National surveys of people using IPEDs: a ‘history’ and the latest data

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&
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There have been two UK survey programmes looking at IPED use

1. The Unlinked Anonymous Monitoring Survey of people injecting IPEDs – Coordinated by Public Health England with Public Health Wales and PHI.

The Unlinked Anonymous Monitoring Survey of people injecting IPEDs.

- The UAM survey started in 1990 as a response to the HIV epidemic and is focused on psychoactive drug use.
- A biennial sub-survey was implemented in 2011 in England and Wales which focused on IPED use.
- The survey recruits people who inject drugs through sentinel collaborating drug services, such as, needle & syringe programmes and outreach.
- Participants provide a dried blood sample and completed a short questionnaire.
- So far three survey waves have been completed.
One in three of people using IPEDs who use NSP distribute equipment to others.

Estimated extend of secondary distribution

There were 564 participants in the sample. 160 collected for others.

Minimum:
160 participants → 667 others

Mid-point:
160 participants → 1,040 others

Range of users which may not be engaging with NSP from our sample

Injecting psychoactive drugs

Ever injected a psychoactive drug:
- 86% Yes
- 14% No

Injected psychoactive drugs during last year:
- 54% Yes
- 46% No

Hope et al. Drug and Alcohol Dependence 2017;179:83-86
Prevalence of antibodies to hepatitis C
Overall one in twenty had antibodies

- Never injected a psychoactive drug: 1.4%
- Recently (in preceding 12 months) injected a psychoactive: 39%
- Previously injected a psychoactive: 14%

Hope et al. Drug and Alcohol Dependence 2017;179:83-86
Awareness of having had hepatitis C

- Never injected a psychoactive drug
- Recently (in preceding 12 months) injected a psychoactive
- Previously injected a psychoactive

AWARE

UNAWARE
The National IPEDinfo Survey

Comprehensive survey designed to gain better insight into the nature and use of steroids and IPEDs. Open to anyone who has ever used any IPEDs.
Survey examines:
- IPEDs used and nature of IPED cycles
- Other substance use
- Health, adverse effects, uptake of health services
- Risk behaviours e.g. needle and syringe sharing, sexual health
2013, 2014 & 2015 surveys

Recruitment predominantly through relevant internet forums and social media; and via needle and syringe programmes.
2015 Survey findings: Alcohol use

Alcohol consumption amongst the sample was relatively low:
• Nearly 2/3 consume alcohol only once per month or less frequently.
• 1/4 reported that they never drink alcohol.

Indications of heavier drinking and binge drinking amongst a minority of participants:
• 4% reported drinking on 4 or more occasions each week.
• 9% reported drinking 8+ units of alcohol in a typical drinking day.
• 17% reported drinking 8+ units of alcohol once a week or more frequently.
2015 survey Findings: Adverse health effects associated with IPED use

A range of harmful effects have been associated with using IPEDs in previous research e.g. cardiovascular disease, liver and kidney damage, injuries and psychological/ mood disorders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physiological impacts – past year</th>
<th>Psychological impacts – past year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Injection site pain 27% Nausea 6%</td>
<td>Mood swings 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testicular atrophy 25% Unwanted hair 6%</td>
<td>Increased aggression 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised blood pressure 14% Hair loss 5%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gynaecomastia 13% Acne 4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Bates & McVeigh, 2016
The 2016 survey

• Two survey programmes worked together to streamline the data collection and with increased emphasis on recruiting out-with needle and syringe programme settings.

• UAM Survey part is still ongoing – data collection will compete later this year, as this survey is continuing to recruit participants over a two year period.

• IPEDinfo survey results (i.e. questionnaire data) will be published next month.

• Here we give a overview of the survey and some selected findings.
2016 IPED Survey results
Sample = 684

94% Male    Mean age 32    80% White British

(Begley et al, in press)
Patterns of IPED use

- Nine-in-ten participants reported using IPEDs orally.
- 85% reported using IPEDs through injection.
- 73% had used IPEDs both orally and by injection.
- A concerning increase in the proportion of participants reporting the use of dinitrophenol (DNP) from 1.8% in 2015 to 3.1% in 2016.
## Types of IPEDs used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oral IPEDs Used</th>
<th>Injectable IPEDs Used</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Steriods</td>
<td>Injectable Steriods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% Oestrogen Control &amp; PCT</td>
<td>3% Peptides &amp; Growth Hormones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43% Fat loss &amp; Others</td>
<td>11% Melanotan</td>
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<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</tbody>
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Begley et al, in press
Traditional motivations

To improve performance and win

– Enhance/strengthen muscle or physical performance
– Perceptions of the ideal body

Body Dissatisfaction

– Weight loss
– Cosmetic appearance of the skin and hair
29. From the following goals, please score from 1-10 how important each goal is to your own IPED use. (10 = extremely important; 1 = not at all important; 0 = not applicable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop sporting/athletic performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(non-bodybuilding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support occupational performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodybuilding (competitive)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase sex drive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodybuilding (non-competitive)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop body image / cosmetic purposes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain/regain youthful appearance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please state):</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Motivation for IPED use

- Develop body image/cosmetic purposes: 56%
- Non-competitive bodybuilding: 45%
- Develop sporting/athletic performance: 27%
- Competitive bodybuilding: 22%
- Occupational performance: 13%
- Other: 10%
- Increase sex drive: 8.4%
- Hormone replacement therapy: 7.8%
- Youthful appearance: 6.5%

Other: Strength, injury pain, cope with depression/anxiety, confidence, and increase energy.
There are many more findings in the report which is set out in a readable format - using a *Question and Answer* approach.

Finally, the survey data indicated that just over half of those reporting side-effects waited for these to go away on their own without seeking medical help/advice, and that another third self-medicated.

We are about to commence a follow-up study with Public Health Wales looking at barriers and facilitators to healthcare use in response.

[www.ipedinfo.co.uk](http://www.ipedinfo.co.uk)