



School of Population Health, UNSW Medicine

Research Project

Smoking cessation among ex-prisoners after release from smokefree prisons in NSW

Despite plummeting smoking rates among the general population, certain sub-populations have much higher smoking rates. One example is prisoners, who smoke at rates five times higher than the NSW community. Most prisoners would like to quit, however $\frac{3}{4}$ of those who try say that attempting to quit **in** prison is harder than it is **outside** of prison. Smoking bans were implemented in NSW Correctional Centres in Aug 2015 but to date, there has been no evaluation of the effectiveness of the ban.

This is an opportunity for you to experience research among a significantly marginalised group in the Australian population. I am conducting an observation study to examine ex-prisoners' maintenance of smoking abstinence following release and am offering a **6UOC, 12UOC or 18 UOC(Extension) research project** to Masters students enrolled in the School of Population Health in 2020-21 Summer Term, or Term 1, 2021.

You will be involved in all aspects of the research, from ethics approvals, study advertising and promoting, recruiting participants, data collection, entry and analysis to writing up of the study. You will need to be available on at least one weekday for participant recruitment, depending on UOC. At least one paper will be submitted for publication as a result of the research work carried out.

Many prisoners are required to regularly attend a community corrections office following their release from prison, and ex-prisoners will be recruited from these offices in Sydney and in regional NSW.

This will be the first evaluation of relapse to tobacco use that has been conducted in Australia and internationally following ex-prisoners recent release from a smoke-free prison where NRT was offered.

This research is significant, and results may impact on the future delivery of tobacco treatments in healthcare services for ex-prisoners.

Professor Tony Butler and I have carried out research in the prison system and among ex-prisoners for over 25 years. We conducted the first randomised controlled trial in the world among male prisoners residing in 32 prisons in New South Wales and Queensland.

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