

Concept note

The Rome Consensus 2.0

A humanitarian drug policy alliance

Concerns about rising levels of addiction, and how to respond, are coming back to the top of policy agendas around the world. The non-medical use of prescription drugs is becoming a major threat to public health and law enforcement worldwide with opioids causing the most harm and accounting for 76 per cent of deaths where drug use disorders were implicated, according to the latest World Drug Report, released by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The scale, length and duration of the opioid pandemic which has ravaged the US for the last decade with the sheer number of overdoses and death in the last 5 years rising at never before seen rates has forced a re-examination of policies and strategies among policy makers in the Criminal Justice, Behavioural Health, Medical and Community sectors. US policy makers are experiencing "once in a generation" changes in their thinking with respect to ethically appropriate and operationally effective responses to the crisis. Some of these changes are more established in Europe, having been implemented as much as 20 years earlier in some countries. However, many have lost their impetus and these systems will probably not be able to respond rapidly and effectively when and if the opioid epidemic will arrive on European shores.

The efforts made to provide meaningful responses to the opioid crisis in the US has sparked not only a complete shift in addiction attitudes in America, but also a burst of innovation in modernising treatment services, and criminal justice *deflection* and *diversion* initiatives. We believe that this offers an excellent opportunity to re-energize the discussion of addiction and appropriate responses, at all levels of policy and service delivery, between experts, institutions and stakeholders at global level. The initiative we are proposing will examine experience and innovation from both sides of the Atlantic, for observation and discussion, with a view to identifying and supporting the replication of best practices in *deflection/diversion* and harm reduction with the aim to design an effective treatment systems person-centered.

The Rome Consensus for Humanitarian Drug Policy was created in 2005 and developed as a partnership between the Italian Red Cross (ItRC), the International Council on Security and Development (ICOS) and the Villa Maraini Foundation (VMF). This initiative was established to address the specific dimensions of drug problem based on the existing knowledge and best practices of the past 40 years. The aim was to promote, within the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement a health-based approach to drug related suffering, and to prompt humanitarian action in this area. *The Rome Consensus* was signed by 121 Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies worldwide.

Our goal is to re-launch it as *The Rome Consensus 2.0* starting from what we've done and learned so far in order to brighten an international debate on how to tackle the drugs related problems and how to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable people.

The Rome Consensus 2.0 plans to organise a series of meetings to promote discussion and then action on the Consensus Statement. Designed to bring together leaders, experts and public authorities from across Europe and the US to explore ways to effectively combine health, criminal justice and community responses to addiction. The goal is to avoid the suffering and death toll caused by the opioid epidemic, by inspiring and spreading a humanitarian drug policy approach worldwide.

This initiative is launched and supported by:

-The Red Cross Red Crescent Partnership on Substance Abuse

It is a tripartite task force between the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Italian Red Cross and Villa Maraini rehab center, funded in 2012 in response to the increase of substances abuse and related problems globally. The goal is to leverage the knowledge and long experience of Villa Maraini to raise awareness and to spread a humanitarian drug policy approach among the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, NGOs and public authorities.

Website: www.villamaraini.it

Facebook: [@fondazionevillamaraini](https://www.facebook.com/fondazionevillamaraini)

Twitter: [@VillaMaraini](https://twitter.com/VillaMaraini)

-The Levenson Foundation: The Levenson Foundation ("TLF") is a privately-funded non-profit chartered in 2012 to measurably impact some of the most traumatized and disadvantaged populations on Earth. Through the lens of mental health, we work at all levels from policy to direct care provision seeking to enhance access to relevant services by those who struggle with a wide range of complex challenges, including addictive illnesses, mental health issues, PTSD, trauma and concomitant issues. Learn more about our portfolio of global activity at <http://www.levensonfoundation.org/>

Facebook: [@thelevensonfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/thelevensonfoundation)

Twitter: [@LevensonFoundtn](https://twitter.com/LevensonFoundtn)

C4 Recovery: is a non-profit Public Charity dedicated to the premise that society's path to achieving improved access, quality, and integrity of behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment is through education, shared knowledge, and rigorous research.

Website: <https://www.c4recoveryfoundation.org/>

Facebook: [@C4RecoveryFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/C4RecoveryFoundation)

Twitter: [@C4recovery](https://twitter.com/C4recovery)

-iCAAD: is a platform that aims to expanding knowledge, exchanging ideas, advancing wellbeing, prevention and treatment of Behavioural, Mental, and Emotional Health issues in order to influence best practice worldwide in the expert treatment of increasingly common conditions affecting individuals in every country.

Website: <https://www.icaad.com>

Facebook: [@icaadevents](https://www.facebook.com/icaadevents)

Twitter: [@icaadevents](https://twitter.com/icaadevents)



-**PTACC:** the Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative (PTACC) is an alliance of practitioners in law enforcement, behavioral health, community, advocacy, research, and public policy, whose mission is to strategically widen community behavioral health and social service options available through law enforcement diversion.

Website: <https://ptaccollaborative.org/>

Twitter: [@PTAC_Collab](https://twitter.com/PTAC_Collab)