

# THE Graduate

During my time as an active drug user I had many crazy adventures that led me to many crazy places. One such event was my time as a Drug Court of NSW participant. My partner at the time and I were planning to do a geographical to South Australia. I was using the gear and smoking pot daily, living in a house that I owed a heap of rent on and doing various illegal activities to support my habit. I ended up with a number of charges against me. Since we were planning to leave the state I hadn't bothered going to the court dates.

One really hot day – 40 degrees plus – my partner, our son and I were visiting our dealer in our car, which was known to the local filth (as were my ex and me for not having licenses). We had the windows down and I was wearing a crop-top and shorty-shorts in my 46kg splendour.

A cop car passed us as we drove home. I furtively looked back to see if they were doing a u-ey, and they were. My heart dropped; my partner was wanted too and would go away for a stretch if he got pulled over. The car was valuable and he didn't just want to leave it on the side of the road. Our 2½ year-old was in his car seat in the back and my ex didn't want to give the cops reason to charge him for other stuff like reckless endangerment of the boy, so we stuck to the speed limit with the cop car following behind, flashing its lights. So ensued the slowest police chase ever. Looking back it was really quite hilarious.

We drove to the house of my partner's ex and pulled into the driveway, blazing lights and sirens behind us. A lot of shit was going through my mind, but I wanted my boy to say goodbye to his dad and completely forgot that I had warrants out. I stood there in the driveway, son on my hip, with a view to seeing my ex off, when *another* unmarked suss-bus screeched to a halt in the small suburban street. Two cops jumped out like their arses were on fire and screamed at me "Stop! Police!" with their usual subtlety – I mean, I wasn't exactly armed and dangerous. We both ended up under arrest, leaving my son with his father's ex. I remember the cops insulting and trying to bait me in the car, calling me a no-good mother and a junkie, which was really helpful!

I detoxed off the gear cold-turkey and excruciatingly in remand at Silverwater. The jail medical staff gives withdrawing heroin users zero sympathy and zero medication. I was starting to come good about six days later when I got called to the office to receive some paperwork. It was court orders removing my baby son from my care. I lost it – my knees went from under me and I dropped to the floor with tears blurring my eyes. Only then was I given a single, measly 5mg valium, but only to calm me down. Didn't even touch the sides, but hey.

I was actually happy to be inside at this point: no responsibility to feed my habit/ex/son every day, no verbal abuse, no daily uphill struggle to get money, get well, get food. The screws pointed out I must really have had a fucked-up life on the outside to be glad to be in jail. That started me thinking. I was 26, homeless, loveless, jobless, a drain on society and now childless to boot. I asked myself what steps I could take to start the long road to piecing my life back together. I chose to apply for the parents and children's program at Odyssey House, get my son back and fix my life. The way to do this with the charges I was facing was to undertake the NSW Drug Court program.

The Drug Court has a weekly ballot that you have to go into, done by surname, and you have to go attend court for it. It was no fun getting up at the crack of frigging dawn to travel all around Sydney in a truck to sit in a cell and wait for the ballot to happen. I mentioned I was arrested on a hot-as day wearing a crop top and shorty-shorts. Because DC participants tend to get bailed or released in one form or another, the jail wouldn't let me go in their greens (apparently they were concerned that I'd keep them!). So I spent the whole day freezing my bony arse off in trucks and cells, exposed to jeering and taunts from the men every time I walked past.

I won the ballot. My crimes were eligible, I pled guilty (a requirement of commencing a DC program) and I had no violence or assault charges so I got accepted. I was then bounced back to Silverwater. All DC participants are required to undergo a fortnight in the detox unit segregated from the rest of the jail before they undertake their DC program. I was already clean by this point and thought it

ridiculous – but those are the rules. At the time the detox unit was a dingy little cell block at the front of Silverwater with about eight one-out cells in it, a small kitchen/lounge area, small laundry and in-cell shower facility. I hear that it's been updated and is shiny, new and well-outfitted with a flat-screen TV and all!

Communication and honesty are at the core of the program. If you talk about what's going on for you and admit to any problems like using or missing a dose, then I feel you will get

the most out of it. The Drug Court acknowledges it's not easy to turn your life around, to go from roting and using for years to dosing, not using, paying bills, caring for your kids and dealing with life straight. You need help and support and you will make mistakes along the way.

A team of nursing staff, counsellors and welfare officers help you formulate a personalised plan that outlines your activities and obligations on the DC program. The judge reviews it and sentences you for your crime/s. In my case, he suspended my six-month sentence whilst I undertook rehabilitation. I was given a copy of my plan and signed it demonstrating my understanding and willingness to participate. There are three "phases" for a DC participant. Phase I is "Initiation and Stabilisation", Phase II "Consolidation" and Phase III "Re-Integration".

My plan entailed full-time rehabilitation, an abstinence-based set-up (no meds or 'done) that required me to stay in rehab, provide clean urines, abide by their rules and do my best to participate in the program for at least six months. A parole officer visited me regularly at Odyssey to monitor my progress and send reports to the Court on my behalf.

The Drug Court has a system of "sanctions" which are accumulated against participants for non-compliance with their program. If you miss an appointment without

telling anyone, or slip up and use something, or fail to attend court, the Judge can apply a sanction. Once you accumulate a certain number you are admitted back to the jail detox unit to "serve" your sanctions, your DC plan is

amended if it's not suitable or working properly for you, and off you go to continue your program. If you receive sanctions then stay clean and on-program for the next few weeks, the judge can use his discretion to remove them.

I stayed at Odyssey for longer than my mandated six months, doing nearly



11 months all-up, until it came time for me to move back into the community. I went to Parramatta to report to the Court and negotiated to continue my Phase III. The Court were fine with me entering the community, as I had far outdone my obligation to stay in the rehab centre and was still providing clean urines – in Phase III you do two a week and report to the Court monthly. I enrolled in study to get my HSC and continued my program.

It took me 18 months all up to get through and I am a Drug Court graduate. I received a "rising of the court" at the end of my program and they had a graduation ceremony for me and a few other graduates. All the officials talk about your progress through your program, and wish you well in future endeavours. This is then followed by a catered lunch with the judge, solicitors, prosecutor, parole, nurses, registrar and friends and family. You are also presented with a Certificate of Graduation signed by all the people involved in the Court.

In general I found it a challenging but positive experience. I have a tendency (much to the annoyance of many of my friends at times!) to find the silver lining to everything in my life. One of my favourite adages is: "Positive breeds positive and negative breeds negative."

*Candice*

# *I Think I'm* Straight Now

I started using when I was sixteen. Love at first shot.

It was the usual story: I thought I'd found the Holy Grail.

I chose to use for a year, then I spent the next

twelve years trying to end the affair. I

was on about four different metha-

done programs over the years

and found life worse on it.

I'd usually sell doses for

gear, banging it up to

try to feel something,

getting so down

about the program

that I'd jump off

high doses cold and

then overdo it with

benzos I obtained to

help detox off the 'do-

ne. Then I'd start using

again for a few months

before getting on another

program again.

I couldn't see how 'done helped

you live a "normal life." I felt a lot more

normal when using but the lifestyle wears you out

from time to time. You kid yourself that the 'done will

give you a bit of respite from all the madness and from

the perpetual cycle of obtaining the cash required to sup-

port your habit.

I can honestly say that the only regret about my using

years was not being able to have my daughter back in my

care. At the age of seven she stayed with my parents while

I tried to get my shit together. That turned into five years.

I felt that I was a good mother while maintaining a habit

and I have had confirmation from straight people who

knew me at the time. It was only when I used benzos that

things went chaotic.

Thirteen years after I started using, after many attempt-

ed detoxes, programs and rehabs, I moved interstate,

away from the Sydney heroin scene. Using anywhere else

in Australia, after the luxury of the nineties' open-market

scoring in Cabra, seemed pointless. Still on the 'done, I

tired of the whole scoring thing and decided to

try to rebuild my life.

I did not know how to do this or

if it was possible, but I had

a glimmer of faith, deep

down inside somewhere in

what faintly resembled

my heart, that maybe I

could try.

I had a conviction that

I was meant to live af-

ter numerous brushes

with death (some ac-

cidental, some not) had

always left me bouncing

back against the odds – to

my disappointment at the time.

I saw an ad on the TV one day for a

place that could help if you were wishing

to change something in your life. I was drawn

to make that call. I ended up in a rehab in the bush,

jumping off 100mg of 'done. I hated it; I didn't sleep for

two weeks. But I thought this might be the cat's ninth life

so I'd better stay. I stayed for eight months.

The first year of being straight the killer was boredom,

but very slowly things started coming back in my life that

I once had been interested in.

A few years later I started studying Counselling and

Drug and Alcohol work, I had another daughter, started

doing some voluntary work at an emergency relief centre

to get a foot in the door back into employment eventually.

I started to address all the old bad debts from the past

and slowly got them all paid so I could one day have a

credit rating again. That was a bloody good feeling!

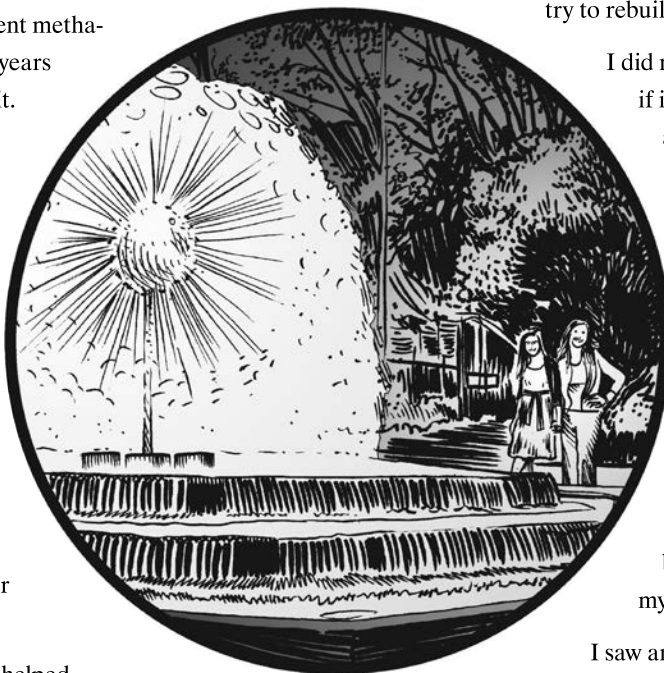


Illustration: Glenn Smith

## User's Story

Eventually I got into welfare work in a paid capacity and have been employed for four years. I have bought and sold two houses. I'm not big-noting; this is just what happened to me.

I've been clean for thirteen years now, the same amount of time I used. There's a nice symmetry to it. Even after thirteen years I still feel like an alien in a straight society at times. I can't share the things I've done in conversation with others. But I also feel strong and proud. I live with the knowledge that I could probably get through anything life throws at me. I know what I escaped from.

I've had to fight so hard to get where I am that I will not let anyone or anything take that away from me and I will never forget to thank God that I was given a second chance at life.

Some people ask me "How do you get off the gear?" But there is no formula. What works for some doesn't

for others. Circumstances, environment and opportunities for all of us are different. I think that if it is your time, you will be able to make it in spite of whatever help is around you. People tried to help me for years but it was no good because it wasn't the time for me. I just used them up and pushed them away.

I am really grateful for all my experiences, both good and bad, with smack. It taught me a lot and made me dig deep to keep it all going for as long as I did. I would never have known what I was made of unless I had the experiences of getting into and out of smack.

I went back to Sydney recently. I took my daughter for a two-week sightseeing trip. On the last night we had some pasta on Darlinghurst Road, visited the British Lolly shop across the road, enjoyed watching the fountain for a while. I thought "Yeah, I think I'm straight now."

*Anonymous*

## Did you take part in the Australian Treatment Outcome Study?



**We are looking for people who were part of the Australian Treatment Outcome Study (ATOS), a study run by the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, looking at what treatments work best for heroin users in Australia.**

ATOS started in 2001-2002 and most people had their first interview at a drug treatment service (e.g., at a methadone clinic, detox, or rehab) or at an NSP. These same people were interviewed again several times up until 2005. If you were in this study, some of the interviewers you would have talked to are Kath, Kate, Alys, Anna, Sandra, Ev and Nicky.

The study has been re-funded for an 11-year follow-up, and we are looking for the same people we interviewed between 2001 and 2005 to do another interview. If you think you were interviewed as a part of ATOS, please call Jo on 9385 0304 or 0477 426 503. The interview will take about an hour and you will be given \$40 for out of pocket expenses.

That

# Niggling Feeling

On a cold winter's morning, my partner had woken me to go and pick up a few deals left at the house of a friend who was away on holidays. The journey would only take me ten minutes, resulting in a nice shot when completed.

I would usually go without hesitation, but for some reason I whinged and complained about having to go. I even asked my partner to accompany me, as I really didn't want to go. That should have set off warning bells, as I was never one to refuse an invitation to party. I realise now that my intuition was trying to warn me about something. Eventually I was persuaded to go.

When I arrived at my absent friend's place, still and dark and cold, I noticed from afar that the screen door was wide open. This sparked a hint of concern, as it was usually shut.

I hadn't noticed the two guys standing in the doorway until I was basically on top of them. They were smaller than me in height and build, and had that strung-out look about them. One guy had pale unshaven skin, dark beady eyes and shoulder-length greasy hair. He did the talking whilst the other guy stood silently, face-down behind him. To this day, I can picture the speaker's face but would not recognise his mate; he was like a phantom.

I could sense the desperation in the guy's voice as he explained that a parcel should have been left for him and his mate. I should have listened to what my heart was trying to tell me, which was to get the hell out of there. But being young and naïve at the time, I took the bait and opened the front door to the apartment, letting the others in behind me. I eagerly accessed the drawer containing the deals and discovered there were only four. I had a problem, as this was the amount I was to pick up. I hesitantly explained the situation and told the two guys they would have to return tomorrow, when my friend would be returning.



One of the guys became argumentative so I decided, out of consideration, to sell one deal to them. Insisting they give me cash for the deal fell on deaf ears.

I was then confronted with aggression and a four-foot chain. One of the two stood by the door, blocking my escape. The other came toward me demanding the remaining deals. There was no way I was giving up my stash, knowing what my partner, waiting back home, would do.

In a panic I reached for the phone. I was instantly rapped across the knuckles, knocking the phone out of my hand. A warm flow of blood followed. Shocked and confused, I was backed onto the bed, where an assault of chain whips started, repeatedly belting down on my thigh.

I had two options: lay there and cop a beating or fight back. I chose the latter. The phone lay next to me on the bed. I grabbed it and brandished it as a weapon, screaming as I pushed violently past the chain-wielder, who shouted at his "watchman" to stop me.

Both assailants failed in their attempt to stop me, due to the adrenalin coursing through my body and my murderous screams of "HELP!", waking the neighbourhood. They both fled.

I got into my car and sped home, reliving the story to my partner, who at first wouldn't believe my experience. After showing him my coked thigh, turning grey and yellow, his realisation of my attack started to sink in. For several weeks after this attack I was on the lookout, hoping to recognise my assailants, but to no avail.

My intuition presented itself on that cold winter's morning, but I ignored it. I was a moth drawn to the flame. It was the last time I was going to be a victim. I had learned a valuable lesson: Listen to your inner voice. Trust that gut instinct.

*Glenn*

LOOK, IF YOU DARE, IT'S...  
**GUTTER POLITICS!**



ON THE STREETS. A TURF WAR...  
TWO PARTIES STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL

RIGHT NOW, JULIA HAS CONTROL...  
RELYING ON AN UNSTABLE ALLIANCE  
OF INDEPENDENTS AND TURNCOATS.  
BUT FOR HOW LONG?



AHR... ER... YEAH.

THESE TURKEYS  
ARE TROUBLE

THEY'LL BE  
FINE, AS  
LONG AS  
WE KEEP  
THEM  
TOGETHER.



I WILL  
NOT BE  
DENIED  
MY  
DESTINY

BUT JULIA KNOWS THAT TONY WILL  
STOP AT NOTHING TO  
SNATCH POWER...



HE SPIES CRAIG, THE MOST TOXIC OF  
JULIA'S ALLIES SITTING ALONE  
ON THE CROSS BENCHES



BASH!  
BASH!  
BASH!  
BASH!





# The Greens' John Kaye

## Talks Medicinal Cannabis

*Dr John Kaye MLC is one of five Greens parliamentarians in the NSW Upper House. An MP since 2007, Kaye has a background in electrical engineering, working for Victoria's State Electricity Commission, teaching and conducting research into sustainable energy at the University of NSW.*

*In the spring session of parliament, Kaye will table a motion to introduce a trial of medicinal cannabis for people with specific health and pain problems – an idea first floated before NSW Parliament in the 1999 Drug Summit. Last April, Kaye took time out from a busy schedule to speak about medicinal cannabis use with Mathew Bates.*

**John Kaye:** The objective is to get a motion through the Upper House that calls on Minister for Health Jillian Skinner to conduct a trial of the therapeutic and palliative benefits of medicinal cannabis. The Minister has the legislative power to conduct a trial. Given that this was a recommendation at the 1999 Drug Summit, we think a motion is enough to push the Minister over the line and do what should have happened 13 years ago.

We first put out a discussion paper. And we're very grateful for the feedback we got from a range of different perspectives. Some of it was "why don't you forget this [trial] and go ahead and just legalise cannabis?" That's a point of view which has validity but that's not what we're doing here. The Greens are dealing with the irrationality of banning cannabis products from a therapeutic/palliative chain while, for example, products that come from opium are used regularly as both therapeutic and palliatives. By the time you go to press, we will have put out another discussion paper which is taking on board what other people have said. We're doing this slowly and cautiously, because we need to make sure we have a watertight proposal that has the support of the community.

A lot has happened since 1999. The American Medical Association has affirmed the benefits of medicinal cannabis and has called for further studies. The Australian Medical Association is a little more cautious but they support further research. The Royal College of Physicians in

the UK supports further studies. The medical research community is arguing very strongly for trials. So there's even more reason for doing it now than there was 13 years ago.

**User's News:** What support within the NSW Parliament do you anticipate and where do you think the hurdles will come from?

**JK:** The Christian Democrats will be totally opposed. They are completely ignoring all evidence on the whole issue of drugs. My challenge to Fred Nile and his colleague Paul Green is: if you don't let this trial go ahead, will you refuse to use codeine from now on? Codeine is derived from the same plant that provides heroin, so your logical stance should mean that you do not use codeine. If you have an operation – and I hope you don't – will you refuse any opioid pain relief? They should be consistent and allow people, for whom there are therapeutic benefits, access to cannabis and its derivatives.

**UN:** One of the recommendations of the Drug Summit Working Party's report was further research.

**JK:** The trial is about collecting more evidence and I think that evidence will be useful, although there have been lots of trials around the world. But also I think it's about building confidence that there isn't a leakage between medicinal prescription of cannabis and the recreational cannabis market. Creating that confidence amongst politicians is an important step towards widespread use of cannabis as a medical treatment.

**UN:** You've called for the establishment of a medicinal cannabis expert advisory panel that would consist of medical professionals and public health officials.

**JK:** Our current model is four people appointed by the Minister from the medical profession and four from the public health community. The public health community has an understanding of recreational cannabis use in a way that some of the medical profession won't. The public health community also has a fairly keen understanding of



people who have ongoing chronic conditions that aren't necessarily being treated by a specialist.

**UN:** You haven't spoken about involvement from members of the community who currently consume cannabis specifically for medicinal purposes. Was there any reason why not?

**JK:** In a rational world, that's exactly what we would do. We invite people who currently use cannabis medicinally to comment on our discussion paper and to have their input at this stage in the design of the trial. We hope the trial will include a phase of public consultation which will also give engagement opportunities for current users. I would have loved to have put current users more formally into the trial but I don't believe that we would have got away with that in the current political environment. This is playing the politics of reality, trying to get something to happen.

**UN:** Your discussion paper is very clear on distinguishing medicinal use of cannabis from recreational use. How do you see the system working so that the waters are not muddied in the way that they seem to be in places like California, Oregon, and other US states?

**JK:** Personally, I'm not opposed to the California and Oregon model. I think they do deliver a therapeutic/palliative drug to people who need it. But we have to be honest about it: they also deliver to the recreational market. I believe if we came forward with that model in NSW, it would not fly. The models that we've proposed, which are based around a prescription from a treating doctor then approval by the Department of Health – that's the big difference to the American model – would not see any leakage at all into the recreational market.

**UN:** Perhaps it's important to talk about the evidence against the efficacy or potential health benefits of cannabis. There are studies on the precipitation of schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorder and other mental health issues for those who are deemed to be genetically vulnerable to it.

**JK:** There are also studies that say there aren't health links as well. So this is contested territory.

**UN:** And there's some evidence of cannabis acting as an immunosuppressant, but that's more about how it's delivered – by smoking – and I take it your trial will involve other delivery forms.

**JK:** Most of the technical details we've left to our expert panel, but the one thing we're being prescriptive about is not smoking. Even though there's some evidence that smoking cannabis does not have the health impacts of smoking tobacco, we have decided that there's just too much resistance to smoke as a delivery in the medical profession. We just don't need to cross that barrier while there are other ways of delivering it.

The issue of mental health impacts of cannabis is interesting. It's largely about massive doses of cannabis. One of the challenges the panel will have to ask is: are there side effects? But every drug that you put on the market will have some side effects.

**UN:** Is there a particular group in the community who experience pain or medical issues who you're particularly passionate, or you think are in greatest need of this program?

**JK:** I had a meeting about five years ago, when I first became interested in medicinal cannabis, with a young man with cerebral palsy who said that the only pain relief he had had since he was five years old – he would have been about 25 at this stage – had been through a combination of cannabis and massage. His uncontrollable shaking resulted in extremely sore muscles, and the cannabis relaxed his muscles enough. He said no other drug that he'd taken was able to deliver that degree of relief without massive side effects. It was a very moving meeting.

I have known people who have tragically died of HIV/AIDS, many of whom went through shocking suffering, some of whom self-medicated with cannabis that was not legally obtained. For them it was clear that the relief that

they received was not just pain relief. They were also able to fight back nausea to the extent where they could actually eat. It didn't just prolong their lives: it gave them a period of life in which they were not starving to death and overwhelmed by nausea.

**UN:** What is your opinion of the Prime Minister's apparent rejection of the findings of the Australia21 Report on prohibition?

**JK:** I remain totally disturbed by politicians who turn their back on science, whether it's in climate science, health science or the science of drug law reform. It is offensive to us that people continue to be captured by the drug hysteria and refuse to even engage with the debate. To their credit, in 1999 the Carr Labor Government, particularly Minister John della Bosca, engaged

with the debate. I don't think the answers that came out were perfect and a lot of them got subverted politically, but there were some definite gains from that, cannabis cautioning being probably one of the most long-lasting.

To continue to ignore the science and to ignore the advice given by those who are studying the problems caused by prohibition is to condemn Australia to an ongoing failed war on drugs. The reality remains abundantly clear to your readers, to the rest of the community who have their eyes open. The war on drugs has been a failure and we definitely need a new approach.

**NEXT  
EDITION**

**USER'S  
NEWS #70**

**We want you to come clean.**

**The next edition of User's News will talk about the process of detox and rehab. If you've had experiences of drying out, hanging out, cleaning up or getting straight – or if you've wanted to but have had trouble – we'd love you to share your story with us. Submission deadline is Friday, 17 August 2012.**

Remember, we always want your stories. Send them in typed or handwritten, by post, fax or email. User's News pays 13 cents per published word if your story is selected.

**Postal Address**

User's News, NUAA  
PO Box 278, Darlinghurst NSW 1300

**Email:** [usersnews@nuaa.org.au](mailto:usersnews@nuaa.org.au)

**Fax:** (02) 8354 7350

**Street Address:**

345 Crown St, Surry Hills NSW 2010

# Take Your Pick • How to Dispose Safely of Injecting Equipment

Harm reduction is about more than protecting yourself; it's also about protecting your friends and your community. This is why we encourage people to dispose of their fits and equipment safely.

## What does safe disposal mean?

Anything involved with the injecting process should be safely disposed of. This means used fits, of course, but also used swabs, tourniquets and waters. Anything that was sterile before being opened stops being sterile after it's opened.

It's not a good idea to get rid of fits in your household rubbish. The risk that used fits pose to our hard-working garbros is just one reason why we recommend safe disposal in an approved safe disposal container. Never put a used fit in a recycle bin. Plastic fits cannot be recycled.

Your local NSP is required to take any used equipment you have, no questions asked. Your NSP worker should also offer you a fresh disposal container when they hand out a syringe. You don't have to say yes, but it's a good idea. You may find the yellow containers are sometimes too big for your needs, but a small number of NSPs (including NUAA) hand out single-use disposal containers with new fits. These are really handy, as an uncapped fit simply locks in place.

If you can't get your hands on a safe disposal container, a hard plastic container with a screw-top lid is the next best thing. At a pinch, you can use a soft drink bottle with a screw top, but cap your fit before you put it in. Make sure you dispose of these containers properly in a safe disposal bin.

## How do I find the nearest disposal bin?

Check out the website safesharps.org.au. It shows a map of districts in NSW where safe disposal bins are located, and where you can get your own sharp disposal containers. It's even available as a smart phone app. Just type in your suburb or town and you'll see a map with different places where you can get rid of fits.

If your area has no safe disposal bin or service, call the NSW Clean Up Hotline on 1800 633 353.

## Police and picks

A lot of people who inject are nervous about carrying used fits around with them, as they don't want to be searched by police officers when they have "evidence" on them.

Here's where the law stands: It is not illegal to carry syringes, whether they are new or used. It is, however, illegal to possess syringes *if you intend to use them to inject drugs illicitly*. This may seem like an impossible legal knot to be tied in, but unless you admit to police that you use, or they find illicit drugs in a search, you cannot be charged.

Remember you are only obliged by law to provide your name and address to police officers when being searched or questioned. You cannot be charged for having used in the past (even five minutes ago) just by having old fits in your possession.

It's technically an offence to carry swabs, tourniquets, spoons *etc.*, but in practice, possession of this equipment is not prosecuted.

## What if I come across a syringe?

We don't recommend you dispose of other people's discarded fits yourself. Call the NSW Needle Clean Up Hotline on 1800 633 353. Alternatively, your local NSP can give you advice.

## If you do decide to clean up someone else's mess, here's what we recommend you do:

- Get a sharps container ready first. Don't hold it. Make sure it's on the ground or on a flat, stable surface
- Wear gloves
- Don't try to re-cap someone else's fit
- Use tongs or pliers to pick up the equipment. Pick it up by the barrel or plunger and place it in the container
- Seal the container and dispose of it at your local NSP, or call the NSW Needle Clean Up Hotline on 1800 633 353.

*Binky Alfonzo*



Poem

# goings *on*

going about getting on  
getting on going about it  
on it getting about  
going on about getting on – again  
and back to go about it  
not much going on  
I really should be going  
it's getting on  
ongoing  
*Bron*



## *Competition Extended!*

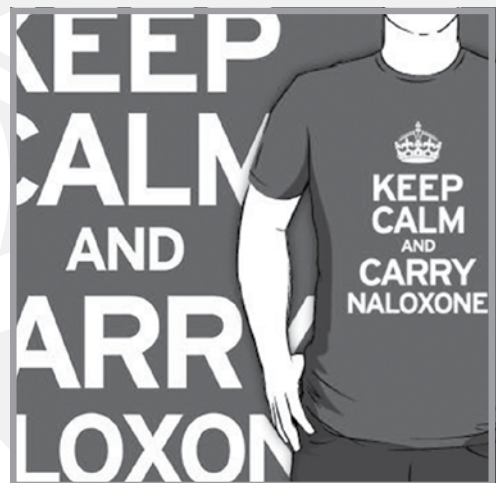
The ACT peer naloxone training program is up and running! To mark this important event we are running a competition open to all readers.

***In 50 words or less, tell us: why should NSW have a peer naloxone program?***

The most original or positive answer will win this fabulous T-shirt!

Post, fax or email your entry. Remember to include your name, address and your T-shirt size (S, M, L, XL, 2XL)

**Entries close Friday 24 August 2012. So get writing!**



**Postal Address**  
User's News c/o NUAA  
PO Box 1069  
Surry Hills NSW 2010

**Email:** [usersnews@nuaa.org.au](mailto:usersnews@nuaa.org.au)  
**Fax:** (02) 8354 7350

**Street Address:**  
345 Crown St  
Surry Hills NSW 2010