Correlation Network Thematic Expert Groups

General
In the forthcoming four years CN will focus on three topics in particular: HCV in substance users, new drug trends and patterns and overdose prevention. This thematic focus will be incorporated in all pillars of CN: monitoring, capacity building and advocacy.

Based on the CN member assessment in the beginning of 2018, thematic expert groups are established on these topics, consisting of about 5 – 6 experts, invited by the CN office, who contribute on a voluntary base to the different activities. The groups are supposed to inform CN and its members about recent developments in their field, to review CN outputs and materials and to function as focus group for the monitoring process.

The groups will be coordinated by a coordinator each, responsible for the communication within the group, preparing and collecting information and link up with the CN office and the Scientific Expert Group, which is responsible for the development of the monitoring tool. We aim, to invite members of the groups to the annual CN meeting (in 2018, the EHRC) for a face to face meeting and to organize meetings alongside of other conferences, like IHRC.

The thematic expert groups will
- provide input in regard to the development of the monitoring tool.
  - The groups will be asked to review the proposed structure and focus of the monitoring. Which can have different approaches in the 3 areas: We might collect ‘hard’ data in regard of HCV in harm reduction, meanwhile we prepare trend report’s in the field of ‘new drugs’. The group can comment on criteria and indicators and contribute to the analysis of data and/or the monitoring report. This process returns year by year. The first tool will be launched at the beginning of 2019.

- provide input in regard to the development of a structure and content for the knowledge hub.
  - Every thematic priority will have special attention in the knowledge hub/resource centre, to be developed by CN in 18/19. The groups will review the concept of the different sections, suggest topics to be covered and attend CN office on relevant publications in the particular area.

- prepare thematic papers annually for the particular area.
  - The focus and outline of the particular paper/report can be agreed on within the group, also other experts can be invited to contribute. The
papers can highlight recent developments, experiences or anything else considered as relevant for the specific topic.

- In case of sufficient financial resources, special tasks can be subcontracted and financially supported. In the area of overdose prevention for example, we plan to prepare an assessment of online tools for overdose prevention.

- provide input in regard to the development and implementation of the annual advocacy strategy
- based on results of the monitoring, the input of the expert groups or external resources and insights, annual advocacy plans will be developed and implemented (e.g. 'advocate for inclusion of harm reduction into the cascade of care' or 'promote community testing'.) The expert groups will be asked to give input and review the strategy annually.

Current coordinators of the groups:

Scientific Expert Group: Tammi Tuukka, FHI

Responsible for the development of the Monitoring tool

Hepatitis Group: Mojca Maticic, Univ. Ljubljana

New Drug Trends: Daan van de Grouwe, Trimbos Institute

Overdose prevention: Dirk Schäffer, DAH