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Holmes, J. orcid.org/0000-0001-9283-2151 (2018) Introduction to a new series on case studies on the addiction policy process. Addiction, 113 (8). p. 1381.

https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14213

Introduction to a new series on case studies on the addiction policy process

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That addiction research should inform public policy is a routine expectation of researchers, our funders and practitioners in the field. However, realising this expectation is not straightforward as the process of policy-making is complex: many actors and institutions are involved, priorities can change rapidly, and there is rarely a science-friendly policy cycle where problems are defined, solutions developed, evaluations conducted and interventions rolled out [1]. Given the above, the genesis of addiction policies and the role played by evidence is often opaque.

This issue of *Addiction* launches a new series which seeks to combine insights from theories of the policy process, case studies of addiction policy-making, and a focus on multiple levels of governance to answer key questions about how addiction policy is made and the role that researchers and their evidence can play in that process.

We seek submissions which go beyond descriptive accounts of the chosen case study to draw explicitly on theories of the policy process and increase the exposure of *Addiction's* readership to a more complex but rigorous analysis of policy-making. There is a large theoretical literature which offers competing and complementary perspectives on the policy process [see the following for introductory texts 1, 2]. This variously emphasises, among other things, the varying roles of individual policy makers, the beliefs of coalitions within policy networks [3], transfer of policies from other jurisdictions (whether voluntary or coerced) [4, 5], and the creation of short-term windows of opportunity when politics, problems and solutions align [6]. In doing so, this literature brings to the fore the importance of ideas, power, institutions, socioeconomic factors and networks of policy actors and we encourage authors to do the same [1].

In this issue, Alison Ritter and colleagues begin the series by analysing the use of drug detection dogs in Australia using the Advocacy Coalition Framework [3]and Multiple Streams [6] approaches with a view to explicating the relationship between evidence and policy. In a rapidly changing policy environment, further opportunities for learning emerge on a regular basis. These include on-going development of regulatory structures for e-cigarettes and online gambling, relaxation of prohibitions around cannabis, the expansion of licit addiction industries into new markets, efforts to combat new psychoactive substances, and responses to the opioid crisis. In addition to contemporary case studies, there are a wide range of addiction policies which have been developed, adopted and implemented over recent decades with little scrutiny of what took place.

Although analyses of national-level policy are welcome, we particularly encourage submissions which recognise that policy emerges and is implemented within both supra- and sub-national jurisdictions. At the supra-national level, bodies including both the European Union and its courts as well as the World Health Organisation require scrutiny while, at the sub-national level, policy processes within local, regional, provincial and state government and governance all merit greater attention than they have been given to date.

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