

Arrangements for Pilot Scheme on hair drug testing

Objectives

- To offer an alternative drug testing method to interested parties providing drug treatment and rehabilitation services, facilitating their treatment and rehabilitation services
- To gauge service providers' demand for hair drug testing service to prepare for the transfer of hair drug testing technology to the industry

General

- Open to all interested NGOs operating the 40 DTRCs, 7 CCPSAs, Lok Heep Club and 34 youth outreaching teams and 7 SACs operated under Hospital Authority (as "unit" below)
- Launch on 1 June 2010
- Free of charge hair drug testing service
- Government Laboratory (GL) will provide drug testing for **50 hair samples per week**

Methodology

- Hair testing method accredited by the Hong Kong Accreditation Service and complied with international standard ISO 17025 for eight classes of drugs¹.
- All hair samples would undergo a screening test. Samples screened positive would undergo a confirmatory test to confirm the presence of the detected drug(s).

Submission

- All hair samples should reach GL **by hand** by every **Monday 4pm**.
- Each unit should follow GL guidelines for hair sampling. Hair samples should be packed in paper or tinfoil packet, put in a plastic bag and tape-seal the bag.
- Each unit should generate their own case number for each submission for their reference.
- Each unit should submit the hair samples with completed submission form(s) (prepared by GL for distribution to each unit)
- Normally, **6 standard drugs** can be selected for testing (i.e. Cannabis, Cocaine, Cough Syrup, Ecstasy, Ice, Ketamine). Each unit may specify particular drugs to be tested in the submission form.

¹ The 8 classes of abused drugs and the related metabolites are: **Ketamine** (Ketamine, Norketamine), **Amphetamines** (Amphetamine, Methamphetamine), **Heroin** (Morphine, Codeine & 6-Monoacetylmorphine), **Cough Syrup** (Codeine), **Cocaine** (Benzoylecgonine, Cocaine, Ecgonine methylester), **Ecstasy** (MDMA, MDA), **Cannabis** (Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol and 11-Nor-delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol-9-carboxylic acid) and **Benzodiazepine** (Nimetazepam).

Confidentiality and consent

- The scheme should be conducted voluntarily. Hair drug testing should only be conducted upon the clients' consent. Drug testing result should only be used for the purposes of treatment and rehabilitation by the unit.
- Each unit should follow their own policy concerning the protection of personal data.
- Hair samples collected would only be accompanied by a case number (generated by the unit). GL would not be provided with any personal identifiable information.

Reporting

- Test results would be released in the format of a report. Colleagues of unit should collect the reports from GL **by hand**.
- Following GL's usual practice, the report would only state whether the drug test yields positive or negative results for each respective drug. Such result should be an indicator of whether a person has abused or has been exposed to drugs in the past three months.
- In case where units have questions on the interpretation of the result or would like to further understand its implication, they should discuss with GL or consult medical practitioners as appropriate.
- Normally, report would be ready for collection **on Friday** of the same week. Unit may contact GL to see if the reports are available for collection if necessary.

Remarks

- Once the number of hair samples received in that particular week exceeds 50, those hair samples may need to be **re-scheduled** to the next week for analysis
- Depending on the response in the initial stage, a **quota** of hair samples for testing each month may be set for each unit to ensure each interested player can benefit from the new service.