RESEARCH IN A CORRECTIVE SETTING; A LESSON IN PROTOCOL DEVELOPMENT AND PROCEDURES TO CONDUCT A PREVALENCE STUDY OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD) IN A JUVENILE DETENTION CENTRE

Authors: Bower C[1], Marriott R[2], Watkins R[1], Mutch R[1] and the Banksia project team

[1]Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Centre for Child Health Research, The University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
[2] Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia

Introduction: There is substantial evidence suggesting youth with FASD are much more likely to be imprisoned than youth without a FASD. In response to the impact undiagnosed FASD may have on the individual and their management in the criminal justice system, there has been an urgent call to understand the extent FASD may affect youth in detention.

The aim is to describe the protocol used in the first Australian estimate of FASD among youth in detention including methods for engaging the community and navigating research through existing correctional setting protocols.

Method: Sentenced eligible youth will undergo; a) screening for FASD, and b) a multidisciplinary diagnosis of their neurocognitive function by a multidisciplinary team who will summarise clinical findings and diagnosis (FASD and other medical, psychological and cognitive impairments). They will then provide needs specific strategies and recommendations for improved care.

Key findings and discussion: Development of the project protocols illustrates the complexity of research in a corrective services environment with involvement of young people, families, communities, youth justice, child protection and family services agencies.

Implications for Translational Research: This research will provide a sound evidence base to support, implement and maintain culturally appropriate research and interventions for FASD and other health research in the juvenile justice system.

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