



Lisbon Seminar 2022

Part 1

WHY PUBLISH YOUR ADDICTION RESEARCH?

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Why publish?

- ▶ Ours is still a relatively young science and things have changed a huge amount even in the time I have worked in the field (35 years).
- ▶ We come from a number of different backgrounds: sociology, psychology, medicine, pharmacy etc and we can all learn from these different fields.
- ▶ Different drugs, different methods of delivery, new infections and the realisation of how injecting (and other forms) drugs can affect people.
- ▶ The effect of different social and environmental conditions that will affect drug users. Eg Corona virus and the economic crisis in Greece.

Why publish?

- ▶ There are changes in research methods, when I started working and researching, few journals would publish qualitative work!
- ▶ There are changes in policy and international views on policy. The phrase harm reduction was introduced in the 1980's and in many places was frowned upon – “giving drugs to people is terrible!” (substitution) “giving needles and syringes just encourages people” (needle and syringe exchange)! These sorts of measures are now widely used and are considered essential.
- ▶ Legalisation and decriminalisation are increasing and proving effective.

Why publish?

- ▶ All of the above have changed over the past few years but whether they work needs to be evaluated.
- ▶ There is no point in doing original work, research, evaluating services etc unless you share the important results.
- ▶ The best way of sharing your work is through a peer reviewed journal.
- ▶ A peer reviewed journal will ensure that your work is evaluated by “peers” (others who have expertise in the field.)
- ▶ This is to ensure the quality and robustness of your research

What can we publish?

- ▶ Quantitative research
- ▶ Qualitative research
- ▶ Systematic reviews
- ▶ Meta analysis
- ▶ Case reports
- ▶ Letters
- ▶ Opinion pieces
- ▶ But not all journals publish all of these – check first

Peer reviewed journals

- ▶ There are probably over 100 peer reviewed journals published in the world on topics of substance use and addiction
- ▶ These are published in English, Spanish, French, Greek, German, Chinese, Korean and others.
- ▶ These days probably the most common language in which to be published is English. This is unfair to non English speakers as it poses a greater burden on them but English is now the language of science and scientific publishing.
- ▶ You can also publish in non addiction journals according to your background eg Psychology, Sociology or Medical journals

Peer reviewed journals

- ▶ A peer reviewed journal will probably have your paper reviewed by 2 reviewers who should have knowledge of your subject.
- ▶ The editor will make a decision based upon the reviews received and will accept, ask for revisions (minor or major) or reject. It is very rare for a paper to be accepted without any revisions.
- ▶ Once your paper is accepted you may add it to your CV and these days will often be published on line within 2 weeks of acceptance. It will be published in hard copy several weeks later but once it is on line it has been published.
- ▶ Another advantage of publishing in a peer reviewed journal is that it will be abstracted onto a number of databases which mean that others will find your paper using search engines.

Achieving success in getting published

- ▶ Journal editors may reject your paper for a number of reasons which you need to consider before submitting.
- ▶ Journals receive far more papers than they could publish even if they were all of a high quality. Editors have a page budget from their publishers (for paper publication) and so can only publish a certain amount of papers. I receive about 400 papers per year of which I can only publish a proportion.
- ▶ Journal with a very high impact factor will have low rated of acceptance. In our field “Addiction” which is the gold standard journal publishes only 15% of papers received.

Achieving success in getting published

- ▶ So choose the journal where you submit your paper with care.
- ▶ Does it have a very high impact factor?
- ▶ Does it take the type of paper yours is? Qualitative research, quantitative research, review papers, meta analysis, case reports, letters, policy papers, opinion pieces. Not all journals will publish all of these type of paper!
- ▶ Check the Instructions for Authors before submitting.
- ▶ Don't exceed word length (page budgets) unless you have prior agreement with the editor. Qualitative papers are often slightly longer than other types of research

Achieving success in getting published

- ▶ Make sure your references are in the same style as required by the journal: Vancouver or APA/Harvard style.
- ▶ Make sure colleagues read your paper before submission, they will pick up mistakes and non-sequiters that you have missed.
- ▶ Have you included in the reference list all the references mentioned in the text and are all the references in the reference list in the text?
- ▶ Have you included all the authors who hve made a major contribution to the paper on the author list?
- ▶ The reviewers and editor will pick up mistakes so it is better to get it right first time.
- ▶ Make sure the language is checked before you submit.

Achieving success in getting published

Why are papers rejected?

- ▶ Papers are triaged before sending out for review
- ▶ Editors value the reviewers they have so do not want to waste their time or the editor's time.
- ▶ Triage can identify major faults in language, format, referencing, length etc.
- ▶ People ignoring "Instructions to Authors"

Achieving success in getting published

Why are papers rejected?

- ▶ Outside the scope of the journal (not about addiction)
- ▶ Manuscript type unacceptable
- ▶ Major methodological weaknesses (eg too few subjects)
- ▶ Clear ethical problems (animals or humans)
- ▶ Purely descriptive, no hypotheses, no conclusions
- ▶ Statistical analysis lacking
- ▶ Nothing new in it.
- ▶ Too many papers received already by the journal on the same subject

Achieving success in getting published

- ▶ Contact the editor ask if paper is acceptable
- ▶ Ensure length is appropriate and references etc.
- ▶ Be very careful in preparation.
- ▶ Ensure you highlight why your paper is important and the contribution it makes to the science.
- ▶ Write strong conclusions and why more research is needed on the subject.
- ▶ Good luck!