

“I Think One Enhances the Other”: Thoughts on Harm Reduction + Treatment

2025 Participant Summary

Background

We wanted to learn what people think about harm reduction and treatment and hear about their experiences with both. We talked to 27 syringe services program (SSP) participants, 18+, who had used drugs in the past week and tried some form of treatment in the past two years. These interviews took place in fall 2024 in Aberdeen, Vancouver, and Shelton, WA.

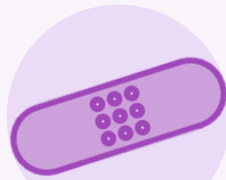
What did we learn?

People use harm reduction and treatment, sometimes at the same time, and see benefits from both.

Harm reduction benefits



Safer use supplies



Wound care



Basic needs



Positive interactions

Treatment benefits



Stop or reduce use



*Learn coping/
other skills*



Heal body & mind



*Reconnect
with family*

SUD treatment programs were seen as sometimes hard to access or stay in.

What about using both at the same time?

“I think it would be pretty helpful. Having services to keep myself a cleaner version and going to treatment to learn all the coping skills and what not to do with cross addiction and stuff like that would help a lot.”

Others felt you should use either harm reduction or treatment. *“You got to pick one or the other.”*

Read the full report here: adai.uw.edu/harmreduction-drugtreatment-ssps

Thanks to everyone who participated in our interviews and the programs who hosted us!