

Welcome to the International Journal of Alcohol and Drug Research

In 2010, the Kettil Bruun Society (KBS) for Social and Epidemiological Research on Alcohol received a request to operate a journal that would focus on international research on alcohol and other drugs, and provide mentoring and capacity building in low- and middle-income countries.

This request fits well with the aims and culture of KBS, most notably the aim of fostering a cross-cultural understanding of alcohol use and alcohol problems in a spirit of international cooperation (www.kettilbruun.org). Therefore, a vote was put to the KBS in early 2011 to sponsor the new journal. The response was positive and a plan was drawn up to make the journal operational. After several stages of consultation and development, the *International Journal of Alcohol and Drug Research* (IJADR) was officially launched.

This journal is a natural evolution for the KBS, which has increasingly included members from around the globe. The substantial international presence is due partly to the KBS providing an ongoing home base for international collaborations. In addition, the society has encouraged participants from low- and middle-income countries through inexpensive membership and meeting registration fees, and by providing financial support to participants to attend meetings. The increasing number of countries represented by the KBS membership, including countries that have little tradition of alcohol research, is described in an invited paper by Henk Garretson and colleagues that is included in this first issue of the journal. In their paper, Garretson et al. describe the evolution of the society since 1983, including changes in the gender and country of origin of KBS meeting participants, as well as the types of research methods used and the topics addressed in papers presented at annual meetings.

An explicit international focus is critical for the growth and impact of alcohol and other drug research. Because substance use patterns and consequences are largely culturally driven, cross-

national research is needed to be able to distinguish universal from cultural aspects of use. Cross-cultural research is also needed because policies and programs that are effective in one context will not necessarily be effective in other contexts. In particular, most research to date has been conducted in a small number of fairly wealthy countries, and the generalizability of these findings to other countries is mostly unknown. Finally, an international perspective is essential in the current climate of increasing globalization and contagion in alcohol and other drug use practices. Thus, a journal that can foster and bring to light more research knowledge from low- and middle-income countries is especially important for the advancement of addiction science at this time.

Accordingly, IJADR is participating in a new mentoring initiative, developed by the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE), which has the goal of building research capacity in low- and middle-income countries.

As IJADR's first Editors-in-Chief, we were delighted to take the lead in developing the journal because we believe it fills an important gap—a belief that is shared by members of our Advisory Board, who have kindly written companion editorials for this first journal issue. Although there are other journals in the addiction field that have a major international focus and presence, IJADR provides an important new function. First, there is growing competition for space in high-profile international journals, with only a small proportion of the many worthy submissions accepted. Most journals also have costs either for the readers or the authors. This means that access to journals is often limited for researchers in low- and middle-income countries. Thus, IJADR can make a unique contribution to publications on alcohol and drug research by increasing access to papers of a high scientific standard focusing on international comparisons and increasing knowledge of alcohol and other drugs from an international perspective.

Alcohol and other drug use and associated problems occur within a global context. Given this, we are particularly interested in papers that examine drug use from an international perspective and that explore how issues related to drug use and the social and health-related consequences of such use impact nations, regions and cultures. Further, alcohol and other drug use often occur in tandem, and this co-occurring pattern of use presents unique challenges for prevention and treatment alike, especially in resource-poor nations or regions.

We are grateful therefore for financial support from the International Program of the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). This funding makes it possible for us to support international research on alcohol and other drugs by operating a journal that is free to both authors and readers.

We also appreciate the foundational support of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Ontario, Canada, which has made the journal possible. The international focus of IJADR, especially on low- and middle-income countries, is consistent with the mission of CAMH, in which multiculturalism and diversity are corporate values that apply to research as well as clinical and educational services.

Moving forward

Since the journal received approval from KBS, our first priority has been to solicit and publish high-quality manuscripts. To this end, our main strategy has been to commission special journal issues on substance-related problems of growing importance. This first issue is based on a KBS thematic meeting held in Kampala, Uganda, in November 2010. Reflecting the growing international perspective of KBS, this was the society's first thematic meeting to be held in Africa. Its success led to the decision to hold the KBS annual meeting in Kampala in 2013. This special issue covers a range of topics, from adolescent alcohol and other drug use to traffic safety to the impacts of cross-cultural drinking contexts.

Another special issue will address fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) from a global perspective. FASD is widespread within some cultures, resulting in diminished quality of life for affected individuals. This issue will expand current knowledge of FASD from an international perspective.

Christina Chambers and Svetlana Popova are the guest editors.

A third special issue will address substance-impaired driving, also from an international perspective, and is co-edited by guest editors James Lange and Robert Mann. As described in the call for papers for this issue, in spite of many efforts to address impaired driving, it remains a leading cause of deaths and serious injuries. Therefore, an international focus is important both to address the rise in impaired driving in some low- and middle-income countries and to bring a concerted and coordinated international effort to implement the most effective policies for prevention.

Also underway is a special issue on international perspectives on alcohol control policies in low- and middle-income countries with guest editors Bundit Sornpaisarn and Kevin Shield. Many low- and middle-income countries are currently implementing alcohol control policies for which the supporting evidence stems primarily from high-income countries. Because differing socio-economic and cultural contexts may influence the effectiveness of any given alcohol control policy, this special IJADR issue is aimed at detailing and assessing the various alcohol policy choices in low- and middle-income countries, and providing strategies to improve policy advocacy and policy effectiveness in these countries.

Calls for papers for each of these special issues can be found on the journal website (www.ijadr.org/index.php/ijadr/announcement).

Finally, an important goal as we move forward will be ensuring that the journal is widely indexed.

Associate and Consulting Editors

In developing the journal, we have gradually been assembling a group of top-notch, mostly young, researchers to be part of the editorial team. We are extremely grateful to these volunteers who were willing to contribute their valuable time and considerable expertise to join us in the uncertain business of starting a new journal.

The team includes two Associate Editors, Paul Shuper and Mark Reed, from the respective home institutions of the Editors-in-Chief (CAMH and the University of San Diego). Additional Associate Editors from other parts of the world, reflecting various areas of expertise, will be invited to join the editorial team and share in the overall responsi-

bility of managing the review process as submissions to the journal increase.

Our Consulting Editors include Christina Chambers, Sandra Kuntsche, James Lange, Robert Mann, Neo Morojele, Monica Swahn, Svetlana Popova and Nazarius Mbona Tumwesigye. In addition to possible involvement in guest editing special issues, Consulting Editors will provide consultation and mentorship where needed to researchers who submit promising manuscripts, and will assist in managing the review process for submissions and making recommendations to the editorial team. As the journal grows, the team of Consulting Editors will grow to expand geographic representation and coverage of research areas. Bios for the editorial team are shown on the journal website.

We are very excited about this new journal and its potential for addressing an important gap in publications on alcohol and other drug research. We look forward to working with our colleagues at KBS and around the world to build a rigorous, responsive and valuable journal within the international alcohol and drug research community.

Kathryn Graham, PhD

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