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A conceptual framework for achieving performance enhancing drug compliance in sport.
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There has been, and continues to be, widespread international concern about athletes' use of banned performance enhancing drugs (PEDs). This concern culminated in the formation of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in November 1999. To date, the main focus on controlling the use of PEDs has been on testing athletes and the development of tests to detect usage. Although athletes' beliefs and values are known to influence whether or not an athlete will use drugs, little is known about athletes' beliefs and attitudes, and the limited empirical literature shows little use of behavioural science frameworks to guide research methodology, results interpretation, and intervention implications. Mindful of this in preparing its anti-doping strategy for the 2000 Olympics, the Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA) in 1997 commissioned a study to assess the extent to which models of attitude-behaviour change in the public health/injury prevention literature had useful implications for compliance campaigns in the sport drug area. A preliminary compliance model was developed from three behavioural science frameworks: social cognition models; threat (or fear) appeals; and instrumental and normative approaches. A subsequent review of the performance enhancing drug literature confirmed that the overall framework was consistent with known empirical data, and therefore had at least face validity if not construct validity. The overall model showed six major inputs to an athlete's attitudes and intentions with respect to performance enhancing drug usage: personality factors, threat appraisal, benefit appraisal, reference group influences, personal morality and legitimacy. The model demonstrated that a comprehensive, fully integrated programme is necessary for maximal effect, and provides anti-doping agencies with a structured framework for strategic planning and implementing interventions. Programmes can be developed in each of the six major areas, with allocation of resources to each area based on needs-assessment research with athletes and other relevant groups.

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