

MEDIA RELEASE

Media embargo – 6 August 2008

A problem with alcohol? Me? Not likely!

How young people end up in treatment for alcohol abuse could influence how successful that treatment is.

A study, by Devon Indig and her University of New South Wales colleagues, analysed the characteristics of young people in treatment. The article is published in the August issue of the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*.

“We found that they are often referred by the police or the court system. Whether or not they think they have a problem is debatable because they may have been coerced into seeking treatment,” Ms Indig said.

“We need to think about the treatment programs themselves and make sure they attract and retain young people and meet their specific needs.

“We hope our research will also point to other ways of detecting and helping young people with alcohol problems, such as through GPs and emergency departments.”

The research found that a significant number of people in their 20s who present for specialist alcohol treatment were also concerned about their cannabis use.

The researchers also found that rural and Indigenous young people were more likely to be in alcohol treatment, in addition to having concerns surrounding cannabis use.

“A lot of the young people in alcohol treatment are from rural and regional areas, so I think the distribution of services in those areas needs attention,” Ms Indig said.

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