

The logo for the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC). It features the letters 'NDARC' in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter 'A' is stylized with a yellow triangle on its left side and a red triangle on its right side.

National Drug &  
Alcohol Research Centre

The Difference is Research

9th International Conference on Health and Hepatitis Care in Substance Users, 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2021

# **The effect of person, treatment and prescriber characteristics on retention in opioid agonist treatment: 15-year retrospective cohort study**

**Chrianna Bharat, Sarah Larney, Sebastiano Barbieri, Timothy Dobbins, Nicola R. Jones, Matthew Hickman, Natasa Gisev, Robert Ali, & Louisa Degenhardt**



**UNSW**  
SYDNEY

Australia's  
Global  
University

# Thank you & Acknowledgments

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## Supervisors

Professor Louisa Degenhardt  
Dr Sebastiano Barbieri  
A/Professor Timothy Dobbins  
A/Professor Sarah Larney

## Co-authors

Nikky Jones  
Dr Natasa Gisev  
Professor Matthew Hickman  
Professor Robert Ali

## OATS project

Tom Murphy  
Aboriginal Advisory Group, including Alan Bennett, Doug James, Kim Sullivan, and Craig Vaughan

## Linkage

NSW Ministry of Health  
Centre for Health Record Linkage

## Data Custodians

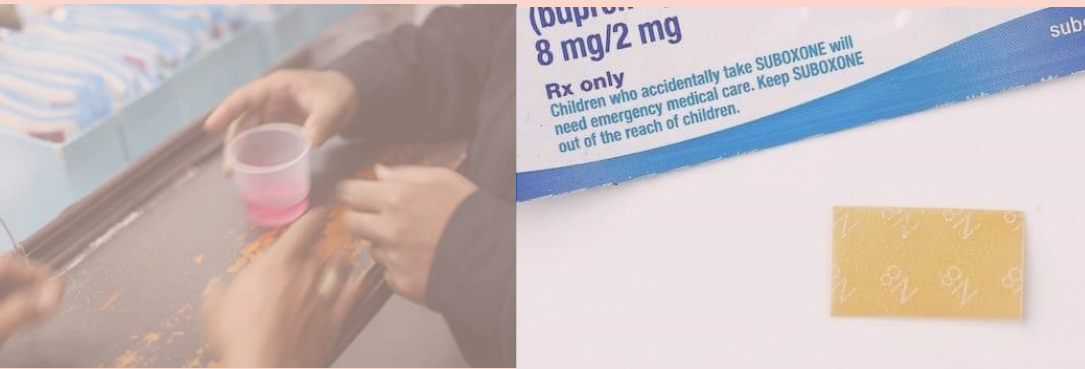
NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research  
NSW Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages, NSW Coroner and the National Coronial Information System

## Funding

National Institute on Drug Abuse  
National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre and UNSW Scientia PhD Scholarships

# Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT)

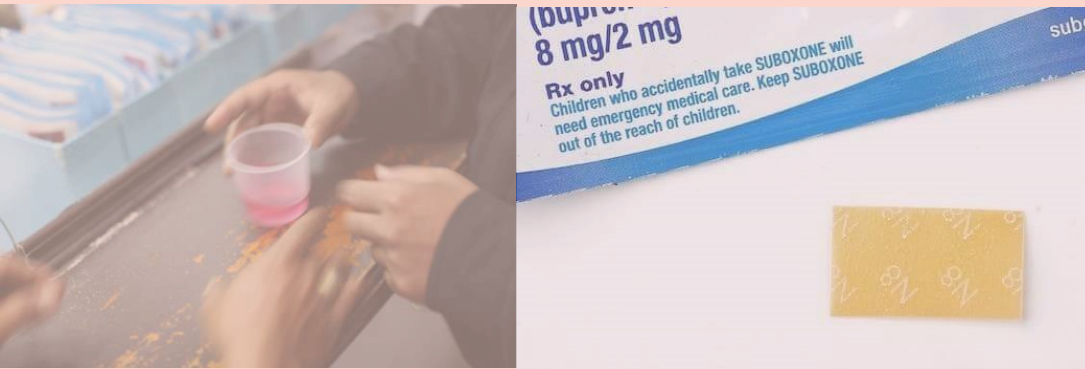
- Methadone and buprenorphine



# Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT)

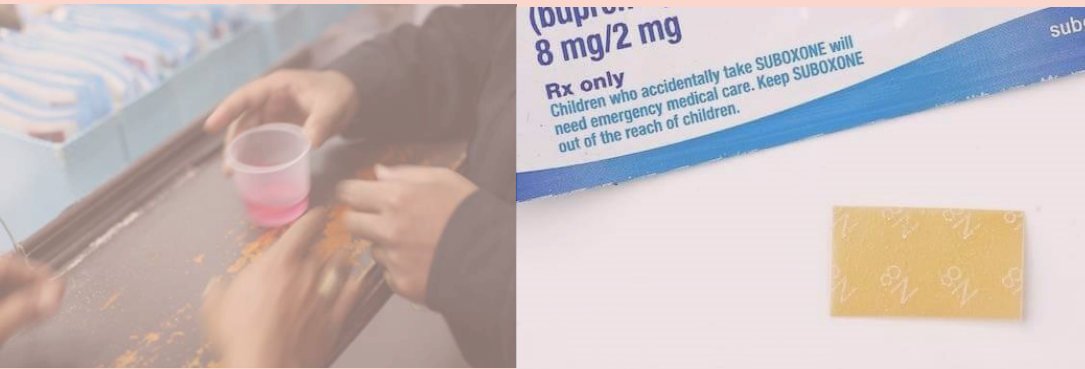
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- Methadone and buprenorphine
- Long-term use recommended



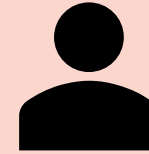
# Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT)

- Methadone and buprenorphine
- Long-term use recommended
- Wide variability in factors influencing retention<sup>1</sup>

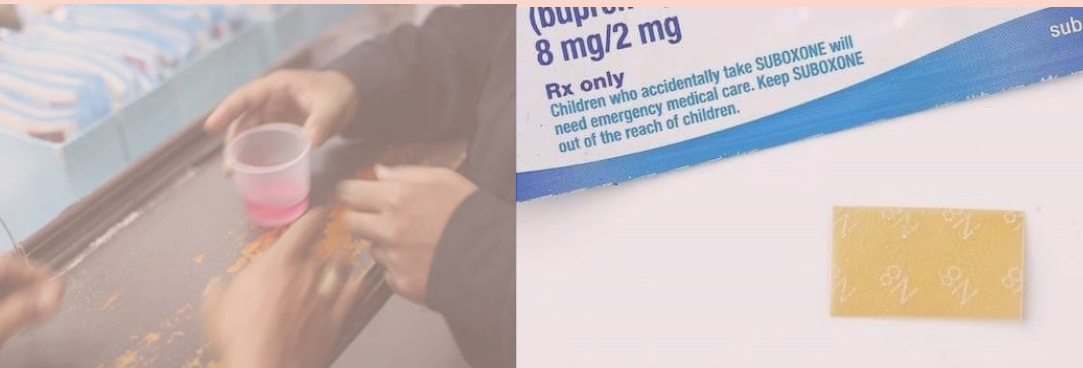


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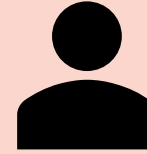


Older age  
Female gender  
Less illicit substance use  
Less criminal activity



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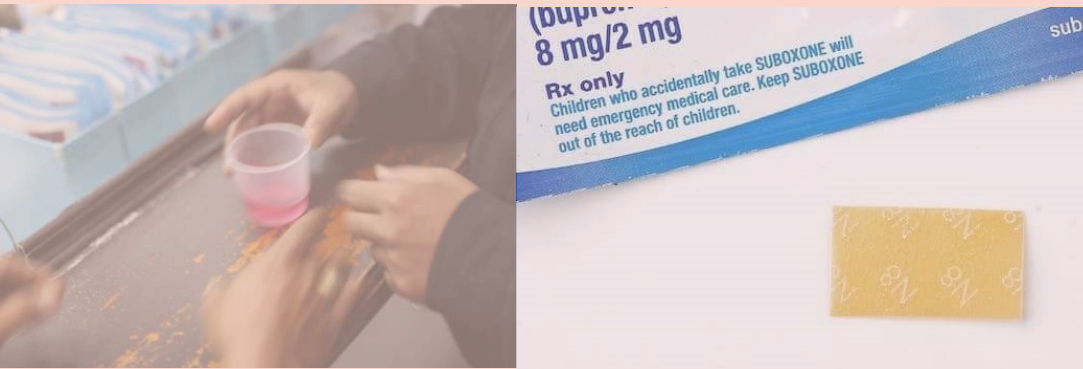
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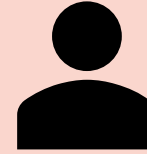


Higher doses



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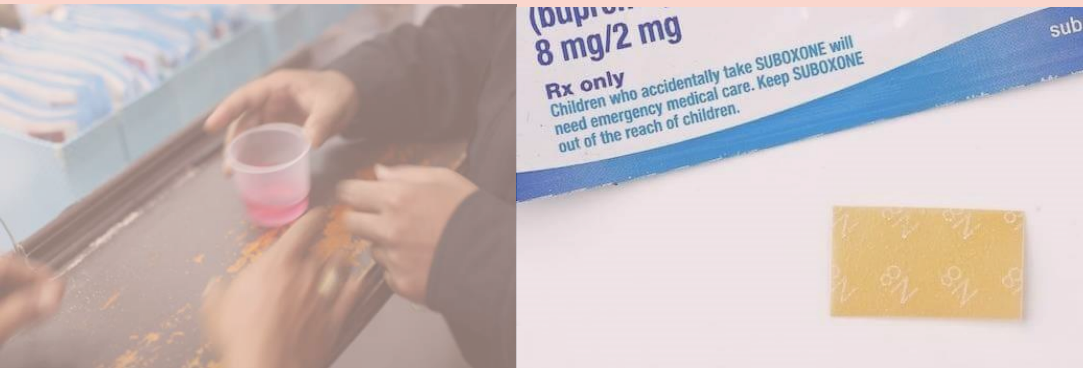
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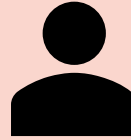




# Impact of characteristics on retention in OAT (22,577 people; 65,371 episodes)

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Improved retention



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Longer tenure of OAT prescribing

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Dosing point



Previous treatment

## Decreased retention



Buprenorphine versus methadone –  
effect varied by cohort

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Buprenorphine versus methadone –  
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More criminal offences



Younger age at entry

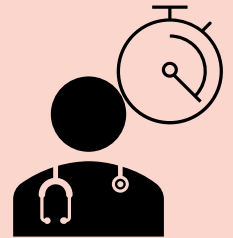


Schizophrenia

# Conclusions

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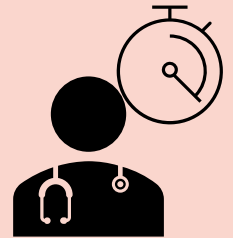
Email: [c.bharat@student.unsw.edu.au](mailto:c.bharat@student.unsw.edu.au)



# Conclusions

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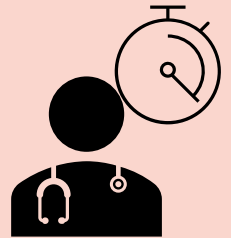
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- See publication in *Addiction* for further details

