**POLICY:**

Indian Health Service Harm Reduction Program Drug Checking Equipment Facility Policy

**PURPOSE:**

To expand access to drug checking equipment in an effort to prevent opioid overdose deaths.

**BACKGROUND:**

The CDC reports that nearly half of drug overdose deaths involved multiple drugs in 20191. Substances are often mixed with additives or other dangerous drugs, which can be unbeknownst to the user. Fentanyl test strips (FTS) and xylazine test strips (XTS) are examples of types of drug testing equipment that can be utilized as part of a harm reduction strategy to prevent overdose deaths. When exposed to substance residue, these strips can detect the presence of fentanyl or xylazine, alerting the person using substances that additional safety precautions should be considered. Drug checking equipment may also include equipment for the detection of other additives or dangerous drugs.

**TRAINING:**

1. Any staff involved in the Indian Health Service Harm Reduction Program (IHSHRP) must complete training on drug checking equipment as designated by the facility. This can be in-person or via established written/virtual materials.
2. Anyone receiving drug checking equipment as part of an IHSHRP should be educated on directions for use and safety tips, either in-person or written form.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Community member requests drug checking equipment per [INSERT FACILITY SPECIFIC REQUEST PATHWAY HERE].
2. Trained IHSHRP staff member provides on-the-spot training or written education materials regarding instructions for use of drug checking equipment, and additional harm reduction measures to prevent overdose. Information regarding potential legal concerns in areas where drug checking equipment is considered paraphernalia should be discussed as well.
3. Staff member documents information as outlined on IHSHRP Drug Checking Equipment Distribution Log when dispensing materials (either alone or with additional harm reduction equipment).

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECIPIENTS:**

1. All drug checking equipment should be stored at room temperature in original outer wrapping, or as directed on the product packaging.
2. Each strip is a single use test, which should be discarded after results are obtained. If a sharps container is available to the user, it should be recommended as the preferred disposal vessel.
3. Each strip should be checked for expiration prior to use. Expired strips may not effectively identify the presence of fentanyl or xylazine, and are not recommended for use.
4. Additional drug checking equipment can be requested if a previous supply has been utilized or expired.
5. There may be risk of legal consequences for use or possession of drug checking equipment in areas where they are not lawful.

**DOCUMENTATION:**

1. Upon verification or provision of training, drug checking equipment will be furnished with documentation via the log shown in Appendix A.
2. This distribution log should be stored for a minimum of 3 years.

**Resources:**

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose/polysubstance-use/index.html>