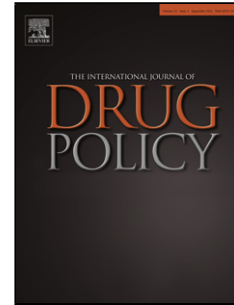


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1 **Spatial Analysis of Drug Poisoning Deaths in the American West, particularly Utah**

2

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11

12 **Abstract**

13 *Background*

14 Most states in the Western US have high rates of drug poisoning death (DPD), especially New
15 Mexico, Nevada, Arizona and Utah (UT). This seems paradoxical in UT where illicit drug use,
16 smoking and drinking rates are low. To investigate this, spatial analysis of county level DPD
17 data and other relevant factors in the Western US and UT was undertaken.

18 *Methods*

19 Poisson kriging was used to smooth the DPD data, populate data gaps and improve the reliability
20 of rates recorded in sparsely populated counties. Links between DPD and economic,
21 environmental, health, lifestyle, and demographic factors were investigated at four scales using
22 multiple linear regression. LDS church membership and altitude, factors not previously
23 considered, were included. Spatial change in the strength and sign of relationships was

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