

# DRUGCHECKING

SAFER DECISION-MAKING AROUND DRUG USE



FACT

#1



## IT IS A HEALTH INTERVENTION

- Delivered by **professional health workers**.
- Chemical analysis of the substance is **used to support an informed health intervention** based on the individual's physical and psychological health.
- Information is disseminated regarding **real risks of drug use and ways to reduce these risks**.
- **Operated in partnership** with health, ambulance and police services.

FACT

#2



## AUSTRALIAN EVIDENCE SUGGESTS

- **47% of samples** tested at CanTest **did not contain the expected drug**.
- Approximately one in ten samples tested resulted in a drug being discarded at the service
- **70% of people** who accessed CanTest reported **never previously accessing a healthcare worker for information** or advice about drug use
- When the substance was not what was expected, or it contained an additional drug, or testing was inconclusive; CanTest service users were four times more likely to report they would 'definitely not' use the drug.

FACT

#3



## IT IS COMMON INTERNATIONALLY

- **Drug checking is not new**, it has been **available for many years in more than 20 countries worldwide** including New Zealand, the UK, Canada, the United States and a large number of European countries like Germany, Spain and France.
- Drug Information and Monitoring System in the **Netherlands currently operates at 23 fixed-site locations** and has been in operation **since 1992**.
- A comparison of countries with and without drug checking services indicated **no evidence of an increase in rates of drug use** or mortality in countries with these services

FACT

#4



## DRUG CHECKING IS HELPFUL

- Opportunity to **effectively encourage people** who use illicit drugs to **modify their behaviours in ways that reduce risks** of harm to their health.
- **Drug checking services do not return sample substances** to people after they've been tested.
- **Many people who discovered that their substance was not as expected**, chose to hand over further substances for secure disposal.
- **Improves engagement with people who may use drugs** who may be unwilling to discuss their drug use with other services.
- **Potential early warning system and drug market monitoring**.
- Efficient and effective way to **increase safety**.
- Efficient **harm reduction** strategy