

Groups in Social Fabric: Prisons and their handling of drug use in German Custody

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Objectives: Health care in prison and the accompanied issue of drug consumption amongst inmates has not yet been given much consideration in scientific research in Germany. Prevalences and other indicators relating to addiction in an intramural setting are frequently outdated and therefore often not reliable. For that reason a qualitative study is planned and the drawing up of a hypothesis for further scientific work is targeted. Despite the aim of incarceration to prepare inmates for a life without criminal behaviour and therefore without trafficking, possession and consequently without drug consumption, the little information and data that are available point to continued drug consumption in prisons.

Methodology: A range of resources is needed on the part of the penal system to cope with the drug consumption of inmates. Distribution of resources concerning drug consumption and addiction in a correctional facility in Wittlich (Rhineland-Palatinate/Germany) will be outlined within the description of the organizational framework. A project which was implemented for detecting new psychoactive substance (NPS) consumption will be the focus of this work. Especially the fact that NPS consumption is reported by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction to be an increasingly important aspect in prison settings around Europe is a reason for choosing this particular project. More knowledge about NPS use in prisons is needed for implementing a proper handling with this topic in penal facilities not only in Germany, but as well in Europe. The prison in question has been selected due to their proactive handling of drug consumption and its implications for innovative health care within prisons. A subsequent qualitative study involving different social groups located within the prison-setting is planned. The different needs and perceptions pertaining to drug consumption and addiction in prisons will be surveyed with the help of structured qualitative interviews.

Results: Dispersion of resources concerning drug consumption in prison is a current issue which is expressed by the fact of introducing new programs for identification of drug consumers. A program which is designated to be introduced in every prison in Rhineland-

Palatine and which is already implemented in the prison in Wittlich shall be presented. The program faces the consumption of new psychoactive substances and data concerning this topic will be presented. A comparison will be made with a prison not yet running this project.

Conclusions: Particularly the impact of directives given by the upper management of a prison regarding proactive handling of drug consumption and addiction in an intramural setting will be discussed and depicted in the course of the project.