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## A Note From NIDA's Director

In this issue of *Science & Practice Perspectives*, a dialogue between researcher Dr. Linda Chang and clinical psychiatrist Dr. Paul Linde provides a prime example of how bringing together a researcher's conceptual framework and a skillful clinician's understanding of clinical nuance stimulates and enriches both. Together, Chang and Linde consider whether the results to date from non-invasive brain imaging studies might support his use of certain medications with methamphetamine abusers. Ultimately, they conclude that the findings appear consistent with Linde's use of some of the medications, raise concerns about others, and can't strictly endorse any. Along the way, the colloquy identifies two good opportunities for research studies and appropriate messages to give patients based on imaging studies.

If Chang and Linde's discussion exemplifies the depth of integration now occurring between research and clinical practice in drug abuse, the overall contents of the journal indicate its breadth. Topics range from clinical interventions to the challenges of making organizational changes and of laying a foundation for systemic change. The research-practice engagement evident in *Perspectives* reflects a broad maturity of collaborative solution-seeking in the treatment of drug abuse. To cite some examples:

- NIDA's Clinical Trials Network has now published the results of studies of motivational interviewing, contingency management, and opiate detoxification with the medication combination of buprenorphine and naloxone. Although these studies proved their hypotheses, an equally important outcome was that researchers and community clinicians jointly planned and accomplished projects that served both of their learning agendas.
- The Blending Initiative—a collaboration between NIDA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Addiction Treatment Technology Centers—has released four evidence-based, validated tools for staff training. They cover the use of buprenorphine for opiate withdrawal and for longer term treatment, and offer guidance on administering and interpreting the Addiction Severity Index.

There always will be some degree of divergence between research and clinical practice in the treatment of substance abuse, because the two enterprises have different natures. Communication across this gap is critical to achieve the common goal of reducing drug abuse and addiction, and

their health and social consequences. The growing maturity of that communication, evident in this journal, increases hope for patients, their families, and the Nation.



Nora D. Volkow, M.D.  
Director  
National Institute on Drug Abuse

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## Change Is at Hand

**W**e are happy to announce several changes that will increase the availability and visibility of *Science & Practice Perspectives*. From now on, clinicians, service providers, students, policymakers, and others who use the PubMed search engine ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi)) will find *Perspectives* articles that match their information needs. The National Library of Medicine's decision to include *Perspectives* in its MEDLINE (PubMed) database significantly expands the reach and influence of our authors' and panelists' findings and insights. It also affirms the high scientific standards of our authors and panelists, reviewers, editorial board, and editing staff.

Also, with this issue, *Perspectives* moves to a twice yearly publishing schedule. This doubling of frequency will enable us to cover a broader array of topics. The semiannual schedule will enable us to keep abreast of the dynamically evolving research-practice dialogue.

With these changes, contributors to this journal can now achieve a broader and longer lasting impact with their ideas and insights. Readers, we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity and send us your proposals for articles and topics. We are pleased to consider any topic that is of interest to both researchers and clinicians. The articles in this issue will provide you with some idea—although a very incomplete one—of the breadth of material this encompasses.

In this issue, Dr. Joanna Fowler and colleagues, and Dr. Michael Otto and colleagues bring highly refined research techniques and theories to bear on particular patient problems. An article by Dr. Dwayne Simpson and Dr. Donald Dansereau, and another by Mr. Jay Hansen address the

challenges of incorporating science-based practices into existing programs, one from a researcher's viewpoint and one from a program director's viewpoint. Finally, Dr. Frank McCorry surveys current standards for performance measurement and quality improvement in drug abuse treatment. We think you—along with future searchers of PubMed—will find much to ponder, profit from, and, we hope, enjoy.



David Anderson  
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