

TALKING POINTS

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AUSTRALIAN
**CRIMINAL
INTELLIGENCE
COMMISSION**

Sixth National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program Report

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If asked: Is pill testing a valid means of reducing drug overdoses?

- The Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and other law enforcement agencies have concerns with the use of pill test kits, as they cannot detect a number of the substances that have caused deaths and non-fatal overdoses recently.
- As pill kits cannot detect all substances that are harmful, they may provide drug users with a false sense of security.
- Illicit drugs are illegal because they are harmful—the best approach is not to take drugs than play Russian roulette in relation to the content of the substances.

If asked: What is your position on pill testing? / Do we need to conduct pill testing to reduce harm?

- The ACIC opposes the use of pill testing as a harm minimisation strategy. Pill testing could result in illicit drug users being given a false sense of security and may still result in deaths or serious, long-lasting harm to drug users. Illicit drugs are manufactured in unregulated, clandestine laboratories that can produce pills with significant differences in their chemical composition, even within the same batch. Pill content is unlikely to be uniform across the pill so a scraping may not reveal harmful substances contained in the pill. Pill testing conducted at festivals and other events cannot guarantee the dose or concentration of drugs in a pill, nor can it identify all potentially harmful substances contained within the pill. With so many unknown and unidentifiable factors, harm minimisation efforts are better placed on demand reduction (prevention and rehabilitation) and supply reduction strategies. The best harm reduction strategy is to avoid taking illicit substances.

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