

Access to Harm Reduction Services in Melbourne Frequently Asked Questions

If you have any questions regarding the provision of OST or NSP at AIDS 2014 please send an email to harmreduction@aids2014.org.

Which Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST) Drugs are Available in Melbourne and in which Form?

Methadone and suboxone are both available in Melbourne. The Victorian pharmacotherapy programme dispenses methadone in liquid form only. Suboxone is available in 2mg and 8mg strengths and comes in a sub-lingual film only. Please be aware that there is no availability of Suboxone sublingual tablets in Melbourne.

There are no injectable pharmacotherapies available in Melbourne or any other part of Australia.

Note that marijuana is not available for medical purposes in Australia.

I am on Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST). Can I get medication while in Melbourne?

➤ People on OST in their Country of Origin

You will need to arrange for take-away doses from your regular medical practitioner and dosing point to last you for the duration of your stay in Melbourne. Please note you are not permitted to bring more than a 30 day supply of OST medication into Australia. People bringing OST medication into Melbourne for the conference are strongly advised to bring with them a letter from their prescribing doctor and a photocopy of the prescription that has been certified (usually by a stamp) from their dosing point. Please do not leave these arrangements to the last minute.

International prescriptions are not valid for dispensing at pharmacies in Melbourne. If you do not have take-away doses of OST for your stay in Melbourne, you will need to see the conference doctor who MAY be able to continue your OST treatment for the duration of the conference. If you are in this situation, you would need to bring with you the following:

1. A letter from your doctor needs to include the following information:
 - a. how long you have been on treatment;
 - b. what dose you are currently on;
 - c. basic identification information (name(s), date of birth);
 - d. when you were last dosed in your country of origin; and
 - e. how many take away doses you travelled with.

Template forms are available in [English](#), [French](#), [Portuguese](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), [Vietnamese](#), [Chinese](#) and [Burmese](#).

2. Your passport
3. A passport photo

The OST conference doctor will be available during the conference from Monday 21 July until Friday 25 July, from 8.30am – 10.00am. The exact location will be communicated closer to the conference. If you need assistance outside of the doctor's hours, please go to the

conference First Aid Centre or the People Who Use Drugs Networking Zone or Harm Reduction Victoria/Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League Exhibition Booth in the Global Village.

If you will need assistance prior to Monday 21 July, please contact harmreduction@aids2014.org as soon as possible.

If you know that you will need assistance from the doctor during your stay in Melbourne, please write to harmreduction@aids2014.org in advance of travelling to Australia so that we can best organize the doctor's time.

➤ **People on OST in Australia**

You will need to have your doctor follow the instructions to organize an interstate temporary transfer. Details are provided at: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/dpu/downloads/ortvic.pdf>. Please do not leave these arrangements to the last minute.

Please contact *Direct Line* for details on pharmacies close to the conference venue or your hotel where your pharmacy transfer can be provided: 1800 888 236: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/aod/directline.htm>.

How do I get an OST Prescription from the Conference Doctor Filled?

The conference has arranged for a pharmacy to supply OST to delegates who have been given a prescription by the conference doctor. The doctor will give you the name and directions to this pharmacy. No other pharmacy will be able to dispense medication prescribed by the conference doctor.

The pharmacist may ask you to sign a contract which lasts for the duration of your treatment.

Can I carry methadone or buprenorphine with me when entering Australia?

Yes, you may carry up to 30 days dosing of methadone and buprenorphine as long as you have a letter from your doctor in your country of origin and a photocopy of the prescription from the dosing point.

The Australian Incoming Passenger (customs) card includes the question: *Are you bringing into Australia goods that may be prohibited or subject to restrictions, such as medicines, steroids, illegal pornography, firearms, weapons or illicit drugs?*

You need to declare medicines and substances which may be subject to misuse, abuse or dependence, for example steroids, opioid analgesics, cannabis or narcotic based medications. Information about bringing medication into Australia is available [here](#).

Additional information can be found through:

<http://www.customs.gov.au/site/page4224.asp> and at:
http://www.aids2014.org/WebContent/File/AIDS2014_Visa_Information.pdf.

What services are available in Melbourne for people who use drugs?

Direct Line: 1800 888 236

Direct Line is a phone based 24-hour service providing information, counselling and referral on all drug related concerns including contacts with counsellors, doctors, and pharmacies who provide OST services, and locations of needle and syringe programme sites.

Phone: 1800 888 236, which is a free call from an Australian land-line. Charges apply if you call from a cell/mobile phone. You will not be able to call this number from an international phone.

Harm Reduction Victoria: 9329 1500

Harm Reduction Victoria (HRV) is the local drug user organization based in Melbourne and a member of the national network of drug user organizations headed up by the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL, www.aivl.org.au). HRV is committed to advancing the health and human rights of all people who use and inject drugs in Victoria. HRV is happy to provide peer support and information and referral on any drug related matter or concern.

For more information visit: www.hrvic.org.au, phone: 9329 1500 from an Australian phone or +61 9329 1500 from an international phone.

PAMS Free call 1800 443 844

The PAMS Service or 'PAMS' is a Victorian state-wide telephone service funded to provide information, support, advocacy, referral and mediation for pharmacotherapy consumers and their direct service providers on any client-related problem or concern. PAMS proactive and 'crisis response' approach works towards the negotiation of 'win-win' outcomes that meet the needs of the consumer as well as the service provider.

Phone: 1800 443 844, which is a free call from an Australian land-line. Charges apply if you call from a cell/mobile phone. You will not be able to call this number from an international phone.

Primary Health Care Units

InnerSpace
4 Johnson St
Collingwood
PH: 03 9468 2800

SEADS
86 Foster St
Dandenong
Ph: 03 9794 0790

SHARPS
20 Young St
Frankston
Ph: 03 9781 1622

HealthWorks
4-12 Buckley St
Footscray
Ph: 03 9362 8100

Living Room/Foot Patrol
7-9 Hosier Lane
Melbourne CBD
Ph: 03 9662 4488/1800
440 188

Access Health/Health Info
Exchange
29-31 Grey St
St Kilda
PH: 9536 7780

Emergencies

In the case of an overdose, call an ambulance (000). Police do not routinely attend incidents of overdose in Melbourne.

What happens to the information collected for the permit?

The information is held by 'Drugs and Poisons Regulation' unit of the Victorian Health Department. OST records are treated with the utmost confidentiality and are protected by the Health Records Act. Privacy legislation in Australia is very strict and any private information provided is well-protected.

Is the conference providing a needle/syringe programme (NSP) at the conference?

Yes, there will be needle/syringe provisions at the conference. The exact location of these sites will be communicated closer to the time of the conference. The below equipment will be available:

Syringes
Needles
Sharp safes
Sharp buckets

Alcoholic swabs
Sterile water
Heat-able plastic spill
proof spoons

Sterifit filters
Sartorius wheels
Butterfly devices
Terumo fabric tourniquets

Look out for the logo for NSP:

