New Report Recommends Heroin-Assisted Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder

But it is less supportive of safer consumption spaces.

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Researchers at Rand Corporation, a California-based think tank, released a comprehensive report this month on heroin-assisted treatment for opioid use disorder and safer consumption spaces. In response to staggering overdose rates, the expansion of treatment for opioid use disorder is imperative but may also be combined with these additional strategies, which are already implemented in some countries but not the United States. The report suggests that both heroin assisted treatment and safer consumption spaces should be considered part of a broader strategy to address the nation's opioid crisis.

Heroin assisted treatment for opioid disorder has been successfully implemented abroad, and high quality evidence suggests it offers individual and community benefits. Researchers argue for conducting clinical trials of heroin assisted treatment in the United States. The study found that safer consumption spaces have been less rigorously tested but notes that the longtime operation of existing safer consumption spaces outside of the U.S. suggests they have not negatively impacted the communities in which they operate. The researchers concluded that any U.S.-based safer consumption space should include a strong research component.

AIDS United and Project Inform recently released a report examining current efforts to bring safer consumption spaces to the United States. The report offers strategies for extending funding and advocating for legally sanctioned safer consumption spaces in a manner that focuses on the leadership and needs of people who use drugs.

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