

Update on harm-reduction policy and intervention research

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Abstract

Harm reduction is a pragmatic approach to reduce the harmful consequences of alcohol and drug use or other high-risk activities by incorporating several strategies that cut across the spectrum from safer use to managed use to abstinence. The primary goal of most harm-reduction approaches is to meet individuals where they are at and not to ignore or condemn the harmful behaviors but rather to work with the individual or community to minimize the harmful effects of a given behavior. The current review addresses some of the newest developments with respect to harm-reduction policy, prevention, and treatment. In particular, this review highlights policies and programs that have been evaluated in peer-reviewed journals and shown to be effective at reducing the harms associated with alcohol and drug use. The overall goal of this review is to present some of the most recent developments in the field of harm reduction.

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