Clinical Research in the Addiction Service: The Lows and the Highs

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Recent Research Projects

• Survey of parental attitudes to teenage drinking
• Functional Study of Inhibitory Control in Adolescent Cannabis Users
• Impact of opiate substitution treatment on mental health of heroin dependent adolescents
• Examination of the fall in age of first drinking and correlation with per capita alcohol consumption
• Prevalence Of Problem Alcohol Use Among Patients Attending Primary Care For Methadone Treatment: A National Cross Sectional Survey
• Recipient syringe sharing and its relationship to social proximity, perception of risk and preparedness to share.
• Lapse and relapse following inpatient treatment of opiate dependence
• A Prospective, Randomized, Multicenter Acceptability and Safety Study of Direct Buprenorphine/Naloxone Induction in Heroin-Dependent Individuals
Lows

• Ethics proposals
  – Timing
  – Striking a balance
  – Illegal and dangerous activities
  – Children

• Funding applications – rejected!
  – Time consuming
  – It is a specific skill – get a good mentor
  – Competence is king
Lows 2

- People!!
  - Collaborators
  - ‘Recruiters’
  - Participants
  - Cures

- Rejected papers
  - Persevere!

- Realizing you are ‘a jack of all trades but master of none’

- The limitations of research
  - Realizing you live in a country (a world?) where facts, science and research have so little influence
  - Challenges my adolescent view of the world
Highs

• Satisfying your curiosity
  – HCV prevalence, factors assoc with HCV
  – Outcome – YoDA & YPP

• Assisting others to take research idea from conception to final publication
  – 9 Regs, 2 clin psychologists, 3 nurses and 7 other clinical staff
Highs 2

• Learning
  – Getting to become an ‘expert’ on an issue

• Getting published, being cited

• Influencing policy and service development
  – Detox
  – Needle exchange
  – Methadone treatment in adolescents
  – Alcohol ????
Is research an addiction?

- Compulsion
- Loss of control
- Salience
- Ongoing use despite harm
- Tolerance
- Withdrawals ??