



Overview of CAARUDs in 2014



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The support centres for the reduction of drug-related harms (CAARUDs) represent a central aspect of the policy on harm reduction measures in France. These 144 centres are aimed at vulnerable populations exposed to major risk due to their substance use habits. Their missions are to prevent and reduce harm related to substance use and to improve the social situation of users. In order to achieve this, professionals inform users on the risks of the various substances and patterns of use, distribute sterile single-use supplies (syringes, crack pipes, snorting paraphernalia, injection and inhalation kits, etc.) and promote access to care and social entitlements. CAARUDs also carry out "social mediation" activities with a view to facilitating integration within their environment.

For the first time since this monitoring instrument was created, analysis of the 2014 CAARUD activity reports offers a comprehensive overview of the geographical coverage of the scheme, the resources used and the intervention capacities of the facilities. The CAARUDs play a central role in distributing prevention material, alone responsible for more than half (55%) of the syringes dispensed to injecting drug users. Although the true needs of drug users are difficult to identify, the difference in the situations is striking: location of CAARUDs restricted to large cities, varying and often fairly restricted opening times, very low representation of the female population. Although all CAARUDs everywhere share the same missions, the small teams in certain facilities, and the lack or

inconsistency of professional qualifications at many facilities raise questions as to whether all users can have access to the same level of harm reduction services.

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