Hepatitis C Prevention Strategies in Corrective Services NSW

Sue Henry-Edwards
Principal Advisor
Alcohol and Drugs and Health Promotion
Blood Borne Virus Infection

2007 Prison entrants survey

Hepatitis C prevalence
- 65% Female
- 37% Male
- 42% of prison entrants

Hepatitis B core antibody prevalence
- 27% of prison entrants

HIV prevalence
- 1.5% (n = 3)
Hepatitis C Risk Factors In Correctional Centres

- Sharing any injecting equipment
- Tattooing & skin piercing
- Fights (without boxing gloves & latex gloves)
- Using hair clippers without proper procedures
- Sharing personal items like razors, toothbrushes
- Cleaning up blood spills without proper equipment
- Sports injuries.
- Any blood to blood activity
Alcohol and Drug Problems among Offenders (2005/06)

- 74% report lifetime problems
- 79% illicit use in 6 months before prison
  - 59% Cannabis
  - 39% Methamphetamine
  - 31% Heroin
- 44% report injecting in 6 months before prison

Kevin M 2008
Risk Behaviours
Drug Use in Prison (2005/06)

- 11% m, 20% f reported injecting during current incarceration
- Of these, 63% reported sharing injecting equipment
- All of whom reported cleaning it

Kevin M 2008.
Risk Behaviours

Tattoos and Skin Piercing

- 60% m, 57% f have ever been tattooed
- 40% m, 72% f had body piercings
- 25% m, 21% f tattooed in prison
- 5% m, 19% f pierced in prison
- 7% m had subcutaneous penile insertions – most did it in prison

Richters et al 2008
Prevention Strategies

- Environmental
- Information and Education
- Workforce Development
Prevention Strategies
Environmental

- Disinfectant Product
  - **Fincol** - quaternary ammonium disinfectant
  - Universal cleaner
  - Must be freely available to all inmates and staff
Prevention Strategies

Environmental 2

- Condoms (male centres)
- Latex dams (female centres)
  - Must be freely available to all inmates
  - Distributed via free vending machines
  - Independent contractor refills and services machines.
Prevention Strategies

Environmental 3

- Razors and toothbrushes

  - Provided at reception (CSI Toiletries Pack)

  - New razor supplied on presentation of old.
Prevention Strategies
Information and Education

- Health Promotion Diary
  - Given to all inmates on reception
  - Entertaining low literacy resource

- DVDs
  - Your first 24 hours
    - Shown at reception
  - Doing your time
    - Shown during induction period
Prevention Strategies

Information and Education 2

- Health Survival Program
  - 2 hour group education program
  - Delivered during induction period
  - Includes:
    - Information re communicable diseases especially BBV
    - Advice re high risk situations and behaviours
    - Instructions on cleaning injecting equipment
    - Universal Precautions
    - Advice to use Justice Health Services
Prevention Strategies
Information and Education 3

- Barber’s Hygiene and Safety Training
  - Universal precautions
  - Safe operation of ‘Barbershops’
  - Cleaning up blood spills safely

- Hygiene Operations training
  - Delivered by Corrective Services Industries
  - Universal precautions
  - Cleaning up blood spills safely
Prevention Strategies
Information and Education 5

- Peer Supporters Program
  - Long term sentenced inmates
    - Carefully selected and approved
  - Trained to provide advice and support to peers to take responsibility for own health in relation to:
    - Alcohol and other drug use
    - Prevention of BBV
Prevention Strategies
Information and Education 4

- Prisons Hepatitis C Helpline
  - Free call on inmate telephone system
- Hepatitis NSW publications
  - Hep C Review, Transmission Magazine
  - Pamphlets
  - Posters, playing cards etc
- NUAA News
- Jailbreak Radio Show
Workforce Development

- Universal Precautions embedded in all OH&S policies and procedures.
- Specific policies and procedures re communicable diseases including BBV
- Specific training for custodial officers
  - Communicable diseases
  - Safe searching
  - Cleaning up blood spills
  - Alcohol and other drug use and policies
Supply and Demand Reduction Strategies

- Drug Detection Dogs
- Detoxification (Justice Health & CSNSW)
- Opioid Treatment Program (Justice Health)
- Screening and Brief Intervention
- Group Treatment Programs (CBT)
- Self Help Group participation
- Urinalysis
- Education
- Employment
Current Initiatives

- Review and update of policies
- Increase availability of information on CSNSW Intranet.
- Review and update of Health Survival Program
  - Production in DVD format
  - Involvement of a wider range of staff in delivery
- Revision and renewal of condom supply contract.
Future Proposals

- Development of short health promotion “advertisements”
- Increased dissemination of health promotion messages to offenders via
  - In cell television (e.g., Dillwynia TV)
  - Inmate intranet
  - Literacy and Oracy classes.