



INHSU's Strategic Plan

2021 - 2024

A healthier future for people who use drugs

President's letter	03	Our unique approach	09
A brief history	04	Our network	10
Who we are	06	Our strategy in action	11
Our vision and values	07	What's next	14
What we do	08		

Contents





Jason Grebely,
INHSU PRESIDENT

“

This strategic plan is ambitious and future focussed. It recognises the significant challenges ahead of us but also the opportunities that together we can build on in order for us to meet our shared goal of a healthy future for people who use drugs.

”

President's letter

Jason Grebely,

INHSU PRESIDENT on behalf of the INHSU board



When INHSU was conceived a decade ago, the founders could not have imagined the scientific advances that were about to occur that would see hepatitis C become a disease that could be cured and eradicated. Due to the passion of those involved in INHSU throughout its life, the organisation has been at the forefront of research as well as advocacy to ensure that everyone can access treatment and improve their health.

Over time working in this area, we have come to realise that the most powerful barriers to improving the health of people who use drugs are fear, stigma and discrimination. These are not issues that can be solved by affected communities alone, but are squarely the responsibility of researchers, clinicians, policy-makers and decision-makers to ensure that we do all we can to respond to the public health issues facing our community and to improve the health of everyone in our community.

The process of developing our new strategic plan has been one of engagement, reflection and excitement as we have worked together to reflect on our successes to date and identify the opportunities for us to make an impact in the future. We thank everyone who took time to provide feedback and input – the plan is stronger because of this.

We know in order to increase our impact we need to broaden our work beyond hepatitis C prevention, treatment and care to respond to the health issues of people who use drugs more broadly. We know that we must connect with the network of people working in this area across the globe, particularly in low and middle-income countries. We must also do all we can to nurture and support emerging leaders and future leaders who will build on our work in future years.

A brief history



INHSU was established by a group of researchers, health care providers, and advocates with a shared vision; to amplify the research and clinical advances in hepatitis C prevention, treatment and care for people who use drugs. Formed in 2009, over the next decade INHSU witnessed – and participated in – huge advances in the treatment options for hepatitis C, including a cure for more than 95 per cent of people who are treated.

In the last decade, we have built a global community committed to improving the health of people who use drugs and connecting them to treatment and care.

We are now recognised as a leader in the global exchange of knowledge, education, and advocacy to support better health for people who use drugs.

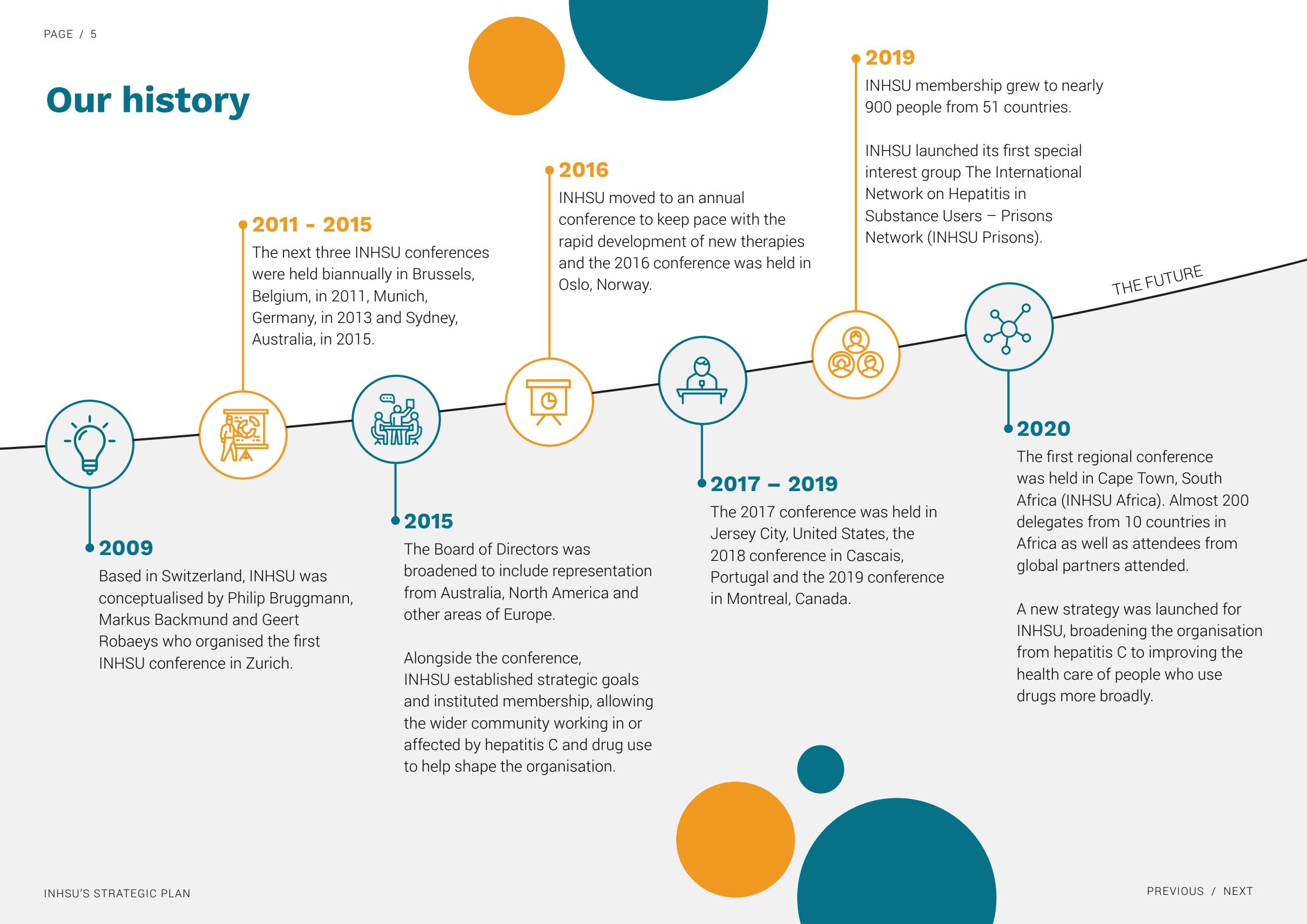
A key part of this stems from a strong commitment to involve people with lived experience in all our activities.

As we enter the second decade of our organisation, we see major opportunities to leverage our learnings and engagement around hepatitis C treatment and apply them to improving the health care of people who use drugs more broadly. **As well as improving health, we will continue our work to remove stigma and discrimination.**

We will continue to grow our network globally, ensuring broader representation from people who use drugs and from those who come from diverse backgrounds, including a key focus on low and middle-income countries.



Our history



Who we are



The International Network on Health and Hepatitis in Substance Users (INHSU) is a global network of people dedicated to improving the health of people who use drugs, with a specific focus on hepatitis C, infectious diseases, and harms that can occur from drug use.

We believe the most powerful impact is achieved when researchers, clinicians, advocates, and communities of people who use drugs come together to share knowledge, learn from each other, and put those insights into action.

We are committed to human rights and ensuring that people who use drugs have open access to information, services, and support they need to live well. The contributions of people who use drugs are central to our work.



Our team

At the heart of INHSU are dedicated teams and individuals who oversee our strategic approach and ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the organisation:

- **A highly respected and professional board:** who connect us to our community, provides access to global experts and supports ongoing innovation
- **A nimble and creative Secretariat:** a small team with a big capacity, our Secretariat has expertise in strategy, education, programming, and administration, enabling the aspirations of the organisation to be operationalised and realised
- **Backbone organisation to support our operations:** The Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) provides infrastructure and organisational support to enable the organisation to deliver exceptional services in a very cost-effective manner

Our vision and values



Working together to improve the health of people who use drugs



Our vision

Our vision is a world where people who use drugs have equitable access to evidence-based services, treatment, and support needed to improve health and live well.



Our values

As a values-based organisation, how we do things is as important as what we do.

The values that drive our engagement with members, stakeholders, partners and suppliers are:

- **Integrity**

We act with trust, honesty, and fairness

- **Excellence**

We strive to reflect good practice in everything we do

- **Innovation**

We encourage and showcase new ways of thinking

- **Collaboration**

We know we can accomplish more when we all work together

- **Respect**

We value the input of everyone, everywhere working in – or affected by – drug use, hepatitis C, and other infectious diseases

- **People-first**

We promote human rights approaches and ensure that people who use drugs are equal partners in our work

What we do



We provide forums for people to connect to, identify and amplify ground-breaking research that improves the health of people who use drugs. This research promotes innovative practices and solutions; educates healthcare providers in good prevention and care practices;

and enables us to advocate for evidence-based drug policy to improve the health of people who use drugs. **Our work highlights the structural inequities that facilitate the transmission of hepatitis C and other illnesses among this community.**



Our three focus areas are:



Knowledge Exchange

We bring together stakeholders to share knowledge on good practice in working to improve the health of people who use drugs. This exchange focuses on research that seeks to improve access to prevention, treatment, and care for hepatitis C, other infectious diseases, and harms that can occur from drug use.



Education

In partnership with the **Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM)**, we educate healthcare providers, program managers, harm reduction experts, researchers, policy-makers, and others to improve their knowledge, confidence and skills around key issues.



Advocacy

We work with our international partners to develop evidence-based calls to action and encourage decision-makers to implement proven interventions that improve the health of people who use drugs in local communities, countries, regions, and globally.



Our unique approach



We start with people

Before we are professionals, we are people. Our network is focussed on nurturing professional relationships, but our shared values and passions mean that we deeply value our connections.

We are strong because of our diversity

We respect, value, and celebrate the diversity of professional expertise, and the expertise that is drawn from the lived experience of people who use drugs.

We collaborate for success

We know we can learn from each other, and that there is always more to learn. We are proud of the contributions of our network and envision a future where they are built on by others.

We are adaptable and innovative

We work in areas of research and health services that are fast-moving and ground-breaking. We look for new opportunities, new partnerships, and new ways to meet our goal of improving the health of people who use drugs.

Our network



Our network brings together a diverse range of people working across sectors to improve the health of people who use drugs. It includes people who use drugs, advocates, healthcare providers, program managers, harm reduction experts, researchers and policy-makers.

We come together because of our shared commitment to connect people who use drugs with prevention, treatment, and care. We work together because we see the power of ongoing collaboration across a range of issues that impact on the health of people who use drugs.

Alongside networking and knowledge sharing, we provide our network with opportunities for professional development through expert committees, special interest groups, our annual conference, and ongoing events.

We produce a regular newsletter for our members, offer discounts for our events, and proactively involve members in the shaping of our annual conference.

Our members are central to the workings of INHSU, and we proactively encourage them to help us shape the future of the organisation with suggestions and input on governance and new topic areas to explore.



Our strategy in action

Knowledge Exchange



Over the next four years, we will:

- Continue to build our global network of people committed to improving the health of people who use drugs, with a specific focus on hepatitis C, other infectious diseases, and harms that may relate to drug use. This includes – but is not limited to – building the INHSU membership base
- Continue to strengthen our annual conference as a key mechanism for fostering research and sharing knowledge, including increasing the involvement of people with lived experience, early career researchers and people from low and middle-income countries
- While ensuring that hepatitis C prevention, treatment and elimination remains a core focus of our work, broaden our areas of interest to other health issues impacting people who use drugs, specifically other infectious diseases and harms that may relate to drug use
- Build opportunities to connect with regional communities in low and middle-income settings
- Provide new opportunities for our members to connect and engage with each other, including establishing special interest groups in areas of particular interest for our network
- Explore new ways to provide scientific knowledge in a way that is accessible and digestible to our members and others interested in our work



We will support, facilitate, and foster research, scientific exchange, and dissemination of knowledge.

Education



We will educate people who use drugs, advocates, healthcare providers, program managers, harm reduction experts, researchers, and policy-makers on health issues faced by people who use drugs including hepatitis C prevention, screening, linkage to care, and treatment.

Over the next four years, we will:

- Review and update education offerings in light of the impact of COVID-19, including where appropriate providing additional education in this area
- Continue to provide education and training programs for practitioners in drug and alcohol settings (online and face-to-face) in current settings, as well as looking to expand our offerings in similar country settings
- Develop curriculum suitable for delivery in for low and middle-income settings
- Develop new funding models to support education and training
- programs in all settings, maintain regular programs in current settings, engaging with new funding partners and develop lower cost delivery models for low and middle-income settings
- Continue to provide one-off workshops and education sessions at key hepatitis and alcohol and other drug conferences
- Develop education and training opportunities around issues of interest to our community
- Explore the opportunities to provide education and training in areas of emerging treatment for people who use drugs



Advocacy



Over the next four years, we will:

- Continue to provide up-to-date, evidence-based recommendations for the management of hepatitis C among people who inject drugs
- Work in collaboration with international partners to identify and advocate for drug policy reform, funding arrangements and intervention that will improve the health of people who use drugs
- Promote innovative and emerging practice occurring in local communities and promote access to evidence-based practice and resources (Connecting with Care project)
- Produce INHSU specific policy briefs that contribute to the understanding of what works in relation to improving health for people who use drugs
- Work to address stigma and enhance general understanding of how to improve the health of people who use drugs

We will collaborate with other societies, government organisations, professional associations, community members, institutions, and individuals to enable evidence to be accessed to demonstrate what works and to advocate for better health outcomes for people who inject drugs including hepatitis C prevention and care.



What's next



Setting a strategy is one thing, delivering it is another.

Over the next four years, we will use the power of our network to bring this strategy to life and work towards our goal of a world where people who use drugs have equitable access to evidence-based services, treatment, and support needed to improve health and live well.

We will explore new initiatives focussed on broadening the organisation's focus to include the health of people who use drugs, alongside our continuing work in the areas of treatment and elimination of hepatitis C.

It will not be easy; as we write this, the world is being turned upside down by COVID-19 which will undoubtedly impact our ability to execute certain areas of this strategic narrative – such as the holding of physical events.

But there will also be many opportunities to innovate, evolve, and reach new audiences. As a nimble, fast-moving organisation – with a knowledgeable and passionate membership base – we are in the ideal place to make the most of these opportunities. **Together, we will adapt and thrive to make this strategic vision a reality.**



For more information or to get involved contact: info@inhsu.org



To join as a member visit: <https://www.inhsu.org/about-inhsu/membership/>



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Thank you



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