

Transforming Our Communities


Learning Together, Supporting Each Other



2023 Gathering | Day 1

I would like to begin by acknowledging that as we gather today, we are on the ancestral homelands of the Indigenous Peoples who have lived on these lands since time immemorial.

Please join me in expressing our deepest respect and gratitude for our Indigenous neighbors.



Goal: increase understanding, gain insight, develop and support effective compassionate relationships and care.

We invite you to commit to being:

- **Welcoming** - invite others to share
- **Open minded** - encourage dialog, listen
- **Kind** - tone and words that are respectful
- **Person-first** - people are not their disease(s), avoid stigmatizing language
- **Generous** - assume good intent, respectfully inquire if appropriate
- **Accountable** - to ourselves and others



Housekeeping

Zoom

- **We are using webinar mode this year**

Presenters will be onscreen, all other cameras are off.

- **Submit questions in the Q&A box**

If presenters aren't able to respond to questions during the sessions, we'll work with them to provide written responses after the gathering.

We will be taking breaks today.



Planning Committee

Thank you to everyone for all your hard work!

Kathryn Akeah

Caleb Banta-Green

Jason Bean-Mortinson

Meg Brunner

Brian Burwell

Tim Candela

Deaunte Damper

Patty Dean

Madi Eggerding

Noah Fay

Heather Flaherty

Lori Fleming

Doug Fulp

Abe Gardner

Nicole Hamberger

Kelsey Horne

Rich Keir

Paul LaKosky

Malika Lamont

Tiffany Lancaster

Ali Lenox



Planning Committee

Thank you to everyone for all your hard work!

Cassie Lentz

Robert Marshall Wells

Erinn McGraw

Victor Mendez

Alicia Ogren

Thea Oliphant-Wells

Alexie Orr

Janet Sanchez

Michelle Sandoval

Aphrodite Sauser

Kevin Shutty

Wendy Stevens

Katie Strozyk

Ruby Takushi

Lisa Rey Thomas

Greg Thompson

Wilma Weber

Shu-Ling Zhao



Agenda

8:45

Welcome

9:10

Why Transforming Our Communities?

9:20

Harm Reduction – What is it? How do we practice it?

10:00

Break

10:10

Diverse Panel of Harm Reduction Services & Organizations

10:50

Drug Checking in Washington State

11:30

Break for Lunch

1:00

Convene/Reconvene at Regional Sites (optional)



Indigenous Welcome

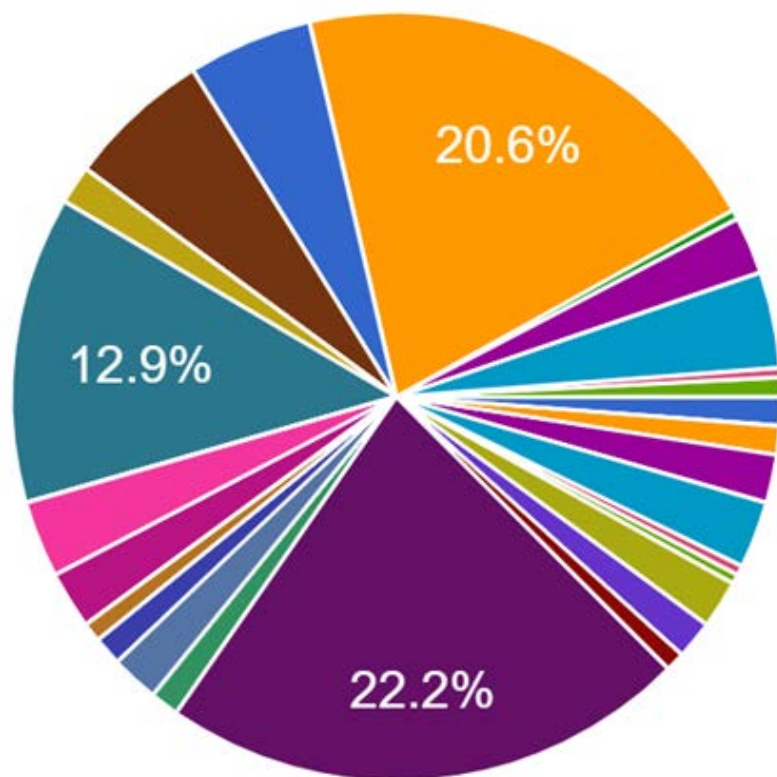


Chief Judge Leona Colegrove
Quinault Tribal Healing to Wellness Court

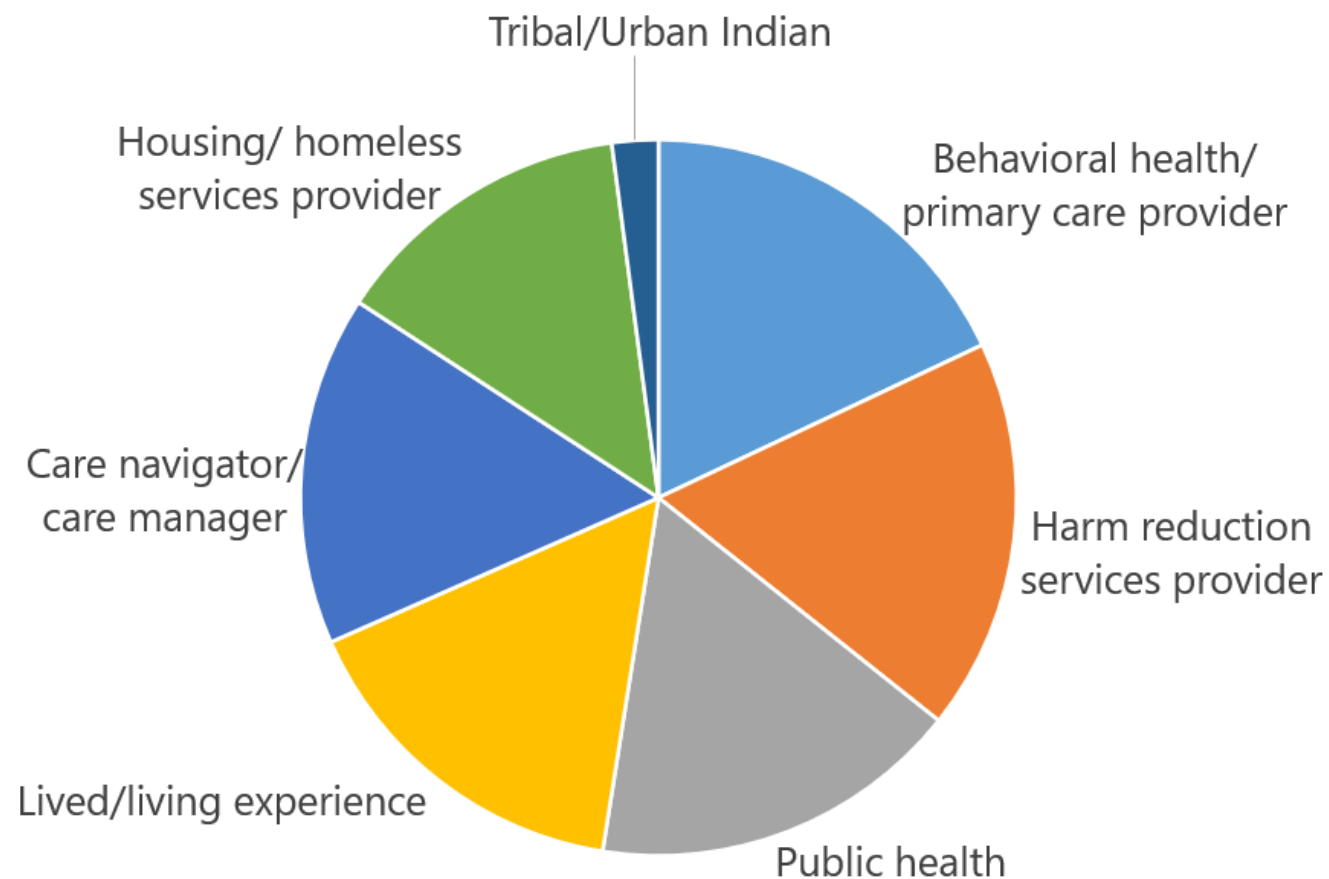


Who is With Us Today?

WA Counties

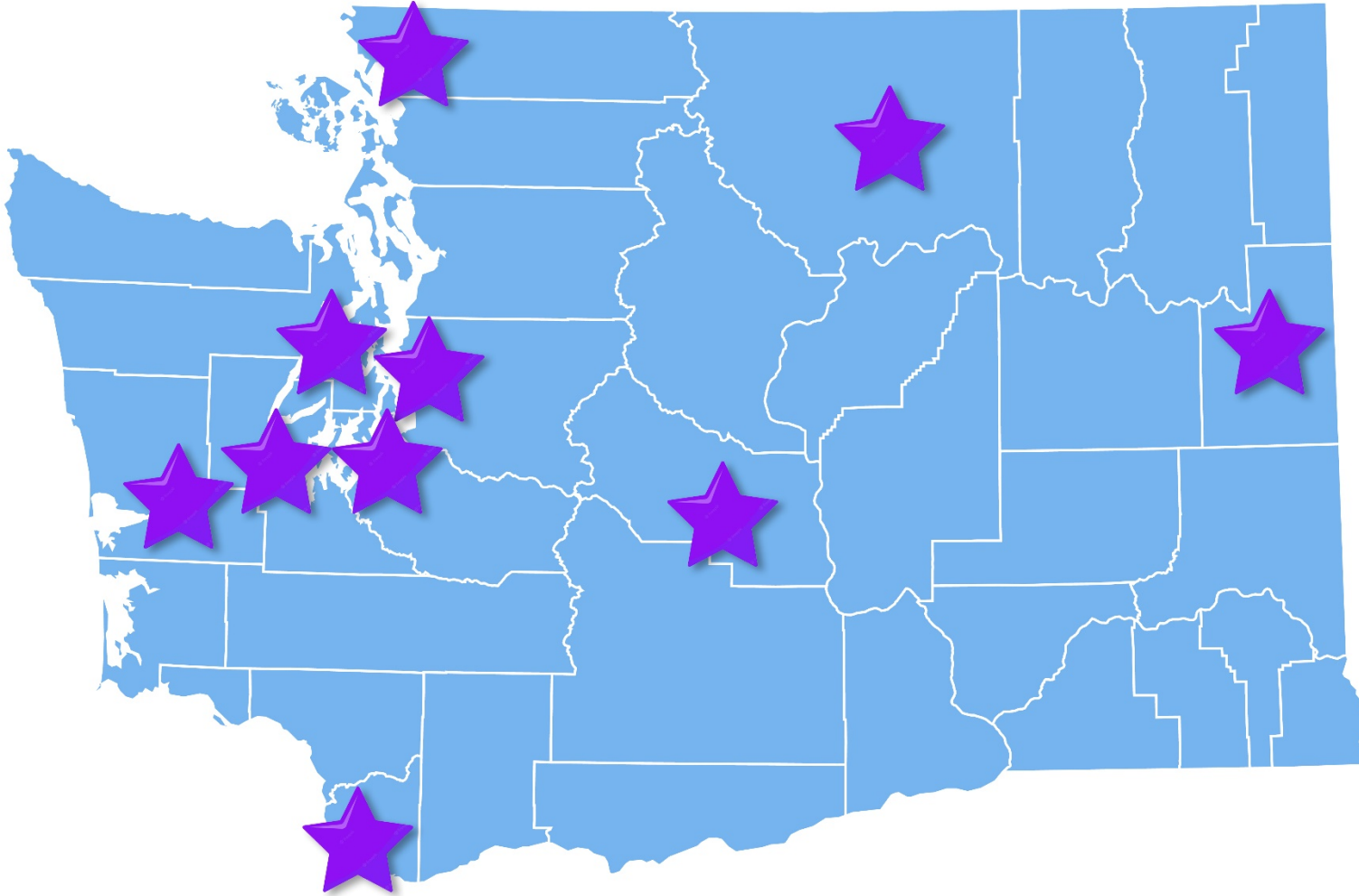


Area of Expertise





Regional Locations in Washington



Aberdeen
Bellingham
Bremerton
Ellensburg
Omak
Seattle
Shelton
Spokane
Tacoma
Vancouver



Welcome & Introduction

Why Transforming Our Communities?

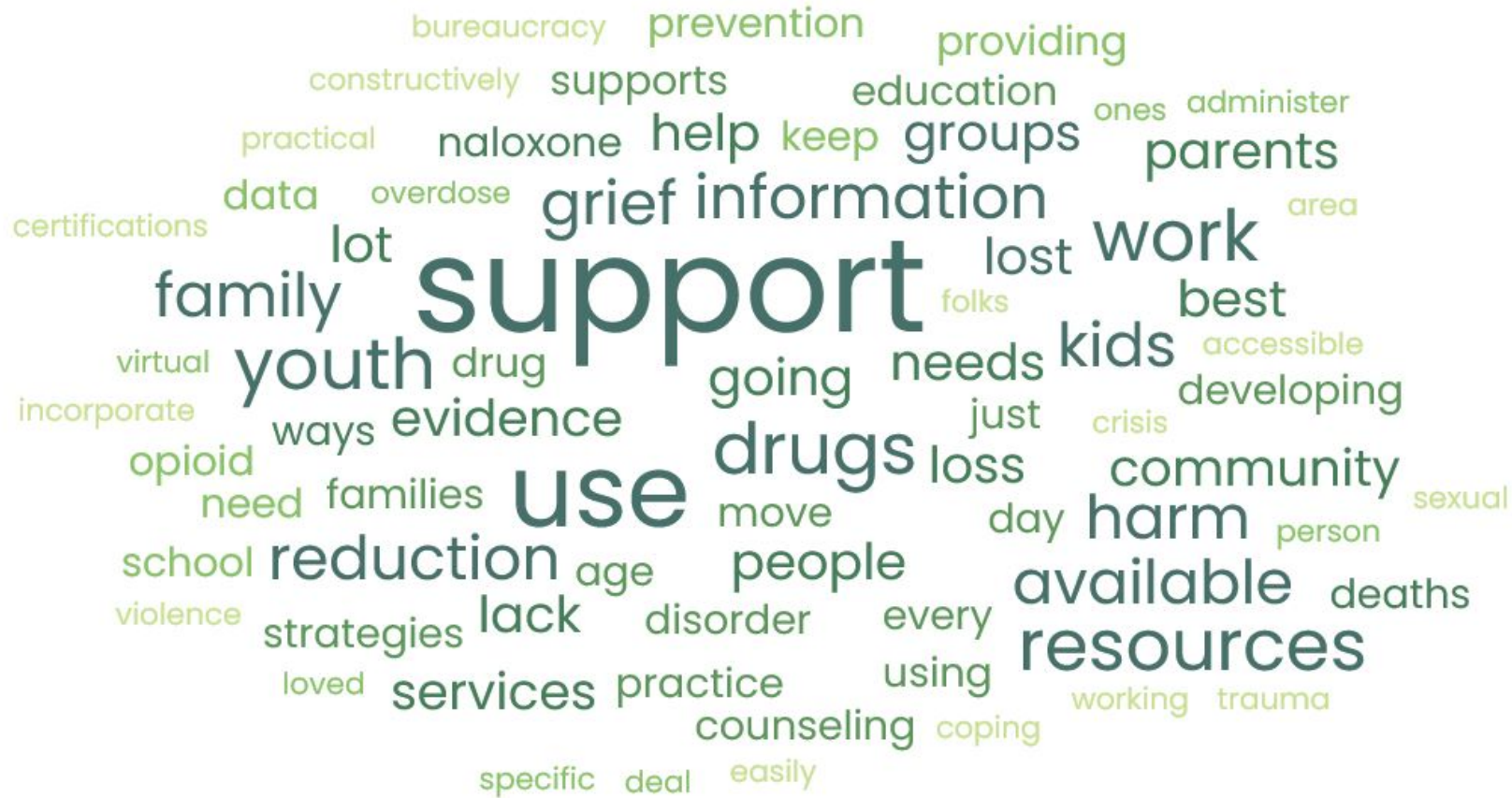


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Welcome & Introduction

What do you want to learn from the presentations?





Panel: Harm Reduction – What is it?

Harm Reduction: What is it? How do we practice it?

Paul LaKosky, PhD,
Tacoma Needle Exchange

Allison Berry, MD, MPH,
Clallam & Jefferson Co.

Cole Meckel,
Gather Church

Jeremy Hoog, RN,
Downtown Emergency
Services Center

Abe Gardner,
North Mason Regional
Fire Authority

Chief Beau Bakken,
North Mason Regional
Fire Authority



Break

Break Time





Panel: Harm Reduction Services & Orgs

Diverse Panel of Harm Reduction Services & Organizations

Brian Burwell,

Suquamish Tribe Wellness Program

Debbie Waltman, BSN, RN,

MultiCare Deaconess Hospital

Ada Moore-de La Cruz,

Kitsap Mental Health Services

Lisa Al-Hakim,

People's Harm Reduction Alliance



Panel: Drug Checking in WA

Community Drug Checking in Washington State

Thea Oliphant-Wells,
Public Health – Seattle & King Co.

Malia Lewis,
Blue Mountain Heart 2 Heart

Cedric Picard,
Tacoma Needle Exchange

Ben Biamont,
Addictions, Drug & Alcohol Institute



Panel: Drug Checking in WA

What is Community Drug Checking?

Thea Oliphant-Wells
Public Health – Seattle & King County



What is Community Drug Checking?

Drug checking:

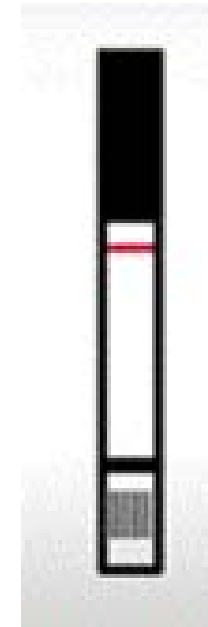
- Allows people to identify contents within a substance and make informed decisions
- Is paired with other person-centered health services, including:
 - Syringe services programs, wound care, HIV & Hep C Testing and Treatment, medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD, and overdose prevention sites
- Allows the community to identify new emerging drug threats, such as contaminants like xylazine



How Do We Check Drugs?

Test Strips

- Single drug: fentanyl, benzodiazepines (ex. Xanax, bromazepam), xylazine (new!)
- YES/NO
- Highly sensitive
- False positives with some substances





Spectrometers (Fancy Science Machines)

FTIR (fourier-transform infrared)

- Shoots a beam of infrared light through the sample and gives a reading to compare with vast libraries of substances
- Can be set up anywhere
- Training is extensive but no background in chemistry required
- Detection limit – about 5%

GC-MS (gas chromatography mass spectrometry)

- Lab based testing – scientist required
- Can detect trace amounts





Why Do We Check Drugs?

Knowledge is power!

- When people know what's in their drugs, they are **more likely to take safety precautions** like using with a friend or using less.
- Drug checking is an evidence-based strategy to **prevent overdose**.
- Offering drug checking **connects people to other health services**, like HIV testing, naloxone, medications for opioid use disorder, etc.
- Knowledge of local drug supply and emerging trends **allows for swift and targeted response** efforts.

Panel: Drug Checking in WA



Malia Lewis
Drug Checking Technician & SSP Manager

Starting Out

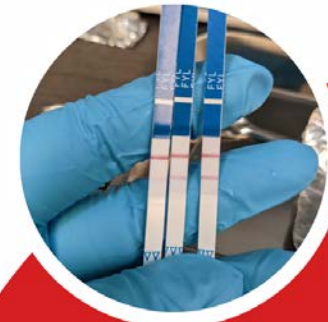
- Received machine in late January
- In person training component
- Began testing samples last few days of January
- 1:1 Training component
- Confirmatory testing support
- Relationship building has been the key
- Barriers include a shifting legal landscape & sense of safety for participants
- Figuring out safe storage options for samples & avoiding transporting samples



June 6, 2023

Community Drug Checking

These are the most recent results from our local FTIR machine, Speck! Come check it out at our 1903 E Isaacs Avenue location in Walla Walla.



Bring samples to us
9 am - 4 pm
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

We have tested:

- 126 samples from 58 participants
- 83 in Walla Walla
- 30 in Kennewick
- 14 in Clarkston

2 samples in Walla Walla & 1 sample in Kennewick have included xylazine, aka tranq. Keep an eye out for wounds and come see one of our nurses!

Feel free to send any questions to Malia at:

509-200-9122

m.lewis@bmh2h.org



Drug Checking Hours & Locations

- **Clarkston, WA** (population 7194)
 - Mondays 1pm-3:30pm
 - Idaho factors
 - Visibility in a small town



Drug Checking Hours & Locations

- **Walla Walla, WA** (population 33,927)
 - Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
8:30am-12pm & 1:00pm-4:30pm
 - Broader walk in hours, stronger relationships,
& less fear-based urgency
 - Dropbox installed recently to collect samples
when technician is away
 - Co-located services





Drug Checking Hours & Locations

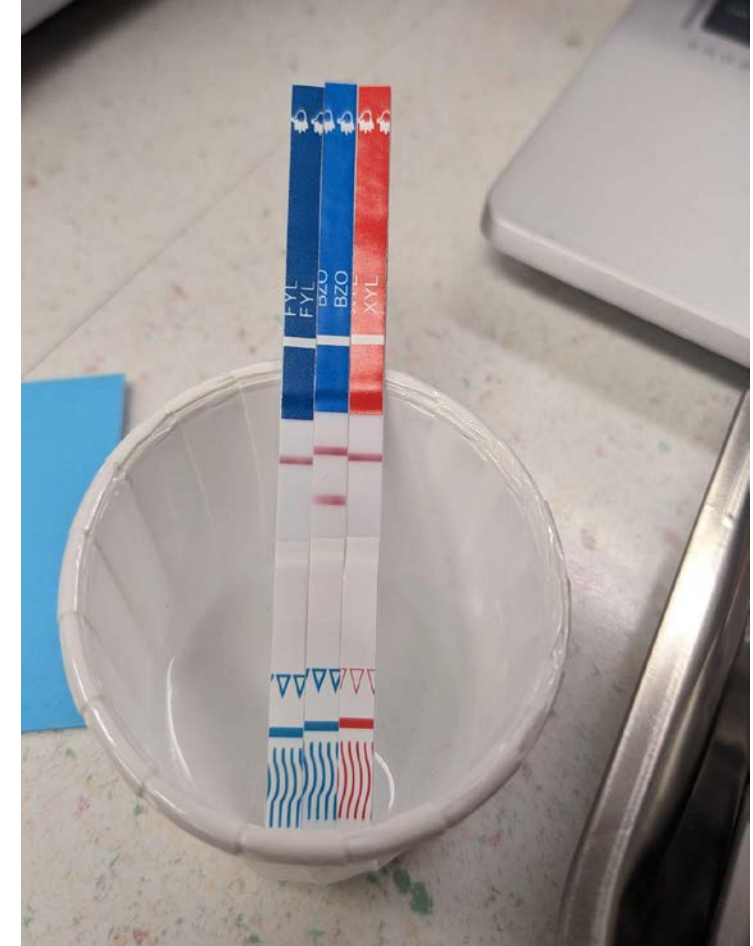
- **Kennewick, WA** (population 84,488)
 - Fridays 12pm-4pm
 - Scant resources in this area despite highest population; high need for wound care
 - Most skepticism of this approach





Xylazine

- 2 samples confirmed so far
- 1 sample awaiting confirmatory test
- Immediacy of wraparound services





Panel: Drug Checking in WA

Community Drug Checking at Tacoma Needle Exchange

Cedric Picard
Tacoma Needle Exchange



Community Drug Checking at TNE

Date: _____

Site Name: _____

Participant ID: _____
(First 2 Letters of last name, First letter of first name, First letter of Mom's First Name, and Day of the Month you were born. EX: ABCD13)

Contact with Results? Yes or No

Select One: Call Text Website

Phone #: _____

Sold As: _____

Thinks is: _____

ROA (How was it consumed?):

IM Injection	Ingested
IV Injection	Rectally (Boofing, Booty Bumping)
Snorted	N/A Did not consume
Smoked	N/A Unknown (if provided by a 3 rd party)

Experience Report: _____

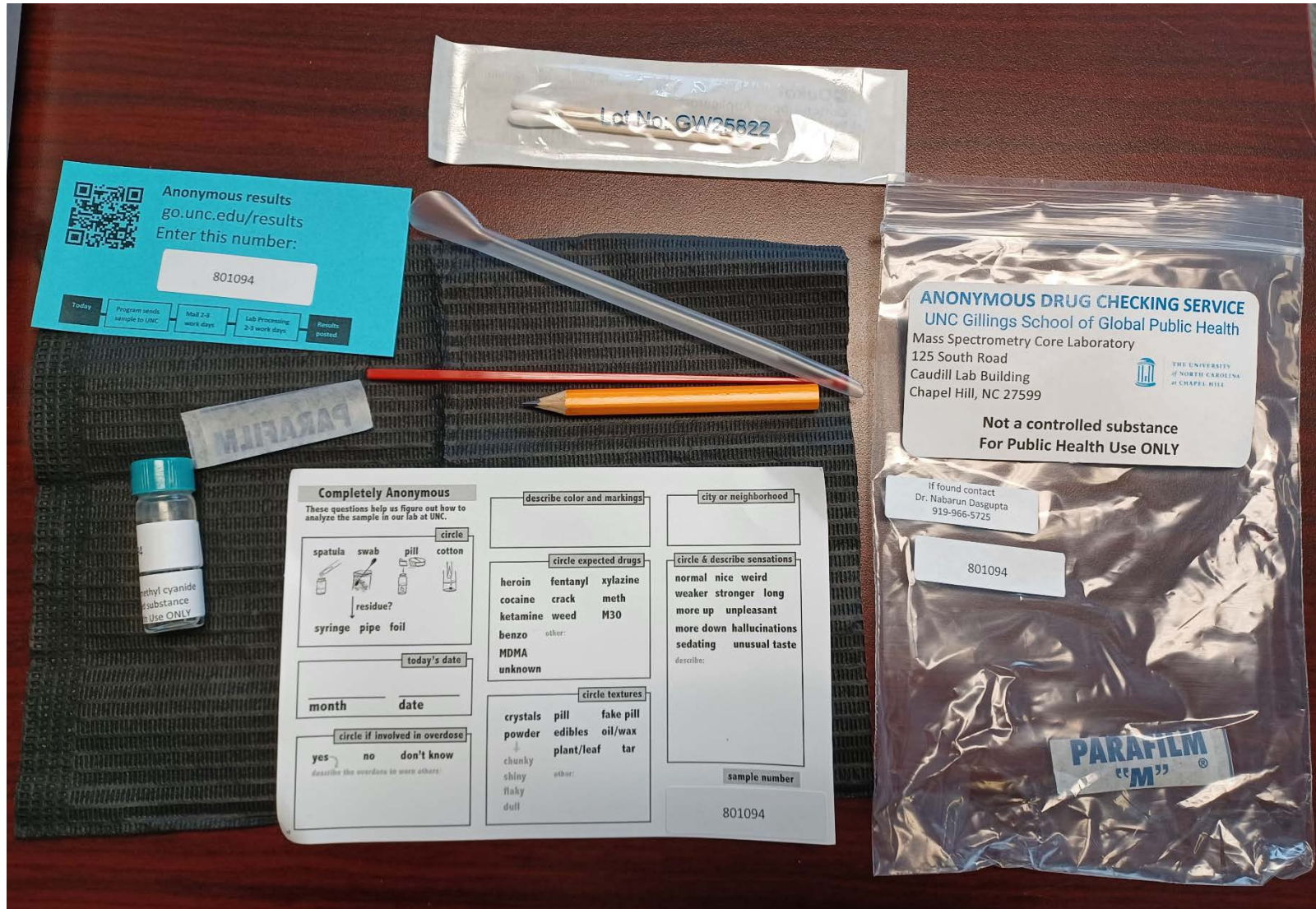
Good Bad Weird



Community Drug Checking at TNE



Community Drug Checking at TNE





Panel: Drug Checking in WA

Community Drug Checking: Statewide Data

Ben Biamont
Addictions, Drug & Alcohol Institute (ADAI)



Current Status of Drug Checking in WA

- **7 locations conducting drug checking in WA State**
 - They will notify community partners when ready to accept referrals
- **Among 325 samples collected in WA State from 12/2022-5/2023 that had confirmation testing:**
 - **42%** of all samples (n=135) tested positive for methamphetamine.
 - **85%** had no other major substance detected.
 - **29%** of all samples (n=95) tested positive for fentanyl of which 60% also had acetaminophen or similar drugs present.
 - **2 samples** tested positive for xylazine (only xylazine positive results to date).



Current Status of Drug Checking in WA

- **Many other substances were also detected**
 - Not possible to determine if drug combinations were sold mixed together, mixed later purposefully, or unintentionally cross-contaminated.
- **Additional analyses will be conducted and shared in the coming months**
 - Describing the drug the participant expected compared to the drug(s) actually detected.
 - ADAI and community drug checking sites collaborate on data analysis, interpretation and presentation.

New WA State Law Supports Drug Checking

Part II - Relating to Drug Paraphernalia

32
33 **Sec. 8.** RCW 69.50.4121 and 2022 c 16 s 92 are each amended to
34 read as follows:

35 (1) Every person who sells ~~((or gives,))~~ or permits to be sold
36 ~~((or given))~~ to any person any drug paraphernalia in any form commits
37 a class I civil infraction under chapter 7.80 RCW. For purposes of

Official Print - 8 5536-S2.E AMH ENGR H1919.E

1 this subsection, "drug paraphernalia" means all equipment, products,
2 and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use, or
3 designed for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing,
4 harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing,
5 processing, preparing, ~~((testing, analyzing,))~~ packaging,
6 repackaging, storing, containing, concealing, injecting, ingesting,
7 inhaling, or otherwise introducing into the human body a controlled
8 substance other than cannabis. Drug paraphernalia includes, but is

Removes from definition
of paraphernalia

Equipment NOT
prohibited

27 (3) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section prohibits ~~((legal))~~
28 distribution ~~((of injection))~~ or use of public health supplies
29 including, but not limited to, syringe equipment or drug testing
30 equipment, through public health ~~((and))~~ programs, community-based
31 HIV prevention programs, outreach, shelter, and housing programs, and
32 pharmacies. Public health and syringe service program staff taking
33 samples of substances and using drug testing equipment for the
34 purpose of analyzing the composition of the substances or detecting
35 the presence of certain substances are acting legally and are exempt
36 from arrest and prosecution under RCW 69.50.4011(1) (b) or (c),
37 69.50.4013, 69.50.4014, or 69.41.030(2) (b) or (c).

38 **NEW SECTION. Sec. 9.** A new section is added to chapter 69.50
39 RCW to read as follows:

Official Print - 9 5536-S2.E AMH ENGR H1919.E

Activities of drug checking cannot
lead to arrest or prosecution

<https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2023-24/Pdf/Amendments/House/5536-S2.E%20AMH%20ENGR%20H1919.E.pdf>



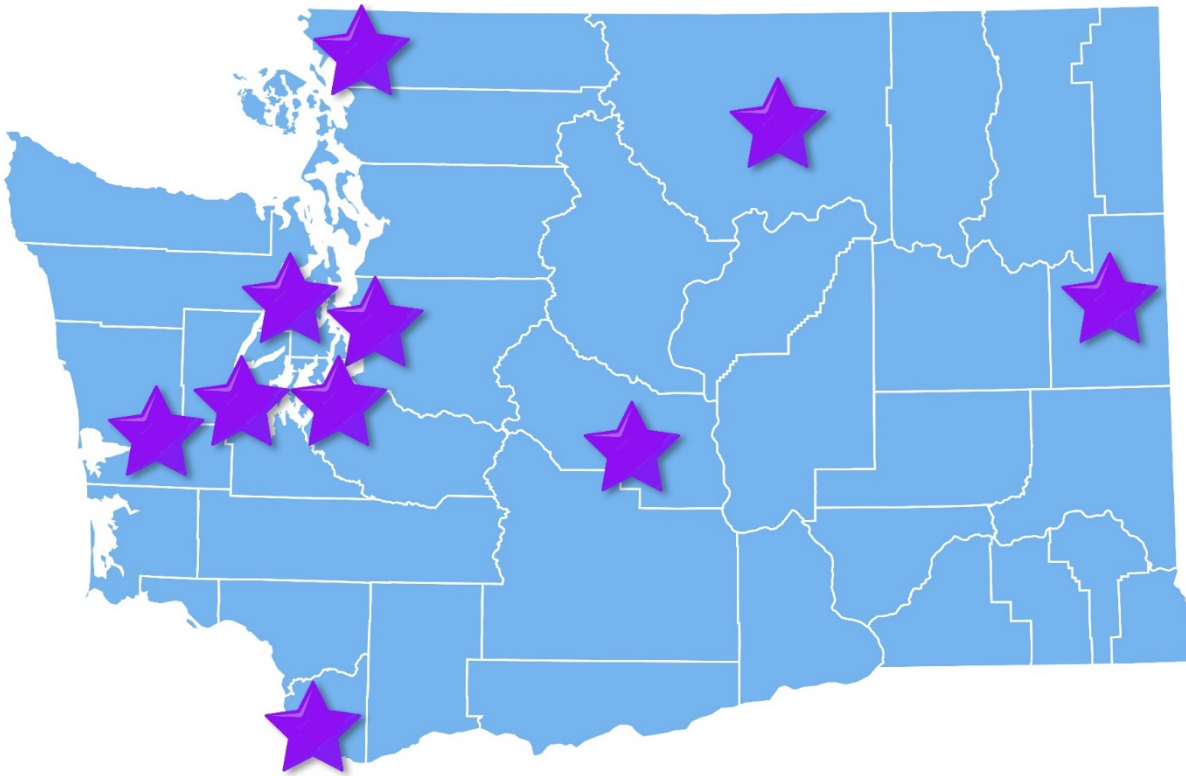
What do our regions want to focus on?





Afternoon Regional Gatherings

Thank you for joining us!



Aberdeen
Bellingham
Bremerton
Ellensburg
Omak

Seattle
Shelton
Spokane
Tacoma
Vancouver