



## Promoting the Use of the REACT Toolkit to Reduce Bacterial Infections amongst People who Inject Drugs



*"With the support of the HPRU knowledge mobilisation lead we developed a strategy for achieving impact which meant we were actively driving the process. Being able to connect with our research collaborators networks was vital in ensuring the toolkit was disseminated to the right people."* Dr Jo Kesten

### Research Context

The REACT toolkit is a behavioural intervention, coupled with interventions that reduce environmental or structural risk factors (e.g. injecting equipment). It aims to help service providers support people who inject drugs (PWID) to care for their veins and make changes to help prevent bacterial infections and associated health complications. The toolkit was created in consultation with PWID, service providers, and other stakeholders, using the Person-Based Approach. It includes an instruction manual, access to an Exchange Supplies

hosted online training module, and a series of five information cards including eye-catching pictures and discussion prompts on topics such as handwashing, use of water in injection preparation and rotating injecting sites. We piloted the toolkit with four service providers from different settings in Bristol who used it in discussions with 13 PWID. The pilot showed the toolkit was well-received and feasible for staff to deliver

## Route to Impact

We collaborated with the University of Bristol's commercialisation team to offer free access to the REACT toolkit via the University's Express Licensing Portal. This allowed for easy sharing and tracking of downloads. Building on connections made when we presented our research at the UKHSA Scientific conference in October 2022 we shared the toolkit with the Harm Reduction Working Group of the English Substance Use Commissioners Group (ESUCG), who agreed to support its dissemination. The study team, which included drug treatment providers, local authority and UKHSA staff, and injecting equipment suppliers, also used their networks to promote the toolkit. It was publicised via the HPRU BSE website, Twitter, LinkedIn, and newsletters from UKHSA, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), and the Scottish Drugs Forum.

An article was also published in *DrugWise Daily*. A short feedback survey was sent to those who downloaded the toolkit and consented to follow-up contact

## Impact Outcomes

Our knowledge mobilisation efforts resulted in 195 downloads between March 2023 and November 2024 of the toolkit by people for organisations such as NHS trusts, drug treatment providers, local authorities, charities, academic institutions, UKHSA, and Public Health Scotland. International downloads came from Austria, Belgium, Australia, and the USA. The feedback survey was completed by 19 out of 154 (12%) respondents. Of these, 13 (68%) had already used or intended to use the toolkit in discussions with PWID, and 15 (79%) had shared or planned to share the resources with colleagues who work with PWID.

## Making a Difference: Lessons for Success

Working with the University Commercialisation team to make the toolkit freely available, whilst also addressing licensing issues, was beneficial and allowed us to capture information about who was downloading it and evaluate its use. Stakeholder involvement in the research from the start of the project and presentation at the UKHSA conference also helped to support wider dissemination.

## Access the Toolkit and Read the Papers

[REACT \(REducing bACTerial infections\) Materials](#)

[Jo Kesten et al](#) Harm Reduction Journal, 2023

## Find out more

To find out more about this research and the work of the HPRU in Behavioural Science and Evaluation please contact: [admin-hprubse@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:admin-hprubse@bristol.ac.uk) or visit our website <https://hprubse.nihr.ac.uk>