



New Psychoactive Substances: The Next Opioid Crisis

Violet Shields

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What are New Psychoactive Substances?

“Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPSs) are an inhomogeneous group of substances which are typically **sold as “legal” alternatives** to the classical scheduled drugs of abuse, such as heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, benzodiazepines, etc.”

(Giorgetti et al. 1).



Global emergence of new psychoactive substances up to December 2022:

Number of substances reported



“UNODC Early Warning Advisory on New Psychoactive Substances.” *UNODC ITS*, UNODC

Software, 2023.

Emerging Issues

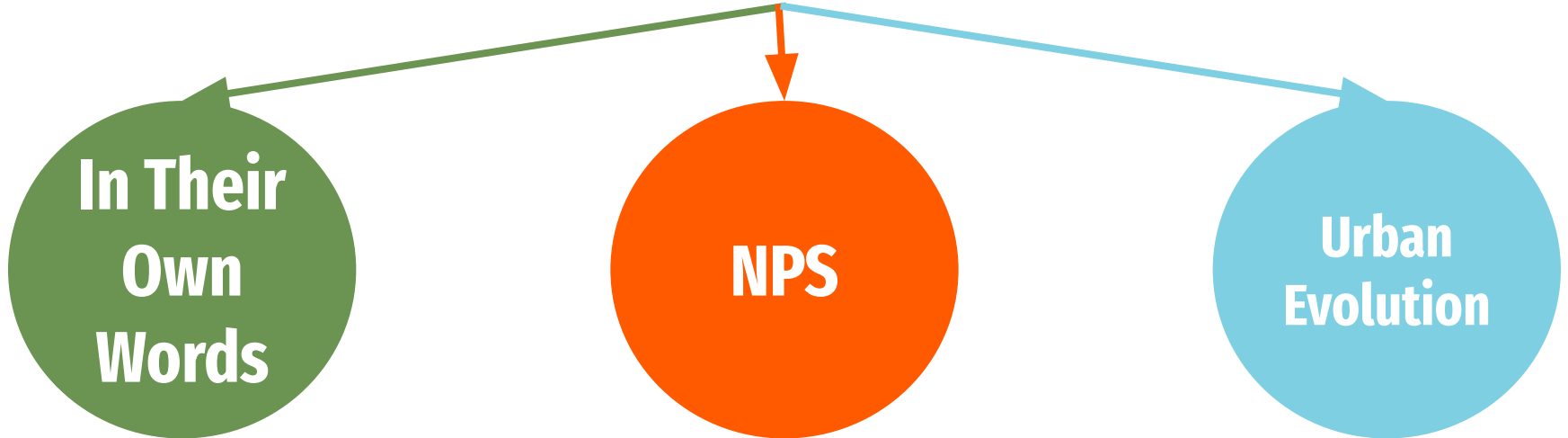
Marketed to public as “legal highs”.

Medical and general knowledge of NPS variants is limited.

Ability to be adapted to avoid restrictions or regulations.

Connection to Stimulus

Adaptability is key to survive and thrive within a capricious environment.



**To what extent could New
Psychoactive Substances (NPSs)
become like the Opioid Crisis for the
next generation of drug users?**

Implications of NPS Use



01

Common Side Effects

02

Healthcare Professionals' Apprehension

03

Emerging Zombie Drugs



Birkenshaw, Sue. "Is Krokodil the Worst Drug in the World?" *Narconon*, 2023 Narconon International, 23, Apr. 2015.

Lockie, Darren. "Krokodil Use and Abuse in Australia." *Dara Thailand*, 9, Jul. 2019.



"I built up such a tolerance. I had to find stronger stuff so soon. I started to buy the herb in bulk, but it was untreated, so I found someone that sold the chemical, all I had to do was mix it with acetone and pour it on the herb and let it dry overnight **which let me make it as high as I wanted** (SAS [2016] 2017: January 27)" (Angulski and Gerber 518).

Solution



#1

Central Database

Resembles the STRIDA Project (Helander et al. 2).

Chemical Restrictions

Legislation aimed to prevent future variants & production



#2



#3

Education

Implementation of Central Database in school drug programs

Limitations & Implications

**Federal
Funding**



Toxicology Reports



**Database Moral
Conflict**



**EMS and Hospital
Data**



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