

# **WORK GROUP: EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS**

**Actividad 1.3 / Activity 1.3**

**COPOLAD II**

# General Objective of the EWS of Argentina

Compile, systematise and manage reliable information on new psychoactive substances, emerging drugs, new patterns of consumption and commercialisation to prevent and reduce their impact on people and public health through early detection, risk assessment, communication and timely response.

# Functions of the EWS of Argentina

- Timely detect the supply of new psychoactive substances, emerging drugs, changes in consumption patterns and / or commercialisation.
- Characterise chemically detected substances (in case of availability).
- Evaluate the individual and population risks involved in its consumption, production and commercialisation, from a public health perspective.
- Generate early warnings to the corresponding recipients (decision makers, State agencies, health providers and / or general population).

# Events under the surveillance of the EWS of Argentina

- **New Psychoactive Substances (NSP):** Substances of abuse not controlled or without previous presence in the country that may pose a threat to public health.
- **Emerging Drug:** emergence, resurgence or increase in the use of controlled substances with prevalence of low (or non-existent) historical consumption in the country.
- **New Consumption Pattern:** new combinations of substances, new ways of self or hetero administration or new consumption rituals.
- **New commercialisation or presentation pattern:** new physical appearance (color, size, shape, etc.), forms and / or channels of diffusion and packaging.



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# Actors members of the EWS of Argentina



# Preliminary protocol for the EWS operation

- The process of generation of alerts of the Argentinian EWS begins with the generation of a notification by detection of any of the events under the EWS surveillance from any of the nodes that make up the network.
- The detection of the event can arise by passive surveillance or by active case search.
- The notification starts as Pre-Alert and must go through a series of steps until it becomes a Consolidated Alert or is Rejected.

# EWS information sources

## SEDRONAR

- OAD studies
- Line 141
- CEDECOR
- Territorial Approach Comprehensive Units (DIAT)
- Community meeting points (PEC)
- Community care and accompaniment houses (CAAC)

## HEALTH

- C2 Clinical surveillance (SNVS)
- SIVILA (SNVS)
- Hospital Posadas National Intoxications Centre
- REDARTOX
- Toxicologic Information, Advice and Assistance centres (CIAATS)
- Toxicologic Clinical Testing Laboratories (LACTs)
- 0800 Health response

## SECURITY

- Complaints
- Seizures
- Federal and Provincial Law Enforcement



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### Justice

- Penitentiary service
- Judicial causes

### Border

- Traffic control

### ANMAT

- Control of composition and effects of products
- Scheduling of Establishments

### SENASA

- Scheduling and control of processes

### CONICET

- Research
- Laboratories

### Other Sources

- Social media/ User forums
- External EWS
- External institutions
- National and international press



# Emerging drug case report

- A 15-year-old patient hospitalised due to a severe acute hepatitis without proven etiological cause.
- Hepatitis A, B C and other hepatitis of viral and infectious origin were discarded, as well as congenital pathology.
- Symptomatology: at the time of admission, the patient was confused, little connected to the environment, asthenic, with jaundiced skin and conjunctivae.



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# Emerging drug case report

- Clinical picture: The picture presented abdominal pain located in the epigastrium and upper right hypochondrium, colic urine, accompanied by depression of the sensorium and / or excitation; mobilisation of liver enzymes, total bilirubin increase at the expense of direct Bilirubin (important cholestatic component), and a picture compatible with severe hepatic insufficiency that deserved its derivation for a possible liver transplant.
- During interviews with the patient's environment, there was a history of joint use of alcohol, marijuana and inhalation of "perfume" for approximately 3 months, every weekend.
- The referred consumption was made in a group and in the adolescent's belonging group, it was identified that other members presented the described abdominal pain, so it is estimated that there may be undiagnosed cases.

# Emerging drug case report

- The components of the "perfume" vary, but it can be a combination of chloroform, ether and ethyl chloride and can be a liquid prepared with green, yellow, black, but most of the time as it was in this case, it is colorless.
- The location of the aforementioned pain is typical of the description of the chloroform intoxication picture.
- For the treatment 20% n-acetylcysteine was used orally, which was reversing the clinical picture of the patient with a marked improvement from the first doses of this antidote.

# Emerging drug alert "perfume"

During the meeting of the Technical Committee of the EWS, it was decided that due to the case presented and after the investigation of the substance carried out by the members of the EWS, it was decided to issue the alert for "perfumes" and in particular to take care of the case of chloroform consumption.

## Agreements emerged during the meeting:

1. Request the inclusion of chloroform in the list of chemical precursors.
2. Sensitise the local health system in the particularity of the mode of consumption.
3. Proposal for the implementation of a specific protocol for acute or chronic hepatitis with unexplained cause, especially in patients with a history of substance abuse.
4. The representatives of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights: promote information throughout the system of the F.P.S (Federal Penitentiary Service) and the P.P.S. (Provincial Penitentiary Service).
5. Sedronar will incorporate in the prevention, training, territory, assistance and research, the treatment of the consumption of "perfume".

# Proposed protocol

In cases of acute or chronic hepatitis with an unclear cause, especially in patients with a history of substance abuse, we suggest to:

a) Perform the investigation by laboratory of:

- Hepatogram
- Complete blood count
- Prothrombin time

Try to perform as early as possible to help confirm the suspected picture:

- Blood phenols
- Hipuric acid in urine
- Orthoresol in urine
- tt muconic acid in urine

b) To incorporate in the toxicological anamnesis the possibility of inhaling "perfume".



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# Proposed protocol

c) Although the inhalation data of "perfume" may not appear clearly, in all patients with a history of drug use or in those in which it is impossible to obtain this information, that present a laboratory with evidence of hepatitis, begin treatment immediate with n-acetylcysteine.

d) Alert hepatologists to the possibility of patients exposed to these hepatotoxins and the characteristics associated with their consumption (usually group consumption, so other members of a patient's circle may have similar risk).



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**Thank you very much**