



Citizens' Assembly on Drugs Use

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A TRADITION OF
INDEPENDENT
THINKING



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1: Prohibition (Model A)

- Drug law enforcement & prevention have contained consumption
- Drugs remain more expensive and scarcer than if they were legal

To consider

- How do we measure policy? Number of users, numbers in treatment, drug-related deaths, overdoses, hospitalisations, drug-related crime & violence etc.
- Think longer-term - online sales & new drugs (i.e. synthetic opioids) are changing markets

2: Decriminalisation (Models C & D)

- No 'explosion' in use after decriminalisation
- Severity of punishment has minimal impact
- Decriminalisation can reduce risk of overdose & illness
- Decriminalisation can provide a conduit to services

“I think if I was offered help, I could have went down a different path... I knew nothing about recovering from addiction ... I didn't know there was another avenue to go... It can be used as an intervention” (in Leonard & Windle, 2020)

- Rehabilitation from addiction (and trauma) often comes before desistance from crime

2: Decriminalisation (Models C & D)


Some general points to consider

- Quantity threshold between possession for personal use / with intent to supply?
 - Many heroin users sell heroin – some to avoid predatory crimes
- Will sanctions be enforced, for what & by who?
- Will people be sanctioned for not attending mandated intervention?
- How will decriminalisation work in rural areas?
- Will previous convictions be expunged?
- Can the policy be overturned or modified?
- Who will monitor the new policy?
- Decriminalise home cannabis cultivation?

3: Regulation (Model E)



- Commercialisation should be avoided (state monopoly?)
- Private companies will likely:
 - promote risky use
 - lobby for lighter regulation
 - advertise & normalise
 - diversify products (i.e. edibles)
 - focus attention on heavy users – daily users responsible for est. 70% of sales (Subritzky et al., 2020)
- Price will decline & retail outlets will increase
- Consumption will likely increase, but mixed evidence – we do not know long-term impact on health
- Cannabis Social Clubs as a middle-ground?



4: No option is a silver bullet

Return to previous weeks –
need greater investment in services

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Images

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