

Dialogue and Collaboration: A Path for Progress

Science & Practice Perspectives aims to foster an ongoing creative exchange of ideas and insights between drug abuse researchers and service providers. NIDA's hope is that collegial dialogue will lead to greater collaboration, to more research that is highly attuned to community-based providers' actual needs and problems, and to greater use of science-based treatment and prevention practices in community-based programs.

In each issue of *Perspectives*, distinguished scientists will review and interpret key research findings in areas of immediate relevance for practitioners, and highly accomplished and respected providers will discuss their experiences with implementing science-based programs and raise questions for research.

The articles in this inaugural *Perspectives* exemplify the equal and complementary contributions that practitioners and researchers can make toward advancing drug abuse treatment and prevention:

- James Sorensen, Carmen Masson, and David Perlman review the science of HIV and hepatitis prevention among drug abusers, focusing on practical steps programs can—and should—take to contain these deadly diseases.
- Thomas Kosten and Tony George explain how drugs affect the brain to produce drug liking, tolerance, and addiction. Their plain-language account will help clinicians understand and convey to patients the biological basis for many of the phenomena encountered in treatment and recovery.
- T. Ron Jackson discusses the new challenge facing opioid treatment programs to achieve and document favorable patient outcomes, identifying research-based tools available to the programs, but also pointing out research opportunities related to the new standards.
- Ann Uhler and Olga Parker address treatment programs and researchers with the troubling possibility that the use of standardized trauma assessment instruments in initial interviews may drive some patients away from treatment.

- Robert Brooner and Michael Kidorf describe how they used the results of treatment research to design a new treatment model, called motivational stepped care, which has shown promise in preliminary evaluations.

Researchers Sorensen and colleagues, Kosten and George, and Brooner and Kidorf draw on the critical knowledge base and analytical tools of science. Providers Jackson, Uhler, and Parker bring the authority of direct, daily patient care and clinical expertise to their discussions. All articles have been peer-reviewed to ensure not only accuracy and completeness, but also relevance and accessibility to all readers. To extend the dialogue an important step further, a panel that includes researchers discusses the content of each provider-written article, and a panel that includes providers discusses each researcher-written article. Finally, we offer a feature in which a group of researchers, administrators, and clinicians relate the strains and the satisfactions of collaborating on a successful project to improve treatment engagement in a community clinic.

We hope you find this first issue of *Science & Practice Perspectives* stimulating and useful. To achieve our ultimate objective of advancing research ideas and treatment solutions that fully reflect the knowledge and reality of science and practice, we need active participation by forward-looking readers: professionals who understand that their own community provides a vital part—and not the whole—of the skills and knowledge required to reduce the devastation of drug abuse and addiction.



David Anderson
Editor
National Institute on Drug Abuse