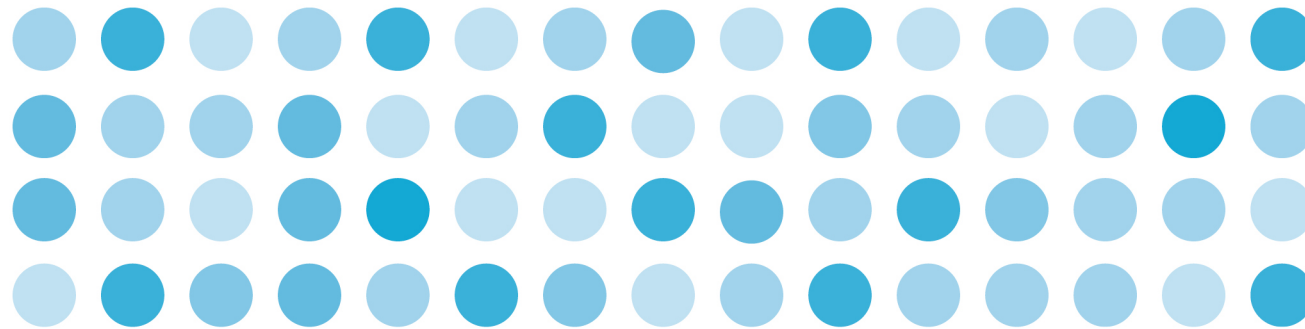


25-26 October 2010
Melbourne Cricket Ground



Anex 2010

AUSTRALIAN DRUGS CONFERENCE

Public Health and Harm Reduction

Rebecca Tipper



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Applying a Gender Analysis to Drug Use and Harm Reduction

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Women's Health Victoria

- Statewide health promotion organisation
- Primarily funded by Victorian Department of Health
- Focus on advocacy, policy, information provision and capacity building
- Work mainly with health professionals and policy makers, and Victorian women's health services
- Work underpinned by social model of health



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Sex and Gender

Sex

Biological differences between women and men

Gender

Socially constructed roles behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women



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Gender analysis

A dynamic process that assesses the impact of a policy, program or project on diverse men and women



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Sex-disaggregated data

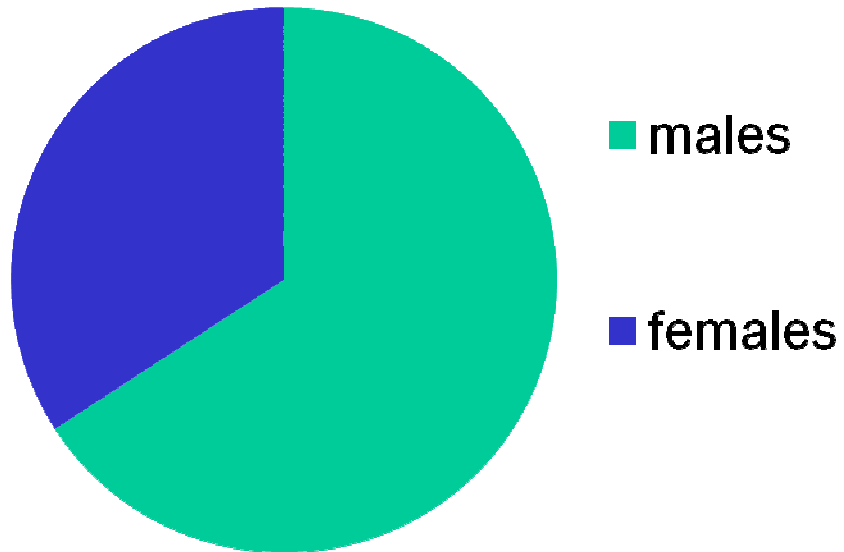
- Information that is cross-classified by sex
- The beginning of the gender analysis



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Intravenous drug use in Australia



Approximately 70 %
of IDUs are men and
30% are women



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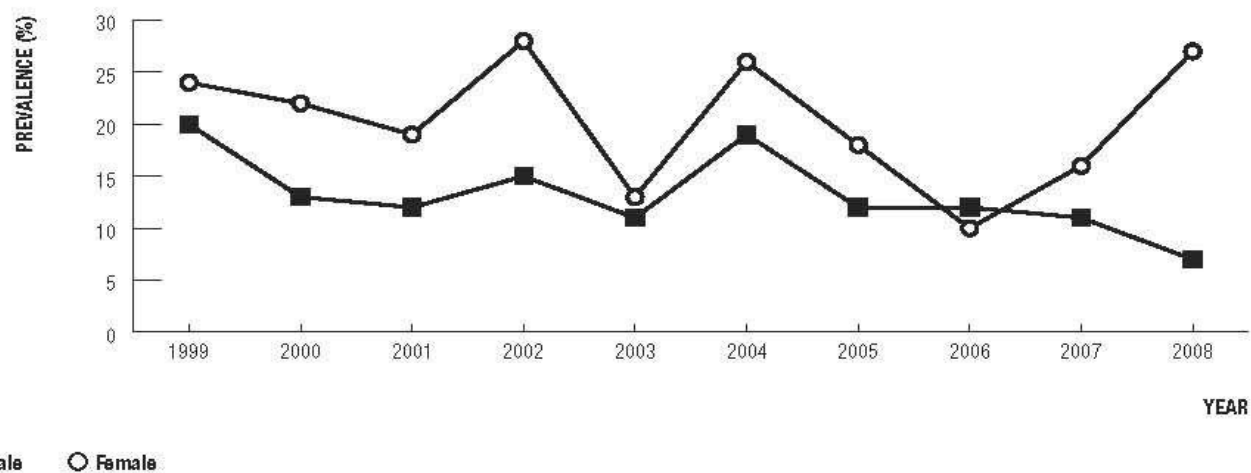
Prompts to analyse sex-disaggregated data

- Examine all the relevant details on the issue
- Consider life factors particular to women and men along side the data
- Examine the relationships between gender and other aspects of diversity



Examine all the relevant details on the issue

Figure 30 Prevalence of sharing among people¹ seen at needle and syringe programs, by year and sex



¹ With a history of injecting drug use of less than 3 years.

National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research. HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis and sexually transmissible infections in Australia Annual Surveillance Report 2009. National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW



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Consider life factors particular to women and men alongside the data

- Intravenous drug using culture
- Women's key relationships are often drug users
- Stigma around women's drug use
- Caring responsibilities of children & the threat of having them taken away
- Financial instability



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Consider life factors alongside the data

Caring responsibilities of children & the threat of having them taken away

- Mandatory reporting to child protection services
- Stigma and discrimination



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Consider life factors alongside the data

Intravenous drug using culture

- Introduction to injecting drug culture
- Injecting drug taking behaviour
- Increased risks of blood borne viruses



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Examine the relationships between gender and other aspects of diversity

- Women from Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- Same sex attracted women
- Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Women in prison
- Women with disabilities
- Women who have experienced trauma



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Examine the relationships between gender and other aspects of diversity



Same sex attracted women are 9 times more likely to inject drugs than their heterosexual counterparts



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Gender Analysis of IDU

- Almost 30 % IDUs are women
- Almost 30% of women IDUs share equipment
- Associated factors – drug using culture, power imbalances in relationships, stigma, caring responsibilities
- Certain population groups face greater barriers to accessing harm reduction services



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Public Health Harm-Reduction Responses for IDU based on sex-disaggregated data

- Strong action is required targeted to males to reduce the higher prevalence of IDU.



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Public Health Harm-Reduction Responses for IDU based on a gender analysis

- Hierarchy of IDU
- Social determinants of IDU
- Type of services available
- Stigma
- Vulnerable population groups



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Benefits of performing a gender analysis

- Go beyond sex-disaggregated data
- Lead to a more targeted approach
- Redress inequities
- Good practice



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For more information

How to apply a gender lens:

www.whv.org.au

www.health.vic.gov.au/vwhp/index.htm

Sex-disaggregated data:

www.theindex.org.au