



our aims

increase the participation of  
medical doctors in drug policy reform

Welcome to the March 2013 issue, particular welcome to our new members and readers.

#### Highlights:

- Commission on Narcotic Drugs
- News
- New publications on the website
- Upcoming events
- Membership
- IDHDP communications

### Commission on Narcotic Drugs

The fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held in Vienna, 11-15 March 2013.

The CND is the central policy making body within the United Nations system dealing with drug-related matters. They have an annual forum on the issue of drugs attended by 53 Member States who meet to discuss and vote on a series of resolutions. "These annual meetings have long provided frustration for civil society [groups], which have fought hard to have a voice in the debates." About 160 civil society members attended this year's meeting, working to influence member states and the body as a whole to base drug control policies on health and scientific evidence, and human rights. This year, civil society groups report being pleased with the passage of a resolution on HIV, hepatitis and tuberculosis which endorses the UN Technical Guidance on HIV and the WHO Guidance on Hepatitis Prevention for people who inject drugs.

For more reactions from civil society advocates attending this year's CND meetings:

**From INPUD:** "There can be no ambiguity when it comes to reaching zero new [HIV] infections. Leadership from UNODC and clear policy statements in support of the basics including opioid substitution therapy and needle and syringe programmes are essential to support the work of UNODC country teams, and for the Office to play its full part as a co-sponsor in the UNAIDS family." Read the full statement [here](#)

**IDPC:** Read the blog [here](#)

**Read more NGO statements at the CND [here](#)**

### In the news

#### **[Open Letter to the Media and Policy Makers Regarding Alarmist and Inaccurate Reporting on Prescription Opiate Use by Pregnant Women](#)**

An open letter spearheaded by IDHDP member, Robert Newman and National Advocates for Pregnant Women, and joined by leading clinical and research experts calls for policies addressing prenatal exposure to opiates based on scientific evidence, and ending the perpetuation of misinformation and prejudice against pregnant women who use opiates. Read [here](#)

#### **[Tuberculosis: a disease that continues to kill](#)**

Editorial by Michel Kazatchkine, IDHDP patron in the Huff post on International Tuberculosis Day. The day "is there to remind us that this disease which some believe belongs to earlier centuries, continues to kill on a massive scale in the world, and acquires new resistant forms that are particularly threatening. And as is so often the case in the history of epidemics, it is the poor and marginalized who are the first victims". Read [here](#)

### **Innovative Regulation of Legal Highs in New Zealand**

Interview with Peter Dunne Minister of Revenue of New Zealand about the innovative legislative approach on new psychoactive drugs in New Zealand. Watch the film [here](#)

### **'This Is Working': Portugal, 12 Years after Decriminalizing Drugs**

Assessing Portugal's drug policy reforms 12 years after eliminating criminal penalties for drug use. Read [here](#)

### **Norway May Decriminalize Heroin Inhalation, Allow Smoking In Order To Cut Down Overdose Rate**

The Norwegian government is considering decriminalizing heroin inhalation as a means to reduce overdoses. Read [here](#)

### **The Female Face of HIV/AIDS**

Editorial by Adeeba Kamarulzaman IDHDP patron on the International Day of Women reflecting on how the Malaysian Government and community stakeholders have demonstrated over the past decade that working in partnership has made it possible to reduce the number of HIV/AIDS cases among men, but the same needs to be done regarding women, whose numbers are spiking. Read [here](#).

### **An Ugly Truth in the War on Drugs**

In an editorial in the New York Times just prior to the meeting of the Commission on Narcotics Control earlier this month, Global Commission on Drug Policy members Fernando Henrique Cardoso, a former president of Brazil, and Ruth Dreifuss, a former president of Switzerland and minister of home affairs, bring attention to the human rights abuses resulting from drug control policies and call on the human rights movement to "take a leading role in calling for an end to the war on drugs and the development of drug policies that advance rather than degrade human rights." Read [here](#).

## **New Publications on the IDHDP website**

*New documents uploaded this month (click on the document title to read the full publication):*

### ***New psychoactive substances***

#### **The challenge of new psychoactive substances**

"This report by UNODC is the first global situation assessment on new psychoactive substances put forward under the Global SMART Programme and pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs Resolution 55/1 on "Promoting international cooperation in responding to the challenges posed by new psychoactive substances"

### ***Prescription drugs***

#### **National strategy to address the harms associated with prescription drugs**

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA), in partnership with the National Advisory Council (NAC) on Prescription Drug Misuse, has released a comprehensive 10-year, pan-Canadian prescription drug strategy.

### ***HCV, HIV/AIDS and TB***

#### **Current situation regarding access to hepatitis C treatment in EECA**

The policy brief by Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN) summarizes key findings from an assessment of hepatitis C treatment accessibility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA).

#### **The Global Fund's new funding model: what it might mean for you and your country**

Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN) reports that "Recipients of the Global Fund in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) have serious reservations about the new funding model (NFM) being launched by the Global Fund in 2013. HIV and TB epidemics continue to grow across the region and people living with and / or affected by the 3 key diseases (i.e. HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria) experience persistent health and human rights challenges."

### ***Treatment of people who use drugs***

#### **Canadian National Treatment Indicators Report 2010–2011 Data**

"The purpose of the National Treatment Indicators (NTI) project is to provide a comprehensive picture of substance use treatment in Canada. The data presented in this report illustrate the potential wealth of information available as the project continues to improve data collection and increase participation."

#### **Effectiveness of diacetylmorphine versus methadone for the treatment of opioid dependence in women**

This study by Oviedo-Joekes E., Guh D., Brissette S. et al. Is the first Canadian study which shows that among long-term, severely opiate dependent patients who have not responded well to prior treatment, women as well as men benefit more from being prescribed injectable heroin than oral methadone.

## **Guidelines**

### **Substance Misuse Detainees in Police Custody Guidelines for Clinical Management (Fourth edition)**

The Royal College of Psychiatrists guidelines assert that "Addicted individuals should always be cared for and treated without being stigmatised, whatever their particular circumstances. For those individuals who become casualties of substance misuse and are in police custody, these guidelines offer a humane response, with provision for care and treatment. They are flexible tools designed to accommodate changes in the nature and extent of substance misuse in the community, as well as changes in national policy and strategy, together with new developments in the care and management of substance-dependent individuals."

## **Short Films**

### **The War on Drugs in Mexico: Is There an Alternative?**

Hungarian Civil Liberties Union's interviews several politicians, professionals and activists in Mexico, to find out why so many people have had to die in the fight on the war on drugs: "Were they the necessary costs of an inescapable but winnable war, as many decision-makers claim, or the victims of a failed policy?" (film)

**Eyes wide open: a film about overdose prevention and intervention** "the film recalls the experiences of people affected by an accidental opioid overdose and the emergency medicine naloxone. Based on true stories from 2 Canadian cities, this short documentary offers a window into the moment between life and death—and highlights the need for expanding overdose prevention." (film)

## **Other newsletters**

### **German Society for Addiction Medicine Newsletter**

The German Society for Addiction Medicine March Newsletter (in German)

## **Upcoming events**

*When attending conferences and meetings, please spread the word about IDHDP. Feel free to use the in your **presentation slide** and the **membership flyer** presentations and conversations.*

### **International Harm Reduction Conference 2013 (9 – 12 June 2013) Vilnius, Lithuania**

This conference is a key event for all those interested in harm reduction around the world. It will include high profile keynote speeches, plenary, major, and concurrent sessions, workshops and a film festival. The theme of the conference is, "The Value/s of Harm Reduction."

IDHDP is conducting a workshop that aims to provide pragmatic tools for doctors to engage in drug policy advocacy: A roadmap for overdose prevention policies: where do you fit?

### **7th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (30 June – 3 July 2013) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

The event is being organized by the IAS in partnership with the Centre of Excellence for Research in AIDS (CERiA), University of Malaya. The conference will include special sessions on HIV/AIDS and drug policy. More information to come.

### **Jubilee Conference ISGF (9 -13 September 2013), Zurich, Switzerland**

The Swiss Research Institute for Public Health and Addiction at Zurich University's (ISGF) international conference will focus on the current major problems in the orientation of addiction research.

### **International City Health 2013 Conference (4 – 5 November 2013), Glasgow, Scotland**

This international event will examine current policy and practice in relation to public health in cities. Prof Michel Kazatchkine, IDHDP patron and UN special envoy on HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe, will present the public lecture on Monday, Nov. 4. Chris Ford will also give a presentation "Urbanization: the new challenge for addiction and how primary care can help."

**Save the date!** Join us there and meet Michel Kazatchkine.

**This is only a selection of events. To view more visit the [website](#).**

## **Membership**

Our membership continues to grow. We now have members in **62 countries!**

We encourage members to tap into our rich database of international experts. If you would like advice on clinical or policy issues, please post on the members discussion forum or send your query to **Rebecca** who will send on to the appropriate experts.

## IDHDP communications

### Twitter

Follow us on **Twitter**. We now have over **890 followers!** If you are a member of Twitter please search for us at **@idhdp**, or if you do not wish to join Twitter, you can check the **IDHDP home page** to read our latest tweets.

### Facebook

Like the **IDHDP Facebook page** to receive updates on your Facebook news feed. This is also a great way to share articles and information with your Facebook friends.

### Newsletter

Please send the newsletter on to your colleagues and encourage them to join IDHDP.

All the very best,

Chris, Holly and Rebecca

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