



Innovative approaches for preventing infection with hepatitis c among drug users



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Fixpunkt - NGO in Berlin, Germany, since 1989

Harm reduction services
(social work, nursing, medicin)

- 17 syringe vending machines
- 4 mobile vans (NSP, social and medical support)
- 3 contact stores (SKA, Druckausgleich, SPAX)
- 3 supervised injecting facilities (SKA, Mobile, Birkenstube)
- Job training for drug addicts in OST (IdeFIX)
- 3 educational films
- „Abgedrückt – Let fly“ (2002) „Einwandfrei – Absolutely correct“ (2004), „Teeth health for all“ (2008)

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Fixpunkt e.V.

Fixpunkt - special issue: Hepatitis

Hepatitis A/B vaccination and counseling (1996 – 2000)

- European project „Control Strategies (2002-2004)
- Networking: German „Action alliance Hepatitis and drug use“, European „Correlation“
- Pilote „FiP-C“ (means: Early intervention, prevention, HepC)
- Testing (HCV, HIV, Syph)



Drug consumption rooms (DCR) in Germany

Actually 26 DCR in 6 of 16 German states

Legislation § 10 a Narcotics act „Licence to operate drug consumption rooms“

Aims

- Reduce mortality, morbidity
- **Promote health**
- Provide a safe environment
- Reduce public nuisance

Drug consumption rooms (DCR) and prevention of Hepatitis C

Aim: Promote health



- Raise (blood) awareness
- Improve knowledge about transmission, prevention and treatment of blood borne infections
- Improve skills (hygienic procedures, injecting, alternative routes of consumption)

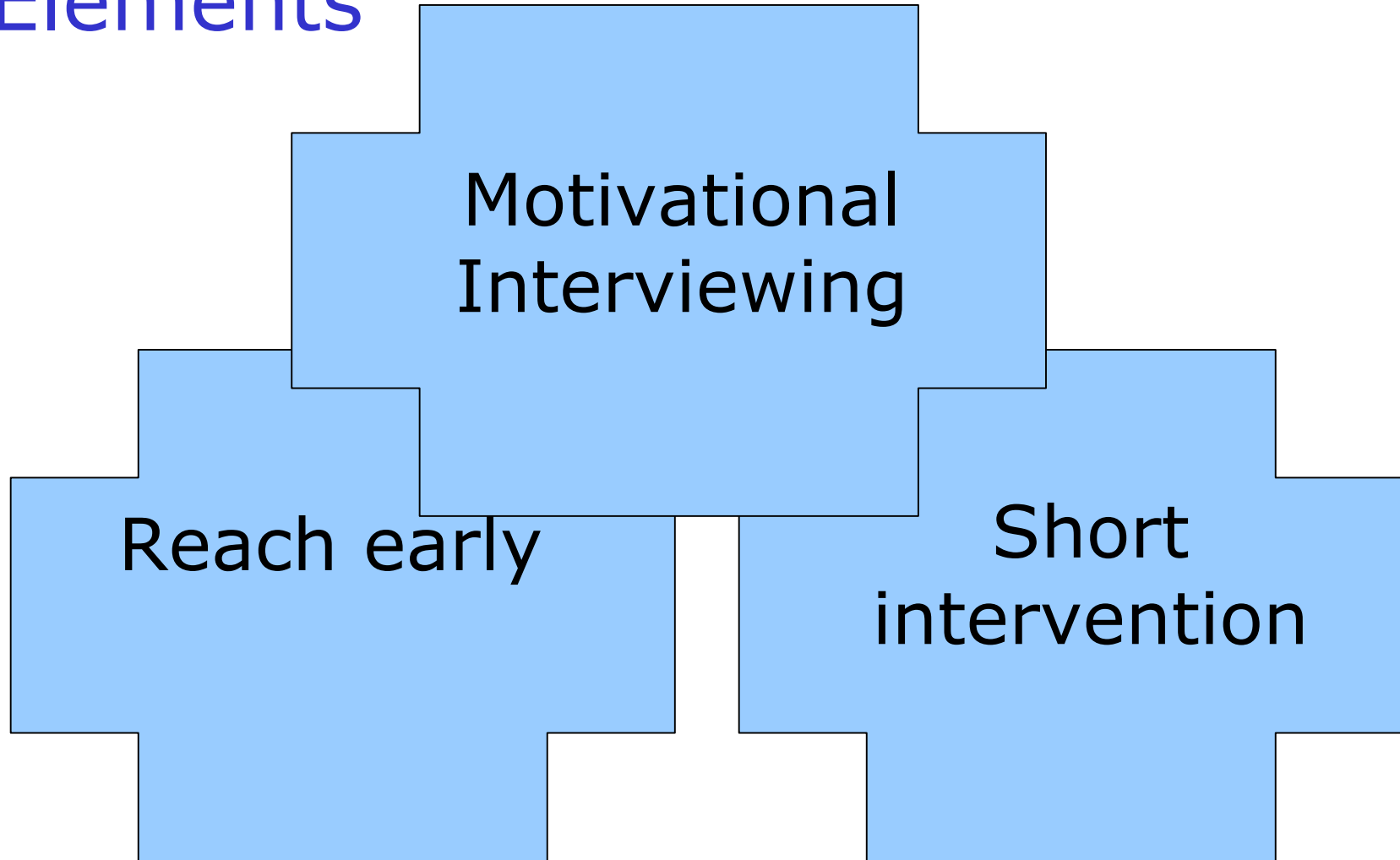


Pilot project „FiP C“, Fixpunkt Interventions

- First contact: talk about hygienic procedures in the DCR
- Talk about risks, risky behaviour and prevention
- Testing (HCV antibodies/PCR), „slow“ and „rapid“ testing
- Preventive Impulses



Elements



Talk about risks



Raise blood awareness in daily life



Train hygienic procedures



Alternatives: Inhaling, snorting



Tupfer-Test **FIP**
C

Welche Aussage stimmt?
Rütle jeweils nur 1 aus!

Frage 1: Vor der Injektion:

- Ich reinige die Einstichstelle mit einem Taschentuch.
- Ich reinige und desinfiziere die Einstichstelle mit einem Alkoholtupfer.
- Eine Reinigung oder Desinfektion ist nicht notwendig, da ich mich regelmäßig wasche/dusche.

Frage 2: Nach dem Herausziehen der Nadel:

- Nachbluten ist selten. Deshalb reicht es, die Einstichstelle eine Weile ruhig zu halten.
- Ich drücke mit einem Alkoholtupfer auf die Einstichstelle, bis es nicht mehr blutet.
- Ich drücke mit einem Trocken- bzw. Zeilstofftupfer auf die Einstichstelle, bis es nicht mehr blutet.
- Ich nehme ein sauberes Papiertaschentuch oder unbenutztes Toilettenpapier, bis es nicht mehr blutet.

Some Results

587 interventions with participants of study (N = 360)

- 310 first contacts in DCR
- 101 counselings before and after testing (1/3 with AB-positive results)
- 75 talks about risks and prevention
- 101 different preventive impulses

Some Results

- Interventions which are useful for practical work have been developed.
- German DCRs are a good place to promote prevention of infections...
- ... but not enough to reach the very beginners (due to strict legal regulations)
- ... and to get the „teachable moment“

Test it Berlin



- Aims

- Improve access to diagnostic and to medical treatment of HIV and Hepatitis

AND

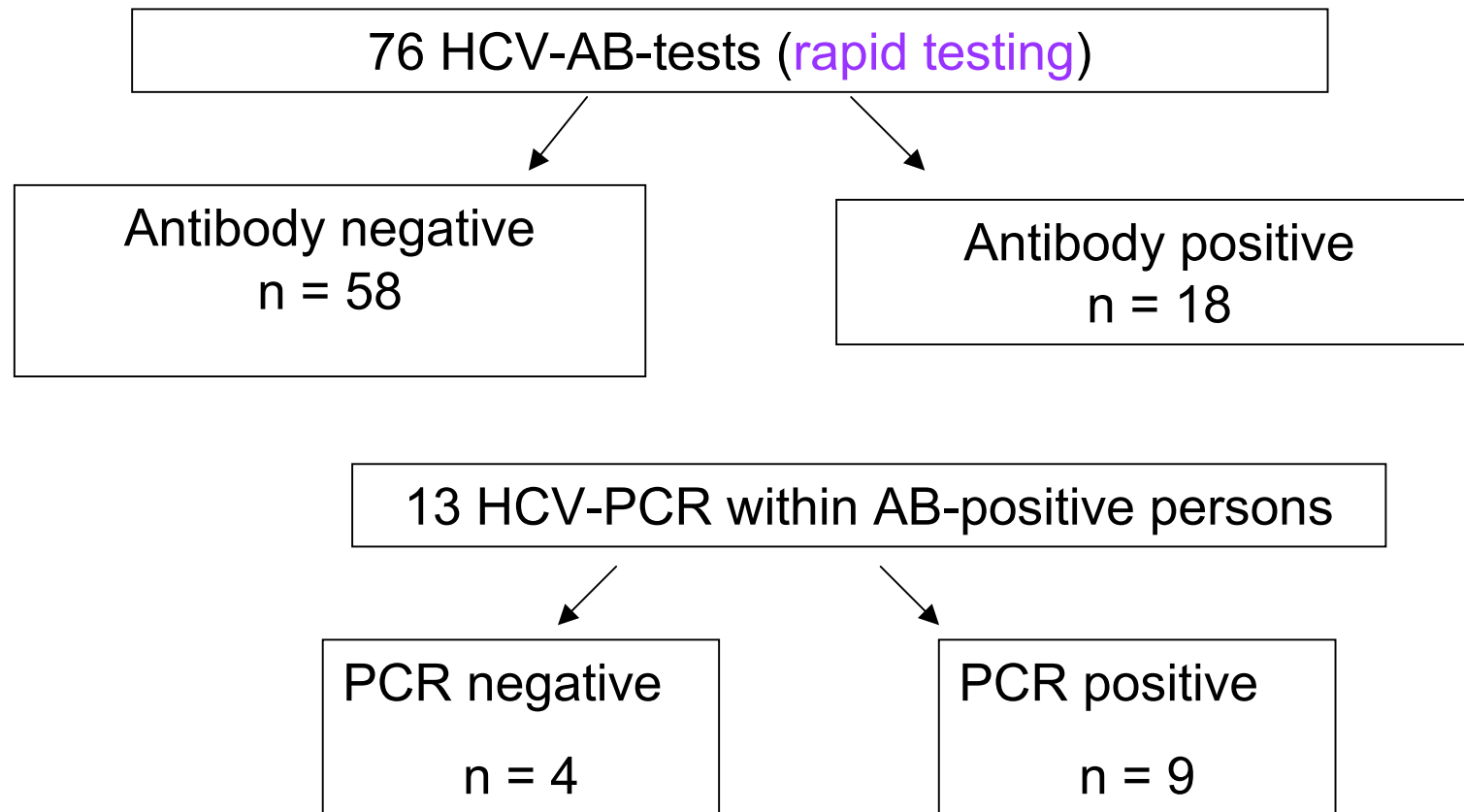
- Improve access to specialised risk counseling

- Strengthen motivation and competences to prevent infections

2011: in cooperation with Deutsche Aidshilfe
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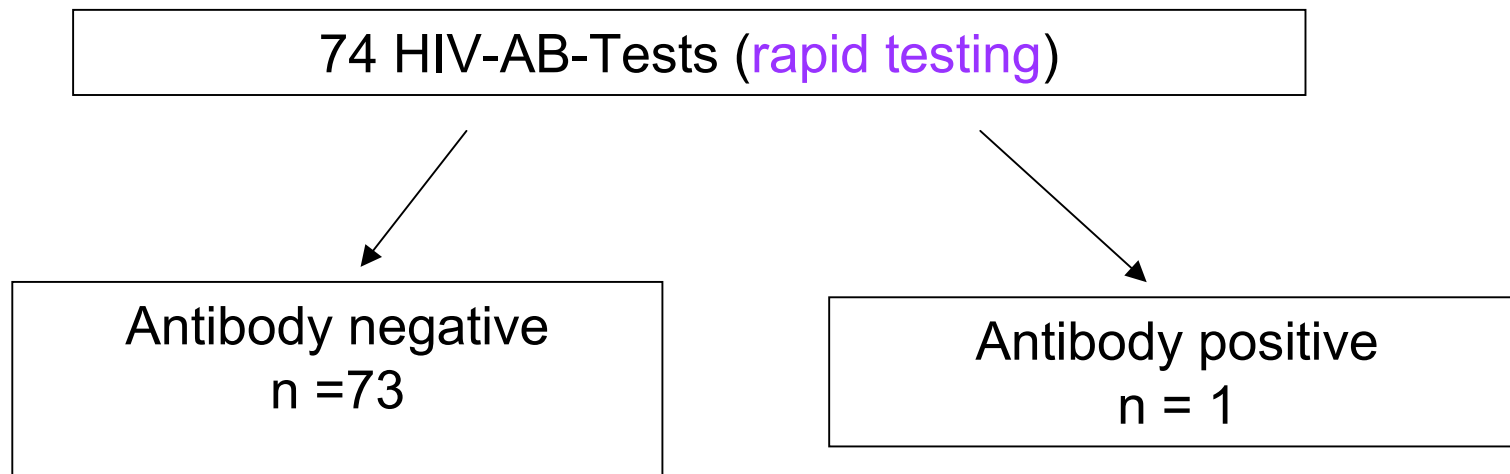
HCV Testing (pre/post counseling, rapid testing)

01/11 – 09/11



Test it Berlin

04/11 – 09/11



Test it Berlin since 04/11

Demands of target group

- HIV tests are preferred
- rapid testing is preferred
- capillar blood is favored over oral fluid



HCV PCR

- HCV AB testing is only half the way!
- think about people who have cleared the virus spontaneously or with therapy and might be reinfected.

Assessment of risks and counseling

- as much counseling as possible or as short as essential?
- one third counseling without testing
- repeated testing and counseling possible

Rapid testing takes more time than labor diagnostic testing

- patients stay longer on site
- pre- and post counseling combined
- time to discuss during waiting for the results

Combined HIV- and HCV-test counseling is demanding for staff

- challenge: be comprehensible despite complexity

Doctors needed!

- diagnostic is a physician's job.



Reflection: Next steps

- Integrate (and develop further) interventions in other settings, with other professional, other drug users, especially
 - Prepare for risks in prison (post/in prison)
 - Safer clubbing
- Develop new ideas by watching and talking with drug users during or after consumption in the DCR
- Enforce non-injecting drug use
- Hidden risks are still an issue
- Offer a big sortiment of paraphernalia (dry swabs in addition to alc swabs, straws, foils, cards for snorting etc.) and **qualified counseling**
- Improve knowledge and prepare for risks post/in prison
- Scale up rapid HCV-/HIV-testing including pre/post-counseling and support
- Keep an eye on other infections (MRSA TB)

Thanks for your attention!

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There is still a lot to do to prevent Hepatitis C!