

Assessing the research capacity of staff from alcohol and other drugs treatment services based in NSW

ROSEMAREE K. MILLER^{1,2}, SUZIE HUDSON^{1,3}, SARAH HUTCHINSON⁴, JOANNE ROSS⁵, & ROBERT STIRLING^{1,3}

¹Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies

²University of Newcastle, Australia

³University of New South Wales, Australia

⁴NSW Drug and Alcohol Clinical Research and Improvement Network (DACRIN)

⁵Strategic Research & Evaluation, Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs

Presenter's email: rosemaree@nada.org.au

Introduction and Aims: Building the capacity of health services to conduct research has emerged as an effective way to enhance the translation of research into practice. The present study assessed the baseline research capacity of alcohol and other drugs (AODs) treatment services in NSW to guide future research capacity building initiatives in the NSW AODs sector.

Methods: Participants were 132 Local Health District (LHD; 55%) and 110 non-government (NGO; 45%) staff working within AODs services based in NSW, Australia. Most staff were female ($n=170$) and worked with services located in the Sydney region ($n=132$, 55%) or rural/regional NSW ($n=107$, 44%). Participants completed the Research Capacity and Culture (RCC) tool, a 51-item scale that respondents use to rate the research capacity of their organisation, their team, and themselves as individuals (Holden et al., 2012). Median RCC scores were analysed with linear mixed-effects modelling using Satterthwaite approximation.

Key Findings: The main effect of RCC subscale was significant, $F(4,18,2)=31.0$, $p<.001$. Participants reported significantly higher levels of research capacity for their organisation ($M=6.2$, 95% CI[6.5, 5.8]) compared to their own teams ($M=5.0$, 95% CI[5.4, 4.7]) or themselves as individuals ($M=5.0$, 95% CI[5.3, 4.6]).

Conclusions: Efforts to build the research capacity of LHD and NGO staff from AOD treatment services may benefit from focusing on enhancing individual and team-based research capacity.

Disclosure of Interest: This research was supported by an NGO service development grant provided to NADA via the Centre for Alcohol and other Drugs, NSW Ministry of Health. The DACRIN also provided funding for participant reimbursement.