

PRISON-BASED TREATMENT FOR ALCOHOL AND RELATED OTHER DRUG USE FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER (INDIGENOUS) AND NON-INDIGENOUS MEN

Authors:

MICHAEL DOYLE^{1,2}, TONY BUTLER², JILL GUTHRIE³, KATE CONIGRAVE¹, ANTHONY SHAKESHARFT⁴, MEGAN WILLIAMS⁵,

¹The University of Sydney; ²Kirby Institute, UNSW Australia; ³Australian National University; ⁴National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Australia; ⁵University of Technology Sydney

Introduction / Issues:

It can be challenging working with men in prison around alcohol and other drug use problems and particularly challenging working with Indigenous men in this population. This presentation will report on the findings of research that investigated the experiences of Indigenous and non-Indigenous men who had undertaken prison-based AoD treatment. This Aboriginal led work identified ways in which prison-based AoD treatment could be improved to better meet the needs of the men.

Method / Approach:

This study used a qualitative approach with 31 men in prison interviewed in-depth about their AoD treatment experiences.

Key Findings:

Participants reported positive experiences with programs facilitated by people who had overcome AoD use problems as these people were the evidence that such problems can be overcome. There was also an appreciation for the professional knowledge of well trained staff who could answer technical questions. Indigenous men did not express a particular preference for an Indigenous facilitator but were concerned about who the other inmates were in the group treatment program and if they could be trusted.

Discussions and Conclusions:

The findings have implications for AoD treatment within a prison context. Prison based programs have the greatest impact when program participants trust the facilitators' professional and or personal experience in AoD treatment. Indigenous men in prison may be more willing to discuss AoD use problems within Indigenous-only treatment groups as they are more comfortable to disclose personally sensitive information.

Implications for Practice or Policy:

Findings from this research could be used to inform and improve AoD treatment in prisons across Australia.

Implications for Translational Research (optional):

Findings from this research could be used to inform and improve AoD treatment in prisons across Australia.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The Australasian Professional Society for Alcohol and other Drugs (APSAD) recognises the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in all written publications.

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