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**COMPLICATIONS OF TATTOOS WE SEE AND THOSE WE FEAR:  
FOCUSED VS SEAMLESS PREVENTION****Jørgen Serup<sup>1</sup>**

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**Background:** The primary target of prevention of tattoo complications is to reduce clinically significant adverse events manifested as disease, complaints or psycho-social restraints. The secondary target is to eliminate or reduce clinically insignificant risk, being reported or not. Ultimately, any instrument of prevention must be sound, reliable, applicable and cost-efficient.

**Aim:** Description of the spectrum of tattoo complications and other problems associated with tattoos, which are first line targets of prevention, with analysis of importance, rationales and the available instruments of prevention. Description of second line targets of prevention assessed similarly.

**Methods:** Clinical data from a large sample of patients of the Bispebjerg Hospital Tattoo Clinic and the medical literature is briefly reviewed and discussed relative to preventive strategies. Strategies may be focused or integrated. An integrated concept labelled “*Seamless Prevention*” is introduced. Time wise the tattooed makes a move, *i* curiosity, *ii* being tattooed, *iii* finally satisfied, regret or complication. The *customer-tattooist interaction* is pivotal and most important to modify. The supporting industry making needles, inks and machines deliver requisites and needs guidance and control. Integrated prevention also includes a number of obligations and actions of health authorities. Focused interventions provided as “stand alone” has little chance to become efficient unless they are rational and acceptable.

**Results:** The presentation will propose a combination of preventive actions fitting into a seamless strategy. Instruments such as informed consent, safe tattoo practices with control systems, registration of activities and adverse events and the need for medical support and Authority’s surveillance with track record of hazards is discussed. Such pragmatic strategy is classical in medicine and public health and not critically dependent on precise knowledge. Control of tattoo ink stock products, brands and manufacturers is part of the strategy.

**Conclusions:** “*Seamless prevention*” is an integrated strategy building on a multi instrumental and balanced approach to prevention of complications of tattooing while targeting realistic and achievable aims. To influence the *customer-tattooist interaction* is pivotal.