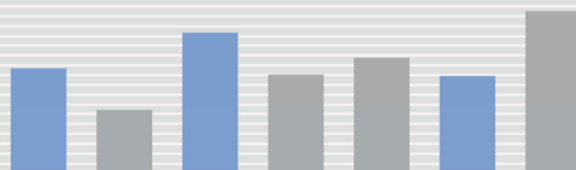




Fact sheet

from the EU drugs agency in Lisbon



BEST PRACTICE PORTAL: WHAT WORKS IN DRUG INTERVENTIONS?

Click and learn with the EMCDDA's new-look Best practice portal

(23.10.2014, LISBON) Real-life responses to drug problems come under the spotlight today as the **EU drugs agency (EMCDDA)** launches its revamped **Best practice portal** ⁽¹⁾. Designed as a practical and reliable source of what works, and what doesn't, in the areas of drug-related prevention, treatment, harm reduction and social reintegration, the portal helps practitioners and professionals:

- identify tried and tested interventions quickly;
- allocate resources to what's effective;
- evaluate and improve interventions applying practical tools, standards and guidelines; and
- take better decisions, gaining from experience and expertise across Europe.

Aiming to 'put the user first', the new-look portal is the result of an extensive process of user-testing. Among its revised features are a dynamic FAQ section, to which users can add their own questions, as well as a raft of new search functions.

Summarising evidence in plain language, demystifying terminology and answering real questions from the field, the re-designed portal provides an accessible tool to support the development of evidence-based interventions. Using an information-layering approach, a vast array of data and research is presented in top-level 'answer sheets', complemented by underlying levels demonstrating the current evidence base.

Among the portal's added value is its overview of standards and guidelines available in the EU Member States to boost the quality of interventions. This comes at a time when Europe's health and social responses to drug problems are increasingly supported by guidelines and quality standards, which translate evidence into satisfactory and sustainable results.

The portal concentrates on illicit drugs and polydrug use and has a clear European focus. Intended as a 'living product', it will be regularly updated as information and research on interventions emerge. The main body of the portal is in English, but documents in other EU languages are also available according to where the interventions occur. Available throughout the portal are links to further information sources.

The current **EU drugs strategy (2013–20)** underlines the need to: 'promote the use and exchange of best practices and develop and implement quality standards in prevention (...), early detection and intervention, risk and harm reduction, treatment, rehabilitation, social reintegration and recovery'. The **EMCDDA's** recast mission statement (2006) prioritises the provision of information on best practice in the EU Member States and the exchange of such practice between them.

With the new portal, the **EMCDDA** aims to bridge scientific evidence and current practice in the drugs field. By enhancing the communication of evidence, it aims to promote the sharing of best practice between countries and better inform decision-making processes, both at national and European level.

⁽¹⁾ For more, see www.emcdda.europa.eu/best-practice (promotional video also available). Subscribe to e-mail updates on EMCDDA best practice activities <http://eepurl.com/5rLmf>