

Chemsex Training Agenda

Learning Objectives, Agenda & Capability Framework Alignment

A 3 hour online course focusing on chemsex, the substances involved, health and sexual health risks, harm reduction and good practice for drug services and sexual health clinics

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Company: TD Consultancy

Delivery: Online — 3 hours

Edition: 2026

Aims & Objectives of the Course

- Increase knowledge and awareness of the issues relating to chemsex and associated harms
- Increase knowledge of how GBL/GHB, mephedrone and crystal methamphetamine are used and the effects on an individual's physiology and neurology
- Understand the possible effects on physical health, sexual health and mental health
- Understand basic working methods and approaches with this client subgroup
- Increase confidence in working with this client group for both drug services and sexual health clinics
- Be able to describe evidence-based harm reduction and prevention approaches relevant to chemsex

Session Agenda

Chemsex: Context, Substances, Health & Harm Reduction

10:00am Start — Welcome & Course Overview

10:10am What is chemsex? — defining the practice and the UK situation

10:25am Who is affected? — MSM communities, prevalence and social context

10:45am The substances — GBL/GHB, mephedrone and crystal methamphetamine

11:15am Break (15 minutes)

11:30am Health & sexual health implications — risks, BBV, overdose and mental health

12:00pm What we know and what we don't — evidence base and emerging research

12:15pm Prevention & harm reduction — practical approaches and resources

12:35pm Good practice — working with drug services and sexual health clinics

1:00pm Close & Q&A

Capability Framework Alignment

This course aligns with the Capability Framework for the Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Workforce (NHS England/ OHID, 2024), which underpins the 10-Year Strategic Plan for the Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery Workforce 2024–2034.

Capability Domain (NHS England / OHID, 2024)	Framework Section
Knowledge of the harm associated with the physical, psychological and sexual health effects of chemsex drugs including GBL/GHB, mephedrone and crystal methamphetamine	<i>Drug and Alcohol Worker: Application of Knowledge</i>
Knowledge of the nature, prevalence and patterns of chemsex among men who have sex with men (MSM) in the UK, including social, cultural and community factors	<i>Drug and Alcohol Worker: Application of Knowledge</i>
Ability to recognise the specific risks associated with chemsex including BBV transmission, overdose, sexual coercion and mental health deterioration	<i>Drug and Alcohol Worker: Application of Knowledge</i>
Ability to provide evidence-based harm reduction interventions for chemsex, including safer drug use guidance, naloxone, BBV prevention and sexual health advice	<i>Drug and Alcohol Worker: Harm Reduction, Treatment and Recovery</i>
Ability to engage sensitively and without stigma with MSM and LGBTQ+ clients in both drug and sexual health service contexts	<i>Drug and Alcohol Worker: Engagement, Assessment and Care Planning</i>
Ability to carry out person-centred assessments that address co-occurring drug use, sexual health, psychological and social needs	<i>Drug and Alcohol Worker: Engagement, Assessment and Care Planning</i>
Ability to personalise care for people from LGBTQ+ communities, including awareness of intersecting identities and health inequalities	<i>Drug and Alcohol Worker: Harm Reduction, Treatment and Recovery</i>
Recovery-oriented approach — working with individuals to build personal, social and community recovery capital	<i>Underpinning Principle: All Roles</i>
Challenging stigma — being alert to the ways negative perceptions can influence practice	<i>Underpinning Principle: All Roles</i>

Underpinning Principles Embedded in This Course

Trauma-informed care • Recovery-oriented approach • Evidence-based practice • Person-centred working • Forming a working alliance • Therapeutic optimism • Challenging stigma • Co-occurring needs and multidisciplinary working

Note: National Occupational Standards (DANOS/NOS) are retained within the National Occupational Standards library but are no longer the primary workforce development reference for the drug and alcohol treatment and recovery sector. This course uses the NHS England / OHID Capability Framework (2024) as its primary alignment standard.