



SMMGP Update - November 2017

We are delighted to announce the launch of the National Substance Misuse Non-Medical Prescriber Forum (NSMNMPF) now incorporated on our website. Non-medical prescribing is an important part of the treatment system and NSMNMPF provide invaluable support to this growing part of the workforce. To find out more, including information about events and how to become a member visit the new dedicated [NSMNMPF section](#) on our website

SMMGP Premium Members have access to quality CPD from experts in the field via our online training webinars and reading our [Clinical Update](#).

Coming soon for Premium Members:

Webinar: *Opioid substitute treatment and dose optimisation: how to get it right* Thursday 23.11.17

Steve Brinksman, SMMGP Clinical Director will take us through the evidence and practice of how to get the OST dose right. He will draw on guidance and his experience of working in the field to discuss the difficulties of finding the right dose for patients.

Premium Members can catch up on a range of webinars including our most recent: *So you want me to prescribe dexamphetamine? What makes an NMP a 'specialist' in modern day substance misuse services?* presented by Graham Parsons, Consultant Clinical Pharmacist and *Novel psychoactive substances - sharing prison and community experiences and good practice* presented by Dr George Ryan, Clinical Advisor Public Health England

Keep up-to-date with the latest research in our [November Clinical Update](#) compiled for us by Mental Elf with an emphasis on dual diagnosis. Here is a taster:

Novel Psychoactive Substances: bridging the knowledge gap

Mdege ND, Meader N, Lloyd C, Parrott S, McCambridge J. (2017)

The Novel Psychoactive Substances in the UK Project: empirical and conceptual review work to produce research recommendations ([First look draft](#)). NIHR Journals Library, National Institute for Health Research.

There is scant evidence about novel psychoactive substances, but with such a fast-moving field are large research studies ever going to be viable?

A first look at the Novel Psychoactive Substances in the UK Project; a National Institute for Health Research funded empirical and conceptual review that recommends research priorities in the field. The project sets out to:

- Summarise and evaluate what is known about NPS use, harms, and responses
- Develop a dedicated conceptual framework for a public health approach
- Make recommendations on key evidence gaps and future priorities.

Commentary by Derek Tracy, Consultant Psychiatrist Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust:

NPS use remains a 'minority' amongst those who consume drugs, but the area is important. Some are being shown to be especially potent, with localised bursts of hospitalisations and deaths; the novel fentanyl seem a particular worry. Even more so than is usually the case, there are some very marginalised and vulnerable people who seem disproportionately involved, notably those who are homeless, in prisons, and forensic psychiatric units. Issues of detectability and cost may be playing a role, but when we think of the social space in which harmful drug use is treated and lives rehabilitated, these may be very difficult people to reach.

The first contested cases of selling nitrous oxide under new laws have recently collapsed, adding further uncertainty to the current legal situation.

In the flurry, and at times panicked, slew of information (often partial, sometimes inaccurate) that has followed the growth of NPS, this work by Mdege et al is an important initial census and State of the Nation. It is timely to set forth prospective goals, rather than seemingly just be reactive to the environment.

To access the full clinical update and to watch our webinars, [upgrade to become an SMMGP Premium Member](#).

We are pleased to list recent resources and events on our website that may be of interest to you:

[The role of nurses in alcohol and drug treatment services](#)

Public Health England, the Royal College of Nursing, the Association of Nurses in Substance Abuse (ANSA) and the National Substance Misuse Non-Medical Prescribing Forum have developed guidance to assist commissioners and providers of specialist adult alcohol and drug treatment services to identify the right workforce to meet the needs of their local populations. It focuses on nurses and their contribution to services responding to associated physical health and co-occurring mental health needs. Nurses bring essential skills to multi-disciplinary teams, delivering a range of interventions cost-effectively.

Experienced nurses can provide advanced clinical interventions, respond to more complex physical and mental health needs and ultimately add more value.

[SMMGP network event on opioid substitution treatment](#)

Training is important, and we held the first of what we hope to become regular workshops last month on working within the 2017 Clinical Guidelines with **Opioid Substitution Treatment and Choices** as the theme. The workshop was well attended and our article on the link above was drawn from the lively discussions during breaks and comments on the evaluation forms.

[FREE WORKSHOP: Working Effectively with People Who Use Drugs and Upholding the Principles of Treatment Event](#)

Following on from the success of this first event, we're pleased to announce a second free event to be held in London on Thursday 1st February 2018 on Working Effectively with People Who Use Drugs and Upholding the Principles of Treatment.

This event is aimed at members in London, but we do hope to be able to repeat the programme in other centres next year. For more information and to book for the event please [click here](#).

[Mind the Gap – ask about pauses in breathing and snoring if patients are on opioids](#)

Dr Kirstie Anderson from the Regional Sleep Service, Newcastle, writes a thought-provoking article on sleep and risk factors if patients are on opioids.

[Federation of Drug and Alcohol Practitioners \(FDAP\) news](#)

We welcome Dr Tim Leighton to the FDAP Assessment Board. Tim is the Director of Professional Education and Research at the Centre for Addiction Treatment Studies in Warminster, which delivers a Foundation Degree and BSc in Addictions Counselling in partnership with the University of Bath.

FDAP is instrumental in the formation of an Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group which is in the process of putting in a proposal for a Drug and Alcohol Worker Apprenticeship (Level 4). This represents a real opportunity for the sector to provide a consistent and recognised education standard across the workforce. All the key large organisations are involved, and many smaller organisations from across the sector are also involved. We will keep posting updates on this initiative as it progresses.

From the SMMGP / FDAP Team



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