



Dr Hester Wilson

Langton Centre, Sydney

4A: Evaluation of a GP and drug and alcohol shared care programme

Dr Hester Wilson, Langton Centre, Sydney

Many GPs find it difficult to care for patients with drug and alcohol issues in the Australian GP setting. While drug and alcohol (D&A) issues are common, affecting all ages and walks of life, many patients with these issues have complex chronic multi-morbidities that make their management challenging. In 2012, a public specialist D&A service in inner city Sydney, Australia set up a GP and drug and alcohol shared care programme (SCP) with local general practices to address this issue. The aim of the programme was:

- To provide support for GPs and their patients in the local area presenting with a range of issues; notably alcohol, prescription drugs, cannabis, opioids and stimulants
- To enhance links and referral pathways for patients
- To build the confidence and expertise of GPs and,
- To change the culture of 'non-co-operation' between general practice and specialist D&A services.

The SCP successfully assisted patients to obtain care in the most appropriate setting. Referral pathways were strengthened and patients remained stable or improved through the programme. This shows that GP and D&A shared care programmes can work well in the Australian setting.

*A Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, **Hester** BMed(Hons) FRACGP FChAM is also a Fellow of the Chapter of Addiction Medicine in the RACP. She completed her Masters in Mental Health in 2013. She has worked in primary health care settings for the last 25 years. She currently works at the Langton Centre in Surry Hills as a Staff Specialist in Addiction and in general practice in Newtown, Sydney. Hester is the chair of the RACGP SI Addiction Medicine Network, clinical advisor to the PRMs programme at the NSW ACI and conjoint lecturer at the University of NSW. She has an interest in improving health outcomes for patients with chronic complex illnesses in the primary care setting. In her role as staff specialist she has developed a GP shared care project aimed at assisting her specialist drug and alcohol service to better engage with general practice leading to better outcomes for patients.*



Jessica Pirie

CADS

4B: Practice-initiated research 2:

Working with Gang Members: Reflections From the AOD Frontline.

Jessica Pirie, CADS

The experiences of non-illicit opioid consumers when accessing treatment

Carina Walters, University of Auckland

We're delighted to be able to offer two breakout sessions this year featuring research initiated by practitioners working within addictions and mental health services.

These sessions will follow a slightly different format to the other breakout sessions on offer this year: our speakers will present a snapshot of their research project (which may be at different stages of completion), but will also share details about their motivations for embarking on the project, as well as insights into challenges, milestones, tips and tricks encountered so far. Following the short presentations by researchers, there will be a combined Q&A.

Working with Gang Members: Reflections From the AOD Frontline.

Gangs have been a part of the New Zealand social landscape since the 1950s. It is estimated that there are around 4,000 active gang members in New Zealand, which comprise 0.1% of the total population. Over the past six years working for CADS, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with members from multiple gangs. Despite the number of gang members accessing CADS increasing through referrals from both our community probation services and prisons, there is little information available about how AOD clinicians can best support this particular group, and the complex therapeutic needs they can present with.

Guidelines that allow AOD clinicians to better understand the context of gangs in relation to social processes, (norms, beliefs, and values) could aid clinicians in their approach to AOD-focused assessments and groups, similar to other culturally-focused considerations. Greater understanding of gangs has the potential to reduce stigma for clinicians, and in turn remove barriers for gang members, ensuring they are able to safely access and engage with AOD services and have a positive treatment experience. As part of this quick-fire presentation I will share my own experiences with supporting gang members, and why I consider it important to explore how AOD clinicians work with gang members.



Carina Walters

University of Auckland

Jessica has been employed in the addictions field for the past 12 years, and holds qualifications in psychology and alcohol and drug counselling. Jessica has previously worked for Odyssey House in their Adult and Family Centre programmes. Jessica has been with Community Alcohol and Drug Services for the past 6 years, and her current role features a primary focus on supporting clients accessing AOD counselling through a corrections-based pathway. Jessica's work is based at various community probation sites in the South Auckland area through groups and individual counselling, and more recently at Wiri Men's Prison (Auckland South Correctional Facility).

The experiences of non-illicit opioid consumers when accessing treatment

Populations of consumers seeking treatment for opioid dependence have changed substantially in recent years. A significant proportion of those now entering treatment have developed their addiction through legitimate prescription or over-the-counter opioid access. Whilst the experiences of people who consume illicit opioids have been explored, little is known about those of people with non-illicit backgrounds to opioid use when accessing treatment. This presentation will describe a research project which aims to elicit the experiences of non-illicit opioid consumers when accessing treatment, and it is expected that the findings of this study will assist opioid treatment services in NZ to deliver treatment that is both accessible and appropriate for this consumer group.

Carina Walters is a PhD candidate at the University of Auckland studying prescription and over-the-counter opioid dependence, and has previously held a role as senior addictions pharmacist at Community Alcohol and Drug Services in Auckland. She has been an investigator in addiction studies ranging from the treatment of amphetamine dependence to the potential role of community pharmacists in extending health services offered in conjunction with opioid substitution treatment.