

Keeping Up with the Evidence: Issue 7

Background

Highlights and references of recent publications related to HIV and other STBBIs, harm reduction, and other related work.

Thinking papers

Diverging from the usual focus on emerging evidence, the issue of Keeping Up With The Evidence focuses on recent articles providing food for thought in relation to multiple issues of interest. While these articles may discuss context which are seemingly beyond those of ACCH membership (such primary care or emergency care) they provide arguments and perspectives which are useful in presenting articulate arguments in harm reduction perspectives.

Pathways to sustained recovery from substance use disorder (Stokes, Schultz, & Alpaslan, 2018)

Summary: This paper is the result of a qualitative study conducted in South Africa where the study team conducted interviews with individuals having experienced sustained recoveries from their substance use disorders. The authors breakdown the themes that were discussed within these narrative accounts and identify some of the factors which contribute to the participant's successes in their journeys. The journeys described line up with existing understanding of recovery processes, including a change of mind-set in relation to addiction, changes in lifestyles, as well as environmental and social factors.

Implications: While this article does not provide much new insight into substance use recovery, it does provide interesting quotes and narrative elements. More importantly, it reinforces the idea that sustained recovery is a very difficult goal to reach and should not be set as the first target for many vulnerable individuals. While the journey to recovery is possible for some, a harm reduction approach is warranted with individuals who are not in a place (physical, social, economical, psychological) to undertake such an endeavour.

Link: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13011-018-0167-0>

Reference: Stokes, M., Schultz, P., & Alpaslan, A. (2018). Narrating the journey of sustained recovery from substance use disorder. *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, 13(1), 35. doi:10.1186/s13011-018-0167-0

Patients and Agents (Walach & Loughlin, 2018)

Summary: This paper discusses a suggested change of approach in healthcare which focuses on agency and considering 'patients' as 'agents'. While patients are suffering from a condition and are the subject of the health professionals' expertise, the 'agent' is an active participant whose life must be understood in a holistic fashion. The authors acknowledge that both perspectives are already being

considered, but suggest that the focus on the agency of individuals should be given more attention. In relation to this, they also support the idea that conditions are often the result of multi-factorial situations which should be addressed with holistic solutions rather than with punctual interventions.

Implications: This article provides an articulate argument supporting treating people in need of health care as participants and partners rather than as clients or patients. It emphasises the importance of recruiting individuals into the development of their care plans. Usefully, it however also points out that the need to consider agency should not be pushed to the conclusion that individuals are wholly responsible for their conditions are should experience guilt if they cannot change their lifestyles.

Link: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13010-018-0068-x>

Reference: T Walach, H., & Loughlin, M. (2018). Patients and agents – or why we need a different narrative: a philosophical analysis. *Philosophy, Ethics, and Humanities in Medicine*, 13(1), 13. doi:10.1186/s13010-018-0068-x

Language interpretations in multicultural and multilingual settings (Lundin, Hadziabdic, & Hjelm, 2018)

Summary: This article is based on a qualitative study conducted in emergency departments in Sweden. A series of interviews and focus groups were analyzed to parse out how linguistic and cultural interpreters were used in such a context. The authors provide arguments as to the importance of interpreters in providing equitable access to health care.

Implications: While the context in which this study was conducted differs greatly from those of ACCH members (emergency care in Sweden), the discussions in regard to the importance of the use of interpreters is highly relevant. Many ACCH members operate in multicultural contexts and provide services to population which could benefit from linguistic or cultural interpreters. Were possible, partnerships should be developed or sustained with organizations that are able to provide interpreters.

Link: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-018-0157-3>

Reference: Lundin, C., Hadziabdic, E., & Hjelm, K. (2018). Language interpretation conditions and boundaries in multilingual and multicultural emergency healthcare. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 18(1), 23. doi:10.1186/s12914-018-0157-3