

FOREWORD TO THE SECOND EDITION

The momentum for strengthening research around the globe is growing. The need to build research capacities in low and middle income countries and to place health research within the wider context of research for development is being discussed at different levels, including the Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health, organized by the World Health Organization and other intergovernmental organizations. Building up research capacity and the evidence base in the area of substance abuse in low and middle income countries is one of prerequisites for developing adequate and evidence-based approaches to public health problems caused by harmful use of alcohol. *Publishing Addiction Science: A Guide for the Perplexed* is an important element to this venture as it promotes the much needed research and effective dissemination of research findings to inform policy and programme development and enhance international collaboration in the area of substance abuse.

This book was initiated by the International Society of Addiction Journal Editors (ISAJE). ISAJE was founded "to promote excellence in the communication and dissemination of information on addiction and related sciences within the scientific community and to those who have responsibility for the prevention, treatment, cure, professional training and policy formation in the field." Because this objective coincides with the knowledge function of the WHO, also in the area of substance abuse, the WHO Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse is pleased to collaborate with ISAJE on contributing to worldwide dissemination of research findings, particularly from low and middle income countries.

Psychoactive substance use and dependence are serious and growing problems and contribute to a significantly high proportion of disease burden worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, alcohol and tobacco were responsible for 4.0% and 4.1% respectively of the global disease burden in 2000, measured in terms of disability-adjusted life years. In many parts of the world injecting drug use contributes significantly to new HIV cases and the transmission of other blood-borne infections. Of particular relevance to this publication is the growing prevalence of alcohol and other substance use disorders in low and middle income countries. However, much more needs to be learnt and understood in this part of the world, as lack of information hinders the public health community from seeing the full scale of the arising problem and developing appropriate interventions. It is there where the tradition of dissemination of research findings also often needs improvement, and where a book of this nature will be a useful tool, especially to young researchers, enabling higher research efficiency and successful contributions to the field.

Helping to build local capacity for research in the field of substance abuse and wide dissemination of accumulated knowledge by researchers in low and middle income countries is an important objective for WHO and the public health community: it will operate for a common goal to reduce the global burden of disease attributable to psychoactive substance use. The publication of this book will go a long way in contributing to the achievement of this objective.

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