



Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project

A Brief Report on Accessing Harm Reduction Services on the Behalf of Others

What is third-party drug checking?

It's when someone accesses drug checking on the behalf of someone else, or for themselves and for others.

Why are we talking about it?

Because it can increase service accessibility and reduce risks within a larger group beyond individual level interactions.

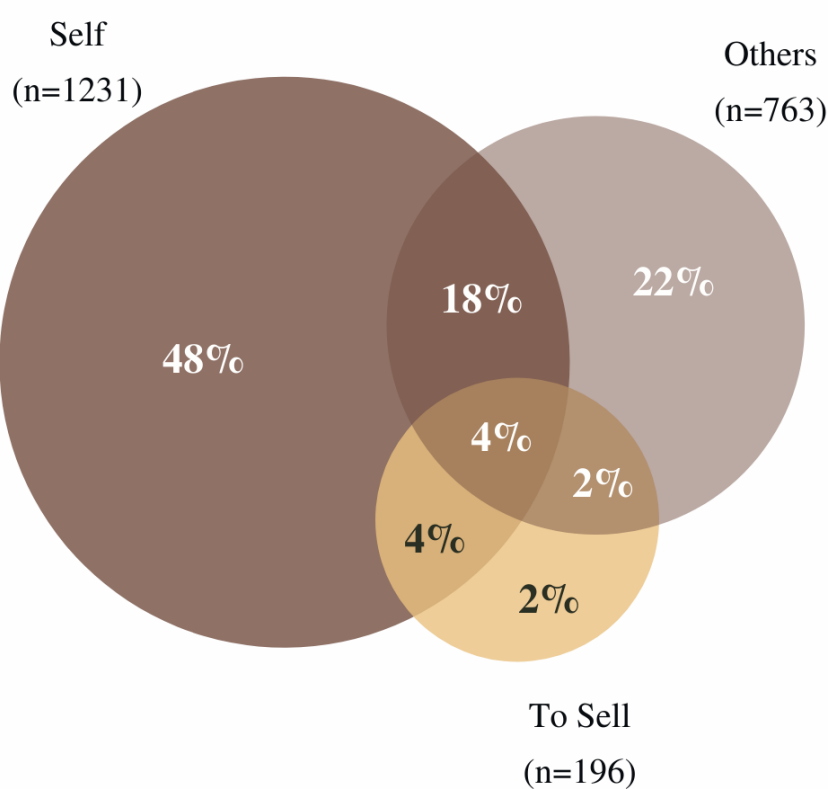
This study looked at the frequency of third party access and explored the reach of this practice in extending drug checking beyond individual benefits.

METHODS

Data was collected from a drug checking service in Victoria, Canada between November 2018 and June 2021. Those accessing service were asked: "Who are you doing this drug check for?" with options of: for self, to sell, for others.

RESULTS

Of 1991 service users, **1653** answered who the drug check was for.



This diagram looks at the complexity and overlap of groups depending on their responses to whom they were checking drugs for. Responses could include either one or a combination of three groups: **for self, for others, or to sell.**

Of those answers, **just over half** (52%) of participants were checking drugs for reasons other than just self.

When checking for others (763):

- 52%** identified it was for friends
- 30%** for outreach clients
- 16%** for family including children, parents, and partners

We also engaged with those checking for the purpose of selling or within the supply chain, representing **12%** of overall service users.

- Third party drug checking is a **common approach** for engaging with drug checking
- Third party drug checking is a **relational process**
- Drug checking services and policymakers should **better facilitate access** to third party drug checking
- Drug checking services **should not be assumed** to be a service limited to people who use drug checking pre-consumption

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