

**Ana Liffey Drug Project & Addiction Research Centre TCD
Half-Day Conference to Mark the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of Ireland's first
Harm Reduction Agency - The Ana Liffey Drug Project**

Harm Reduction for Problem Drug Users

Date: 15th March 2007

Venue: Edmund Burke Theatre, Arts Building TCD
Programme

Speakers Abstract: Risk, Injecting Settings and Environmental Approaches to Harm Reduction
Keynote Speaker: Dr Tim Rhodes, Centre for Research on Drugs & Health Behaviour, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Risk, injecting settings, and environmental approaches to harm reduction

Public health interventions in drug misuse have focused on individual behaviour change at the cost of social interventions and environmental change. This presentation focuses on reducing health risks related to drug injecting, and injecting in 'public' injecting environments in particular, and calls for greater emphasis on 'safer environmental interventions' in harm reduction. The presentation combines qualitative data with evidence-based review on public injecting and interventions creating safer drug injecting environments, including 'drug consumption rooms'. Qualitative data are drawn from two studies, including video recorded observations of speedball injecting in public and semi-public injecting settings in London and Bristol, and semi-structured interviews with 49 drug injectors in South Wales. These data are used to reflect on how injecting settings shape risk and its reduction, and how the experience of injecting in public places intersects with risk identity and social marginalisation. The paper concludes by cautioning against spatial programming and urban design interventions which can cause the geographic and social displacement of drug injectors, and emphasises the need for community-based 'safer injecting environment interventions'.

Tim Rhodes