

# “Reducing the harmful impacts of illicit drugs”

Reflections on the impact of system contact and treatment

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# What do we know about how people stop offending?

- Hope
- Strong social bonds
- Feelings of belonging and social inclusion
- Supportive state systems

# System contact

- Influence criminal behaviour
- May result in labelling, stigmatisation, and social exclusion
- Tend to escalate in line with criminal history
- Non-custodial options can also be experienced as punitive

*Well since I got caught with the drugs there a couple of weeks ago, [...]I've been getting a bit of hassle off them [the Gardaí] the last couple of weeks now. If I was to walk to the shops now and they seen me, they'd stop me and search me.*

Participant quote from Healy (2019)

# Treatment

- Offending and addiction are closely intertwined
- Treatment effectiveness
- Intervening with low-need groups and recreational users
- Dealing with non-compliance and relapses

*As far as I'm concerned when I'm on methadone, I'm still an active user [...] He's [the doctor] over there telling me that I'm a lifer on it, and I'm strongly telling him I'm not and I got so frustrated over it. Your life is more manageable but you're still on a string, you're a puppet, that's how I look at it.*

Participant quote from Healy (2016)

**Thank you!**