



# AIDS 2018

HARM REDUCTION SERVICES

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE USE OF DRUGS WHILE IN AMSTERDAM

### HARM REDUCTION NETWORKING ZONE

At the conference, a Harm Reduction Networking Zone (HRNZ) is located in the Global Village and is accessible to the general public (delegates and non-delegates). The HRNZ is the key area for people who use drugs or people who want to know more about it. Services that will be provided include:

- Information about medical services for people who use drugs
- Information and guidance from harm reduction experts
- Free drug-use and injecting equipment
- Sharps containers for the safe disposal of equipment for drug use
- Information and advice about overdose prevention and care
- Condoms
- A range of publications on harm reduction in relation to safe drug use (overdose and infection prevention).

### DOCTOR AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

On the first floor of the Global Village, in Room L101 (next to the film screening area), a doctor will be available **Monday to Friday from 10:00 to 12:00** for medical services and information specifically for people who use drugs.

In case of an **overdose**, call **112** immediately.

In accordance with **Good Samaritan laws**, you will not be prosecuted for seeking **assistance**. Be honest about your own or a friend's drug use; this will make it easier for medical professionals to help.

## DRUG POLICY IN THE NETHERLANDS

- Although the Netherlands is known for its tolerant drug policies, possession of drugs is still officially illegal. This includes forms of cannabis, such as hash and weed.
- The Dutch Narcotics Act distinguishes between:
  - "hard drugs", including heroin, cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamines, magic mushrooms
  - "soft drugs", cannabis and magic truffles.
- **Drug use** itself is **not a punishable** offence.
- In the Netherlands, buying and possessing drugs is still illegal. However, a tolerance policy applies for possession of amounts intended for personal consumption:
  - You will not be prosecuted if you are found to be in possession of less than five grams of cannabis.
  - You will not be prosecuted for the possession of "hard drugs", provided you do not carry more than 0.5 grams of powder or one pill. In the city of Amsterdam, five pills are the maximum amount for personal use.
- Law enforcement prioritizes dealing, selling, producing and most other acts involving any drug.
- If you have any concerns or queries related to drug policy and/or law enforcement in the Netherlands, please come to the HRNZ to get expert advice.



## SAFETY

- **Inform yourself** about the effects and risks of the drugs you plan on using. Feel free to ask one of the outreach workers in the HRNZ for advice.
- In **the Netherlands, drugs are** likely to be **more potent** than in your home country:
  - For any new drug or new source, always **try a small dose first**.
  - If you are used to injecting your drug, try smoking a little bit first. The purity of a drug might be higher than what you are used to at home.
- Street dealers in Amsterdam often sell "drugs" that are fake, not the substance they claim it to be, of dubious quality and sometimes even outright dangerous.
- Be aware that the term "soft drugs" refers only to the legal framework and that it does not mean that soft drugs like cannabis and magic truffles are harmless. Some of them are extremely strong and can cause paranoid psychosis and panic attacks. Be careful and aware of the effects of these drugs before using them.
- Even though possession of drugs is officially illegal, you can still **get your drugs tested anonymously** at an official drug checking service. See links on the next page for locations and opening hours in Amsterdam. Please note that you can only test drugs that are bought in the Netherlands. Substances that are not recognized by the test services may take up to a week to be tested in a laboratory.
- Only use in a stress-free, safe environment with people you know and trust. Try not to use when you are alone.



## ADDITIONAL INFO

For more information regarding drugs, please visit:

<http://celebratesafe.nl/en/about-en/>

<https://www.jellinek.nl/english/>

<https://www.unity.nl/en/>

You can get your drugs tested anonymously. For more information, please check the following websites:

<https://www.jellinek.nl/vraag-antwoord/why-do-they-test-drugs-the-netherlands-and-how-does-it-work/>

<http://www.ggd.amsterdam.nl/drugs/drugstestservice/>

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