

# **From Chemsex Check to Chemsex Choices**

**Low-threshold support at a queer sexual health centre**

# Jacques Kohl

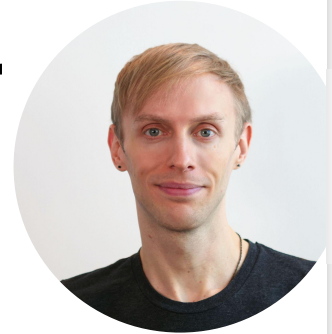


Psychologist

Head of Checkpoint BLN



# Christopher Clay



Information Designer

Lived experience

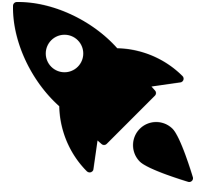


# Checkpoint BLN

Queer sexual health  
centre

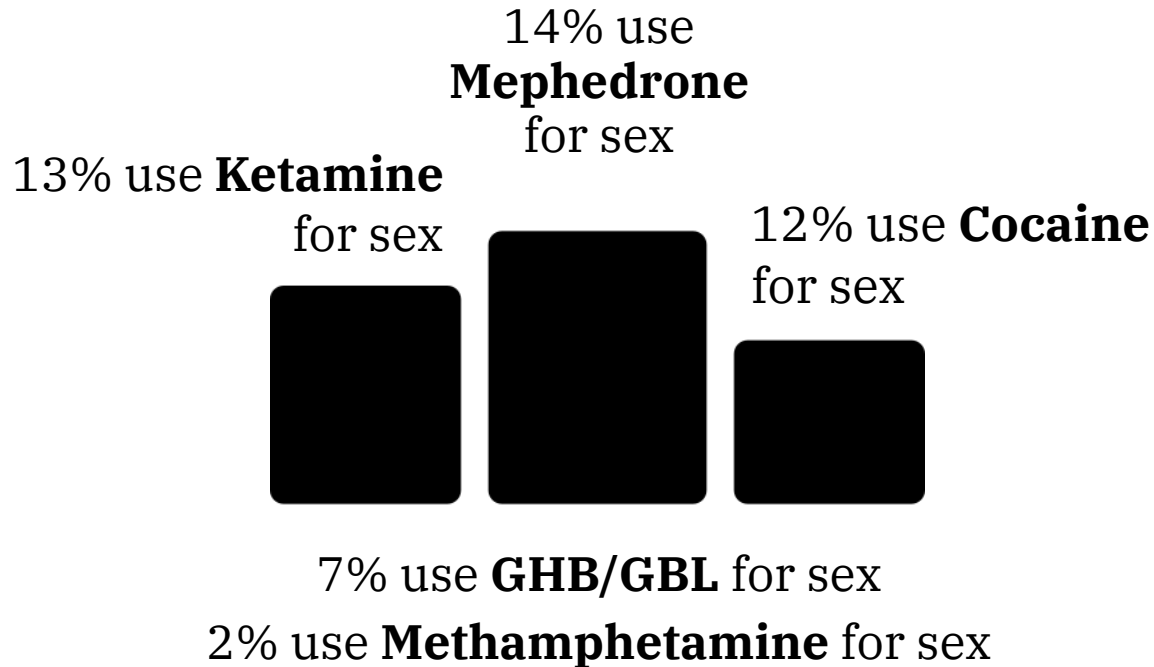
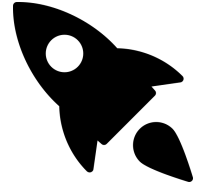


# Substance Use & Chemsex among Testing Clients | 2025



- Of **5,733** people tested for HIV/STIs in 2025, **74%** reported **substance use** in the previous 3 months
- **27%** reported using substances **in a sexual context** in the previous three months

# Substance Use & Chemsex among Testing Clients | 2025



# Chemsex Check

Self-assessment  
exercise



# chemsex check

adventure  
relief from shame and inhibitions

fun  
intimacy

Row by row, circle every statement that currently applies to your substance use in sexual settings.

→ How do you feel about your balance of positive effects and risks?

## 2 Your red line

Draw a line from left to right that you do not want to cross in the future.

Above = "acceptable to me"  
Below = "would prefer to avoid"  
The line doesn't have to be straight.

→ What strategies can help you stick to your line? Are there any particular issues you want to address?

→ Which of your chemsex partners share your boundaries?

# Chemsex Check

In connection with chemsex, I'm experiencing...

adventure	relief from shame and inhibitions	sex is more enjoyable than ever	self-confidence boost	I feel like part of a community	meaningful new friend- or relationships	I'm also enjoying sober sex more now	It's less important for me than it used to be			
I have a fulfilling sex life	I'm also enjoying my sober life	the amount of chemsex in my life is stable	situations that I later regret	sometimes I keep going for 2-3 days	It's getting more prominent in my life	It's affecting my looks	low mood & low energy lasting several days	I feel ashamed of my chemsex		
I combine G + alcohol	I'm not sure everything was consensual	I share needles or injecting equipment	I've missed days at work/uni	problems with sleep/irritability/anxiety	I can't think about	I combine poppers + Viagra	I've overdosed on G	I've overdosed on G several times	I've needed emergency medical attention	violations of consent

I've neglected some former hobbies

I'm seeing old friends less

I forget my PrEP or HIV meds now & then

I worry for some of the people I encounter

I've missed days at work/uni

problems with sleep/irritability/anxiety

I've needed emergency medical attention

violations of consent

What next?

My chemsex goal:

e.g. more self control / less frequent sessions / abstinence

Today/from now on, I will

problematic substance, go home at 12:00, plan for this weekend, book a therapist, delete certain apps/contacts...

talk about it?

We're happy to discuss feelings you have about your substance use.

...with our counselors, or book a therapist online:

support groups

...just drop by sober: Berlin (Gotenstr. 51)

...in English German

→ [schwulenberatungberlin.de](http://schwulenberatungberlin.de)

Was ist...

# chemsex check

## How it works:

### Who is this for?

Chemsex is the use of libido-increasing substances during sex – especially when people use “G” (GBL/GHB), mephedrone or 3-MMC, “Tina” (crystal meth) and/or “Monkey Dust” together at private parties in queer scenes.

If chemsex is a habit of yours, this exercise can help you weigh its pros and cons and define your personal boundaries.

### 1 Where you're at

Row by row, circle every statement that currently applies to your substance use in sexual settings.

→ How do you feel about your balance of positive effects and risks?

### 2 Your red line

Draw a line from left to right that you do not want to cross in the future.

Above = “acceptable to me”  
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- What strategies can help you stick to your line? Are there any particular issues you want to address?
- Which of your chemsex partners share your boundaries?

## Chemsex Check

## What next?

In connection with chemsex, I'm experiencing...

adventure	relief from shame and inhibitions	sex is more enjoyable than ever	self-confidence boost	I feel like part of a community	meaningful new friendships or relationships	I'm also enjoying sober sex more now	It's less important for me than it used to be
fun	intimacy	I am in good, caring company	I generally stick to my plans and boundaries	It generally leaves me feeling satisfied	I have a fulfilling sex life	I'm also enjoying my sober life	the amount of chemsex in my life is stable
I spend a lot of time looking for it	frequent bacterial STIs	I've neglected some former hobbies	I'm seeing old friends less	sex acts that I'm not really into sober	situations that I later regret	sometimes I keep going for 2-3 days	It's getting more prominent in my life
GBL/GHB more than once a week	Mephedrone or 3-MMC more than once a month	I forget my PrEP or HIV meds now & then	I worry for some of the people I encounter	I meet some people because they share drugs	It's affecting my looks	low mood & low energy lasting several days	I feel ashamed of my chemsex
I take G without exact dosing and timing	I share straws or pipes	Tina or Monkey Dust regularly	It's affecting my relationship with my partner	I need a higher dose than I used to	I don't have sober sex	all my closest friends engage in chemsex	I want to make a change
I'm not protecting myself against HIV	I forget my PrEP or HIV meds regularly	I inject (slam)	chemsex (just about) every weekend	my focus has shifted from sex to being high	I also use alone	I redose until I run out	I've tried to make changes but failed
I combine G + alcohol	I'm not sure everything was consensual	I share needles or injecting equipment	I've missed days at work/university	problems with sleep/irritability/anxiety	I can't stop thinking about it	episodes of paranoia, hallucinations	I use GBL/GHB 24/7
I combine poppers + Viagra	I've overdosed on G	I've overdosed on G several times	I've needed emergency medical attention	violations of consent	I was newly diagnosed with HIV	lost my job/dropped out of school	suicidal thoughts

Additional positive effects:

Additional negative effects:

### My chemsex goal:

e.g. more self control / less frequent sessions / abstinence

### Today/from now on, I will

e.g. quit my most problematic substance, go home at dawn, make other plans for this weekend, book a counseling session, delete certain apps/contacts...

### Want to talk about it?

At **Checkpoint BLN** we're happy to discuss any thoughts and feelings you have about your sex life and your substance use. Bring it up with our counselors, or book a specific appointment online:

→ [checkpoint-bl.n.de](https://checkpoint-bl.n.de)

### Open queer support groups

No sign-up required – just drop by sober:  
Schwulenberatung Berlin (Gutenstraße 51)

- Wednesdays 17:30 in English
- Mondays 18:30 in German

→ [schwulenberatungberlin.de](https://schwulenberatungberlin.de)

# Principles



reach users at any stage



acknowledge the positive



facilitate own judgment



casual, playful, graphical

# Goals



take stock



strengthen boundaries



signal approachability

# Results

- around 5000 distributed (with partner organisations)
- positive feedback

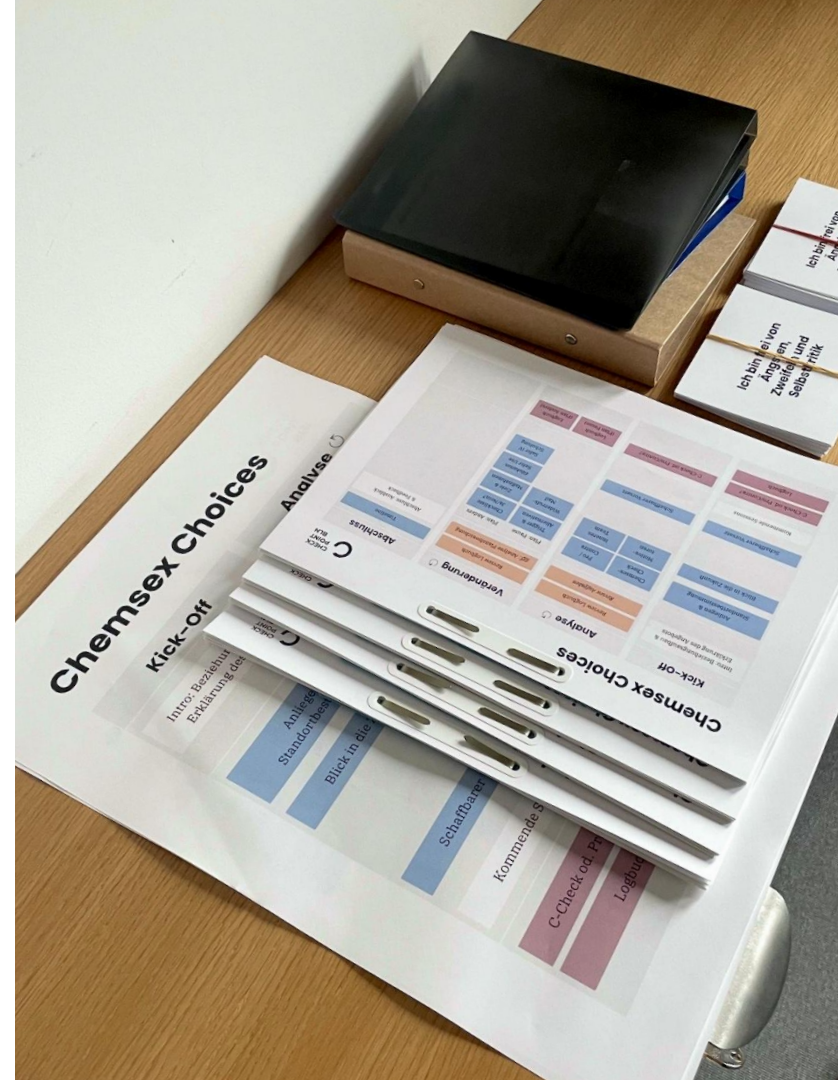
## Adaptations



→ [checkpoint-bln.de/chemsex-check/](https://checkpoint-bln.de/chemsex-check/)

# Chemsex Choices

Upcoming structured counselling series



# Chemsex Choices



structured  
counselling series



not abstinence-  
oriented



patient empowerment  
and agency



integrative methods  
MI-based

## Possible Chemsex Choices:



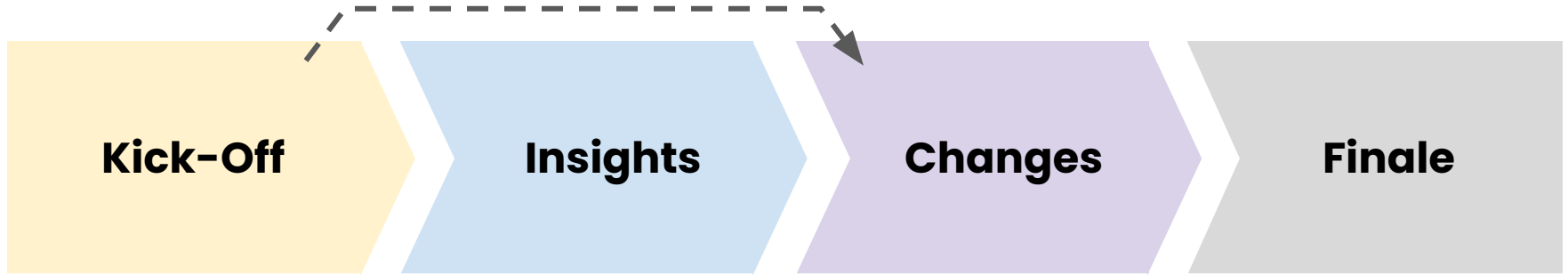
Chemsex “light”  
(safer / more moderate)



Chemsex Pause



Client workbook



 **Assessment**

 **Chemsex Check**

 **Pause**

 **Milestones**

 **Imagine a future**

 **Motivators**

 **Light: Yes or No?**

 **In the right direction**

 **Pros & Cons**

 **Light: Timeline**

 **Logbook**

 **Internal Team**

 **Opt out email**

 **Plan Deviation**

# Motivators

My HIV status  
isn't an issue

I feel sexually  
self-confident

I feel desired  
and appreciated

I can explore  
special kinds  
of sex

## Chemsex Choices – Methode Motivatoren



**Material:** Kartenset Motivatoren, [Mappe Motivatoren](#)

Auf diesen Karten stehen mögliche Motivatoren für Chemsex. Du kannst sie verwenden, um zu entscheiden, welche du für dich wählst, welche du ablehnst, welche du für dich besonders erfüllend findest, welche du für dich besonders wichtig findest, welche du für dich besonders erfüllend findest, welche du für dich besonders wichtig findest.

### 1 Aussortieren

Gehe die Karten durch und teile sie in zwei Stapel:

1. **Trifft auf mich zu:** Deswegen habe ich Chemsex besonders erfüllend
2. **Trifft nicht zu / ist mir nicht wichtig**

### 2 Top 5

Breite die auf dich zutreffenden Karten auf dem Tisch nach ihrer Relevanz/Wichtigkeit. Identifiziere die Top 5 Karten (es gibt jedoch kein strenges Limit).

## Review

### 1 Dokumentation

*Klient:in macht ein Foto und/oder dokumentiert die Karten*

### 2 Analyse

- Welche Erkenntnisse konntest du gewinnen?
- Fallen dir weitere Motivatoren ein, die du für dich wählst?
- Welche dieser Bedürfnisse erfüllt für dich Chemsex?
- Wie wichtig sind dir diese Gefühle für dich im Kontext deiner Lebensplanung?

## Meine Motivatoren für Chemsex:

Motivator	Gedanken dazu
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

**Thank you**

j.kohl@checkpoint-bln.de

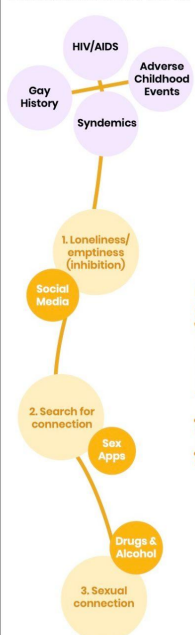
[checkpoint-bln.de/chemsex-check](http://checkpoint-bln.de/chemsex-check)

Adverse health & well-being

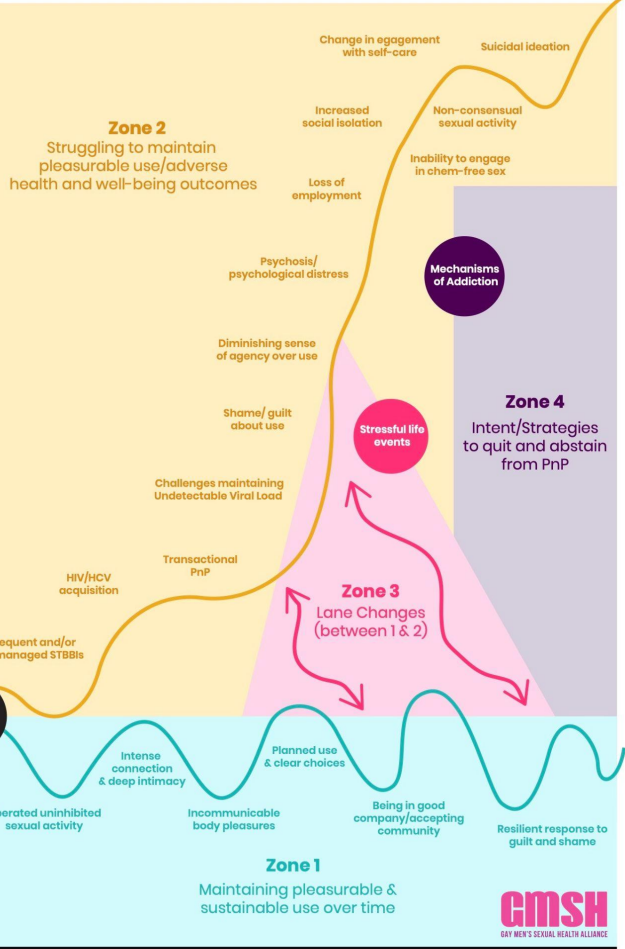
Indicators of Health & Well-Being

Positive health & well-being

### 2SGBTQ Factors/ Predeterminants to PnP



First instance of PnP



**Zone 2**  
Struggling to maintain pleasurable use/adverse health and well-being outcomes

**Zone 4**  
Intent/Strategies to quit and abstain from PnP

**Zone 3**  
Lane Changes (between 1 & 2)

**Mechanisms of Addiction**

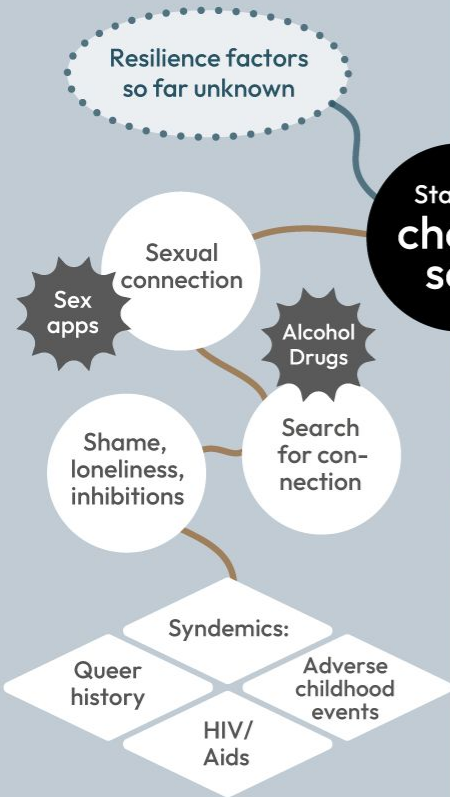
We don't yet know much about the "resilience factors" of those 2SGBTQ men who remain in Zone 1 over time. This is a gap in the current evidence.

**Zone 1**  
Maintaining pleasurable & sustainable use over time

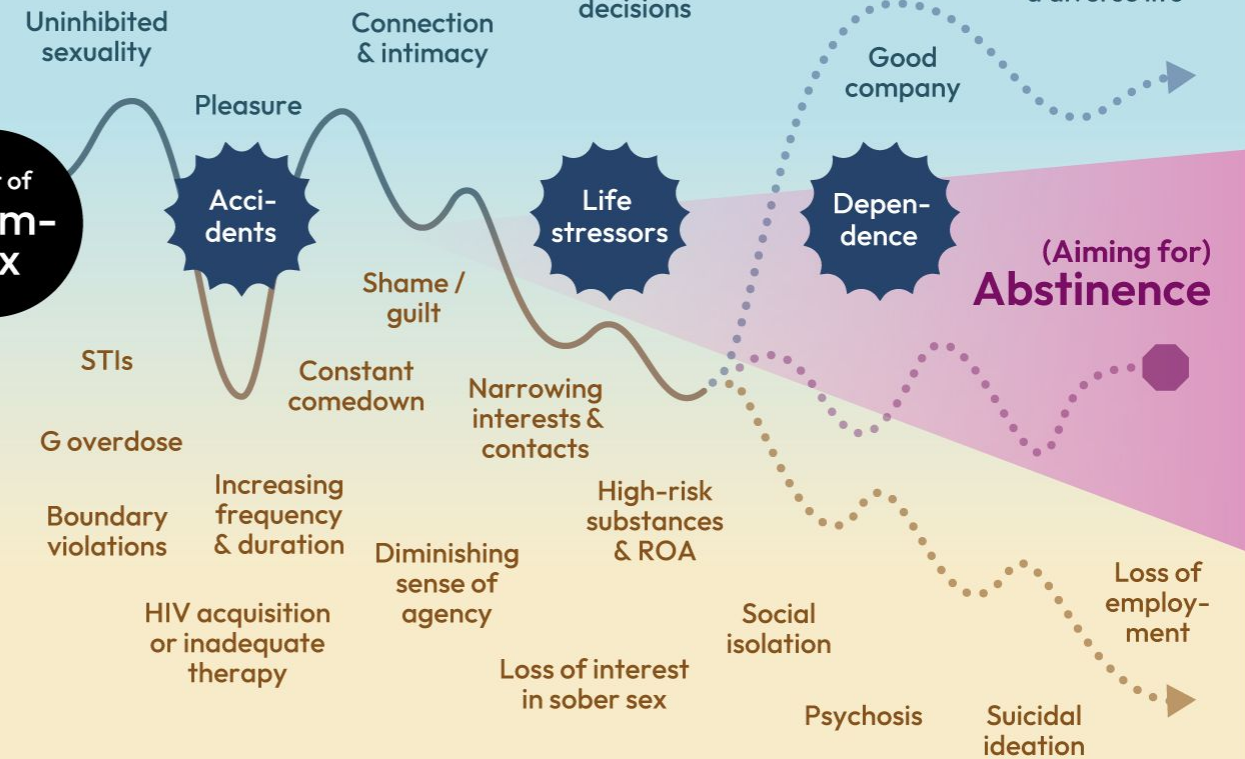


Time

# Predeterminants



# Controlled chemsex



# Problematic chemsex



Time >