

Maximising the impact of Scottish drugs research:
from inception to publication

28th November 2018 Grand
Central Hotel Glasgow

PROGRAMME

09.15 – 09.45 **Registration and refreshments**

MORNING PLENARY

09.45 – 10.00 **Welcome**

Prof. Catriona Matheson, DRNS Convenor

10.00 – 10.30 **Research into policy: some examples of success**

Prof. Alex Stevens, University of Kent

10.30 – 11.00 **Getting good ideas into practice: how is implementation science useful for service improvement?**

Prof. Tracy Finch, Northumbria University

11.00 – 11.20 **Poster presentations**

11.20 – 11.45 **Break**

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

11.45 – 12.45 **A. Democratising drugs research? Navigating the evidence and building on people's experience: making it work for Public, Peers and Family members**

Dr Tessa Parkes, University of Stirling
Dr Gillian Tober, Leeds Addiction Unit
Jason Wallace, Scottish Drugs Forum

B. Preparing a strong grant application

Prof. Kate Hunt, University of Stirling

C. The power of large datasets and data linkage

Lee Barnsdale, NHS Information Services Division
Suhail Iqbal, Administrative Data Research Centre

12.45 – 13.45 **Lunch**

AFTERNOON PLENARY

13.45 – 14.15 **Getting published: A how-to guide**

Prof. Betsy Thom, Middlesex University

14.15 – 14.45 **Using non-academic methods in knowledge exchange**

Prof. Harry Sumnall, Liverpool John Moores University

14.45 – 15.05 **Poster presentations**

15.05 – 15.30 **Break**

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

15.30–16.30 **D. Ethics and governance in drugs research**

Dr Anne Whittaker, University of Stirling

E. Communicating research effectively with policy makers

Carol Brown, Scottish Government

F. Research into practice: Successful case studies from a clinical/practitioner perspective

Prof. Roy Robertson, University of Edinburgh
David Liddell, Scottish Drugs Forum

16.30 – 16.45 **Closing notes** Prof. Catriona Matheson, DRNS Convenor

MEET THE SPEAKERS

Professor Alex Stevens

Alex Stevens is Professor in Criminal Justice at the University of Kent. He is a member of the UK Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs and President of the International Society for the Study of Drug Policy. He has published extensively on drug policy issues, including drug services in prisons, decriminalisation in Portugal and the recent increases in drug-related deaths in the UK. These publications include a book on *Drugs, Crime and Public Health: the Political Economy of Drug Policy* (Routledge) and, most recently, an article called 'Drug Policy Constellations' in the *International Journal of Drug Policy*.



Research into policy: some examples of success (10.00-10.30)

We are all familiar with examples of research being blocked from informing policy. But there are examples of success. These include: the long spread of opioid substitution therapy (including in prisons); the adoption of harm reduction in response to the HIV epidemic; and the international spread of support for decriminalisation of drug possession. This talk will focus on the mechanisms through which research makes its way into policy, including professional pressure, community mobilisation, legal action and relatively enlightened democratic processes. It will emphasise that mere publication of research is never enough. It will invite discussion of whether and how such successes can be replicated for present problems, including record levels of drug-related deaths.

Professor Tracy Finch

Tracy is Professor of Healthcare & Implementation Science in the Department of Nursing, Midwifery & Health, at Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne. Tracy is known for her work in implementation science, most notably Normalization Process Theory (NPT), of which she is co-developer. This work includes applying theoretical perspectives and novel research methodologies to understand and shape the processes of healthcare improvement through implementation of changes in practice, across a range of topics (eg mental health, e-health, patient safety, stroke therapy). Central to this, is development and application of theory based tools and assessment instruments to support non-academic users conducting implementation work in practice settings; and development of qualitative and mixed methods process evaluation methodology in relation to development and evaluation of complex interventions.



Getting good ideas into practice: how is implementation science useful for service improvement? (10.30-11.00)

New innovations in health and social care provision promise improvement in service user outcomes, yet fail to be successfully integrated into routine practice. The presentation will provide a brief introduction to 'implementation science' and outline how the theoretical and practical developments in this field can help us to better understand – and influence – efforts to create and sustain change in practice. One key approach within the field, Normalization Process Theory (NPT) (<http://normalizationprocess.org>) will be described and illustrated with brief examples, as a tool for planning and evaluating complex health interventions.

Professor Betsy Thom

Betsy is Professor of Health Policy and co-director of the Drug and Alcohol Research Centre at Middlesex University. Her research interests include alcohol and drug policy, gender and substance use, and community based approaches to prevention and intervention. She has been involved in several EU funded projects and has worked as a consultant for UNODC. She was editor-in-chief of *Drugs: Education Prevention and Policy* for twenty years and a member of the board of the International Society for Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE). Her work has included developing and running distance learning programmes in drug and alcohol studies; most recently a masters in 'Comparative Drug and Alcohol Studies', a collaborative programme with Denmark and Italy. Current research is looking at drug prevention interventions for young drug users in the criminal justice systems in six EU countries.

**Getting published: A how-to guide (13.45-14.15)**

The presentation will highlight some dos and don'ts in three key areas: choosing a journal; preparing your manuscript; and replying to reviewers' comments. Come prepared with questions you want to raise.

Professor Harry Sumnall

Harry Sumnall is Professor in Substance Use at the Public Health Institute and Liverpool John Moores University. His research focuses on young people's substance use, with a general interest in prevention interventions and mechanism to support the use of evidence in practice and policy. Ongoing research projects include evidence-based risk communication campaigns, development of opioid-prescription reduction programmes in primary care, and understanding the representations of substances in popular media. Harry is a member of the UK Government Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), a Board member of the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR), a Trustee of the drug and alcohol prevention charity Mentor UK, and a Scientific Advisory Board member of the MIND Foundation.

**Using non-academic methods in knowledge exchange (14.15-14.45)**

Traditional dissemination routes are rarely effective in helping researcher's to improve their knowledge exchange activities. Drawing upon recent examples in the substance use field, this talk will discuss some of the opportunities and challenges of alternative knowledge exchange practices, including social media, art & music, broadcasting, as well as the evidence underpinning more structured dissemination programmes.
