

# National Drugs Forum 2024

Emerging drug trends:  
monitoring, communicating  
and responding

#NationalDrugsForum24

**Croke Park,  
Dublin**  
14 November 2024



An Roinn Sláinte  
Department of Health



An Bord  
Taighde Sláinte  
Health Research  
Board

The National Drugs Forum will be an opportunity for stakeholders to learn about the implementation of monitoring tools in Ireland and to get a sense of the types of information that can support preparedness to deal with threats that might still be unfamiliar. It is also a chance to think about how all stakeholders can contribute to this system meet the challenge of a changing drug world with confidence and determination.

### **Emerging drug trends: monitoring, communicating, and responding**

This year's National Drugs Forum will focus on creating awareness around early warning systems on new drugs and emerging trends. The European Union Drugs Agency have developed a well-coordinated system of communication and a robust mechanism to provide the European Commission with scientific advice on control decisions. Progress in these areas will depend on the development of national early warning systems, and this will need creation of new monitoring tools, such as wastewater analysis and drug checking services.

# National Drugs Forum 2024 Programme

09:30	Registration opens
10:00 – 10:20	<b>Professor Eamon Keenan</b> , Health Service Executive (HSE), <i>Monitoring Emerging Drug Trends in Ireland</i>
10:20 – 10:40	<b>Dr Rachel Christie</b> , European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA) <i>Developments in analytical techniques to support early warning and risk assessment</i>
10:40 – 11:00	<b>Vicki Craik</b> , Rapid Action Drug Alerts and Response (RADAR) <i>RADAR: Developing early warning drugs surveillance as part Scotland's public health system</i>
11:00 – 11:30	Break
11.30 – 12.45	<b>Marketplace 1</b>  Sinead McNamara, <i>HSE National Drug Treatment Centre</i> , HSE Rebecca Doyle, <i>Key workers incident reporting form</i> , Ana Liffey Drugs Project Deirdre Mongan, <i>European web survey on drugs</i> , HRB Damian Harrington, <i>Cork EW network</i> , Mercy University Hospital Cork Adrian Moughty, <i>Emergency departments: monitoring overdoses</i> , Mater Hospital Nicki Killeen, <i>Responding to synthetic opioids outbreaks in Dublin</i> , HSE
12.45 – 13.45	<b>Lunch</b>
13.45 – 15.00	<b>Marketplace 2</b>  Nicki Killeen, <i>Drug checking and festival outreach</i> , HSE Sarah Killoran, <i>Forensic Laboratory drug analysis</i> , Forensic Science Ireland Wim Meijer, <i>Wastewater analysis</i> , University College Dublin Cian Dowling Cullen, <i>Sources of data in EWS</i> , HSE Suzi Lyons, <i>Drug treatment data and early warning</i> , HRB HSE Safer Nightlife Programme information stand
15.00 – 15.30	<b>Close</b>

# Speakers

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Prof Eamon Keenan

Prof Eamon Keenan has been working as the HSE national clinical lead of addiction services since 2016. He is a consultant psychiatrist in substance misuse, and a clinical professor in addiction studies at Trinity College Dublin. He has been working in this area for over 30 years and has published extensively in peer reviewed medical journals. He is one of the Irish representatives on the management board of the EUDA. He has a keen interest in the area of emerging drug trends and recently coordinated the Irish response to a number of overdose clusters associated with synthetic opioids.



Rachel Christie

Dr Rachel Christie is a chemist with a Bachelor's degree in forensic and environmental chemistry and a PhD in 'The analysis, synthesis and characterisation of new psychoactive substances of abuse'. She has worked at the European Union Drugs Agency (EUDA), previously the EMCDDA, for more than ten years in the action on new drugs sector as a principal scientific analyst, with responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the EU Early Warning System on new psychoactive substances.



Vicki Craik

Vicki Craik is a public health intelligence adviser within the drugs team at Public Health Scotland (PHS). In this role, she manages Scotland's drugs early warning system and supports the development of drug surveillance in Scotland, including hospital toxicology and drug checking. Vicki trained as a research and development scientist, and prior to joining PHS she worked for a national front-line drug service where she specialised in emerging drugs trends and new psychoactive substances.

# Report on National Drugs Forum 2024

Reports from the workshop will be compiled and these will be made available on the website of the National Drugs Library ([www.drugsandalcohol.ie](http://www.drugsandalcohol.ie)) and included in the Winter 2024 issue of *Drugnet Ireland*.

