National Drug Research Institute
Student Information Evening 2010
Research Overview and Opportunities

Professor Simon Lenton
NDRI Deputy Director
Overview

• History
• Part of Faculty of Health Sciences and Tier 1
• WHO Collaborating Centre
• Relevance of NDRI to national strategy and beyond
• Key result areas:
  – Conduct high quality research that will contribute to primary prevention of harmful drug use and reduction of drug related harm
  – Disseminate research findings to policy makers, practitioners, public health professionals, other researchers, community interest groups and the public; and contribute to the building of national capacity for research in the prevention of drug related harm
• Links to a range of stakeholders (e.g. Health; Police; Drug consumers; Community)
Activities, outputs and outcomes

• Wide range of opportunities for HDR supervision and for casual work/research careers

• Varied professional background
  – Psychology
  – Public Health
  – Epidemiology
  – Anthropology
  – Medicine
  – Sociology
Engage in range of research and related activities

- Alcohol policy
- Indigenous Australians
- Offender health
- Primary prevention and early intervention
- Social contexts of drug use
- People who continue to use alcohol and other drugs
- Tobacco
- New technologies
Alcohol Policy Research
Examples of current projects

- National Alcohol Indicators Project (NAIP)
- Alcohol outlet density and related harm
- An investigation of the nature, extent and effects of point-of-sale promotions for alcohol beverages
- Australian Alcohol Aetiologic Fractions for Emergency Department Presentations (AAAFED)
- Evaluation of public health and safety impact of Extended Trading Permits for Perth hotels and nightclubs
- Impact of changes to outlet density of public health and safety
- The estimate of the direct and indirect economic costs of alcohol incurred by Local Government
- The range and magnitude of alcohol’s harm to others
- Alcohol and other drug use at school leaver celebrations in Western Australia
Prevention, Early Intervention and Inequality
Research Strands

- Impact of early intervention (maternal health, child health and early learning and care) on health and well being (including substance use) among marginalised populations; e.g. evaluations of early learning initiatives in East Kimberley & central Australia
- Child-focused, family-centred, youth-led models of community development; e.g. Jaru Pirrjirdi project
- Social inequalities and their impact on health and substance use outcomes e.g. ARC Catalyst
- Mixed-method, participatory approaches to research and evaluation, e.g. NH&MRC Indigenous research training
- Alcohol and pregnancy longitudinal cohort and data linkage studies; e.g. Effect of dose, pattern, and timing of prenatal alcohol exposure and fetal effects; and Effect of a maternal alcohol-related diagnosis on children
Prevention, Early Intervention & Inequality Team

- Collaborative research also with Professor Dennis Gray, A/Professor Ted Wilkes, Ms Annalee Stearne, Dr Mandy Wilson & Mr Michael Doyle (Indigenous Australian Research Team)

Prof Sherry Saggers

Dr Lynn Roarty

Dr Kate Frances

Dr Colleen O’Leary
Community and School Interventions
Examples of Research Strands

• Alcohol Use and Pregnancy
  – Formative intervention research
  – Systematic literature review of interventions to reduce alcohol use during preconception, pregnancy and breastfeeding
  – Surveys with pregnant women who drink – demographics, situation and circumstances – directions for potential intervention
  – Impact of low level alcohol use during pregnancy
• Kalgoorlie Alcohol Action Project
• School Health and Alcohol Harm Reduction Project (SHAHRP) - ongoing national and international dissemination
• School Drug Education
Community and School Interventions Team

Dr Nyanda McBride  Dr Rina Cercarelli  Andreia Schineanu (KAAP)

- Susan Carruthers, Sherry Saggers and Colleen O’Leary also involved in FASD research
Offender Health
Offender Health Research

Justice Health Research at NDRI

Communicable Diseases: STI & BBV NPEBBVS

Substance use problem (IDU Alcohol)

Risk Behaviours: Sexual Gambling Tobacco Violence Injury

Indigenous incarceration

Standards & Advocacy & Policy: Medicare & PBS NMDPH

Interventions: Violent offending Alcohol

Who:
- Adult Prisoners
- Juvenile offenders
- Ex-offenders
- Community orders
- Courts

Mental Illness co-morbidity

Violent offending Alcohol

Who:
- Adult Prisoners
- Juvenile offenders
- Ex-offenders
- Community orders
- Courts

Offender Health Research

ndri.curtin.edu.au

national drug research institute
Offender Health Team

Prof Tony Butler
Dr Susan Carruthers
IDU/ Hepatitis C
Dr Eva Malacova
TBI & offending

Jocelyn Jones
PhD Scholar
(Juvenile offending)
James Fetherston
PhD Scholar
(Hepatitis C)
Michael Doyle
MPH Scholar
Clare Stevens
Research Associate
Indigenous Australians
Examples of Current Projects

- Identifying Areas of Greatest Need in Indigenous Substance Misuse Intervention
- Enhancing the management of alcohol-related problems among Indigenous Australians
- Evaluation of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress’ Safe and Sober Support Service
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cannabis Interventions
- Randomised controlled trial of an intensive smoking cessation intervention in Kimberley Aboriginal PHC settings
- Longitudinal study of the impact of alcohol restrictions in Central Australia
- Support of Tangentyere Council Research Hub
Indigenous Australians Research Team

Prof Dennis Gray
A/Prof Ted Wilkes
Dr Julia Butt
Dr Mandy Wilson
Anna Stearne
Ed Garrison
Illicit Drug Use Research
Drugs and Policy

Legislative and Regulatory Approaches
- Legislative options for cannabis
- Research on strategies to respond to drink and drug driving
- Research and advocacy for peer access to naloxone (Narcan)

Illicit Drug monitoring
- IDRS - Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDUs)
- ERDS – Ecstasy and Related Drugs (‘party drugs’)

Other projects and interests
- Drug users and the on-line environment
- Knowledge Transfer – Bridging the research to policy gap
Drugs and policy team

Prof Simon Lenton

Candice Rainsford

Jessica George

Monica Barratt (PhD Scholar)
Ethnographic Research
Examples of Current Projects

- Understanding and reducing alcohol-related harm among young adults in urban settings: Opportunities for intervention
- Analysing addiction concepts for improved public health outcomes: A Victorian Pilot Study
- Understanding the barriers to improved access, engagement and retention of methamphetamine users in health services
- Under construction: The social and cultural politics of hepatitis C in Australia
- An examination of injection drug use sites in Vancouver: The influence of social and physical context on drug-related harms and public health interventions
- The harms associated with concurrent alcohol and party drug use amongst young people: Risk environments and the implications for prevention
- The ethnography of party drug use and related harms in the Melbourne club/rave scene
- The ethnography of recreational party drug use and related harms in Perth
- Improving understanding of psychostimulant-related harms in Australia: An integrated ethno-epidemiological approach
PhD project: Doing drugs in an internet society

Monica Barratt
PhD Scholar

m.barratt@curtin.edu.au
Reflecting on my time at NDRI

- Started 2002 as research assistant; completed Honours thesis with NDRI co-supervision; since held positions as research officer and fellow in Melbourne
- Excellent mentorship and work experience
- Peer-reviewed publications
- Opportunities to work on national level projects
- Networking opportunities with researchers and AOD professionals locally and across the country
- National and international conference presentations
- Great friendships and collegial relationships
- Excellent administrative and infrastructural support

**Future career aspirations:**
- To submit thesis end 2010 or start 2011
- Submit academic papers arising from thesis
- Application for competitive funding to continue work from thesis
- Post doctoral fellowship / development of program of research
Doing drugs in an internet society

Monica Barratt, supervised by Simon Lenton & Matthew Allen

Aim: To explore and document the relationship between drug use & related harms and the use of online forums where drugs are discussed

- Description of settings & participants
- Seeking & sharing information
- Assessing accuracy & credibility
- Constructing norms/discourses
- Constructing/negotiating identities
- Accessing real world social scenes

Outcome: To inform how drug use is understood in an era of widespread internet use
Benefits and Challenges

• Completing my thesis in Melbourne while receiving supervision from Perth

• Choosing an exploratory research topic about which little was known (in 2006 in any case!)

• Stretching my quantitative psychology training by doing a mixed-methods project involving online research methods
Honours project: Public attitudes to drug dependence

Tanzi Collinge
Bachelor of Psychology
Curtin University
Public attitudes to drug dependence

Research questions

- Parental status of drug user
- Legal status of drug
- Predicting attitudes towards helping

My study

- Online questionnaire
- Quantitative + qualitative component
- MRA for comparisons, and SEM for model testing
My results

- Sympathy
- Helping Judgements
- Anger
- Perceived Responsibility
My experience studying with NDRI

• Real-world research project
• Co-supervision from an expert in the field
• Research grant
• Networking opportunities with researchers and AOD professionals
• The potential for publication and national conference presentation

Career aspirations

• Registration as a psychologist
• Working with children in the AOD field
Research Bursaries:

TWO RESEARCH BURSARIES in 2011
CLOSING DATE: 31 January 2011

VALUE - up to $2500
For any bona fide research expenses
e.g. recruitment, data coding, conference registration & travel
Expectation – refereed journal submission

SELECTION CRITERIA
Essential
1. Good undergraduate grades
2. Capacity to undertake a successful project.
3. Enrolment in honours or masters program at a WA university
4. A supervisor in enrolling department who is willing to supervise
   a drug-related project with a co-supervisor from NDRI
5. Availability of a potential co-supervisor at NDRI
Desirable
1. Previous study / experience in the alcohol and other drugs area.
Scholarship opportunities, and other Postgraduate info

Susan Carruthers
For further information on scholarships, bursaries and research:

**CD**

Please take an information CD with you

**NDRI**

ndri.curtin.edu.au/students

**Curtin**

curtin.edu.au/research/futurestudents/
To stay informed: ndri.curtin.edu.au or sign up to our email list