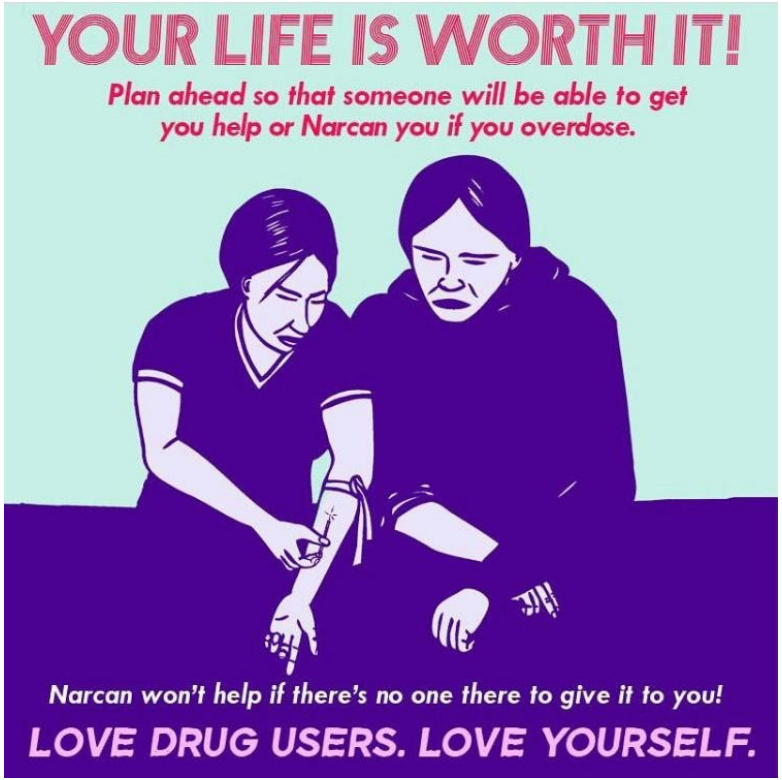
1) Humans use drugs because they feel good.
2) Humans use drugs because they can help with pain in the head, heart and body.
3) Some people end up with a problematic relationship with substances, but not everyone.
4) Drug checking is a safe way to test substances that people put in their bodies.
5) Drugs would be safer without prohibition.

History of Drug Checking

Benefits of Drug Checking

- To understand the drug composition
- To identify harmful/unknown substances
- To help ourselves and others make informed, safer choices

Leading with Lived and Living Experience



Key Advocacy Partners

MAINE ACCESS POINTS

COLBY COLLEGE 1813 · LUX · MENTIS · SCIENTIA ·

MaineHealth

ACLU MAINE

State of Maine
Office of Governor Janet T. Mills

Why we need your support for LD 1745

This legislation is crucial to ensure the safety of the Project DHARMA team and other partners in carrying out this evidence-based public health initiative.

Drug Checking Legislation

Legislative Document **No. 1745**

H.P. 1124 House of Representatives, April 20, 2023

An Act to Support Public Health by Protecting Certain Activities Conducted Under Comprehensive Community Drug Checking Initiatives

Project DHARMA's Key Drug Checking Partners

MAINE ACCESS POINTS

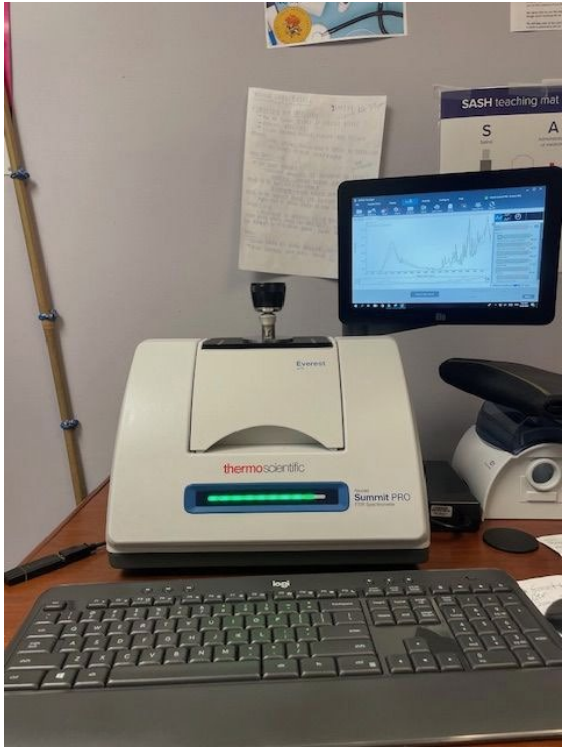
MaineHealth

UNC Street Drug Analysis Lab

Brandeis UNIVERSITY

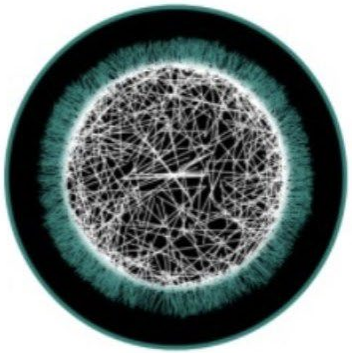
BROWN

Interpreting Drug Checking Results



Interpreting Drug Checking Results

Streetcheck database



STREET CHECK
COMMUNITY
DRUG CHECKING

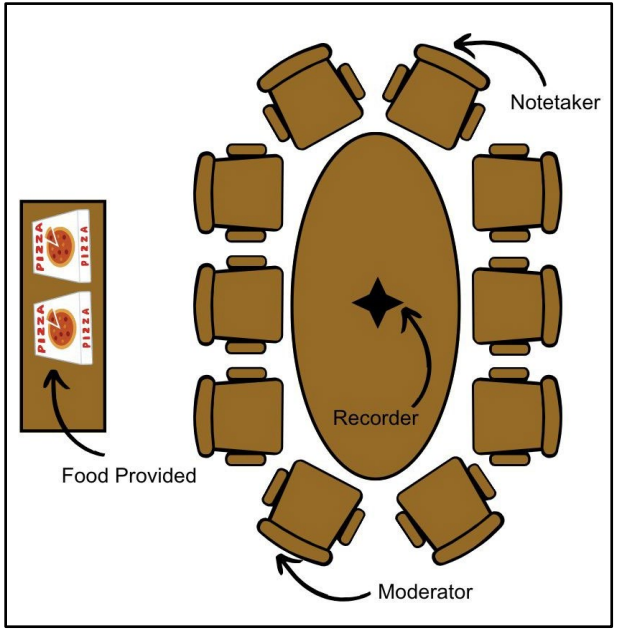
Brandeis | THE HELLER SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Opioid Policy Research Collaborative

https://vimeo.com/779026106

Upcoming Plans for Research (Summer 2025)

Project Goal: To examine the **feasibility and acceptability** of community-based drug checking service interventions and information dissemination strategies in Maine.



Project Aim: To measure the unique needs of:
(1) **people who use drugs**,
(2) **staff** of syringe exchange programs, and
(3) **medical providers**.

Project Design: Conduct **focus groups** (n=8, totaling n=48-80 participants) covering diverse areas of Maine to inquire about participants' attitudes and preferences.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Project DHARMA team and to all of the people who use drugs that we continue to learn from.

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The views expressed in conference materials and by speakers do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

References

Remedy Alliance: https://www.drugcheckingftp.org/

A Realist Review of How Community-Based Drug Checking Services Could Be Designed and Implemented to Promote Engagement of People Who Use Drugs https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9564958/

DanceSafe.org

DrugsData.org

Drug checking services for people who use drugs: a systematic review
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9299873/

The Drug Resource and Education Project: https://dredproject.ca/

Creating Opportunities For Innovation Across the Lifespan

Q&A

Creating Opportunities For Innovation Across the Lifespan

Please Return to the Cornelius Room
or
Virtually Return to the Main Room