



Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse

System Change in Addiction Services: What Does It Mean to Me?

Rebecca Jesseman

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Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse

Learning Objectives

1. Increase awareness of the system-level changes directly influencing addiction services.
2. Understand how system change impacts practitioners and how practitioners can influence system change.

Clinicians' Daily Demands



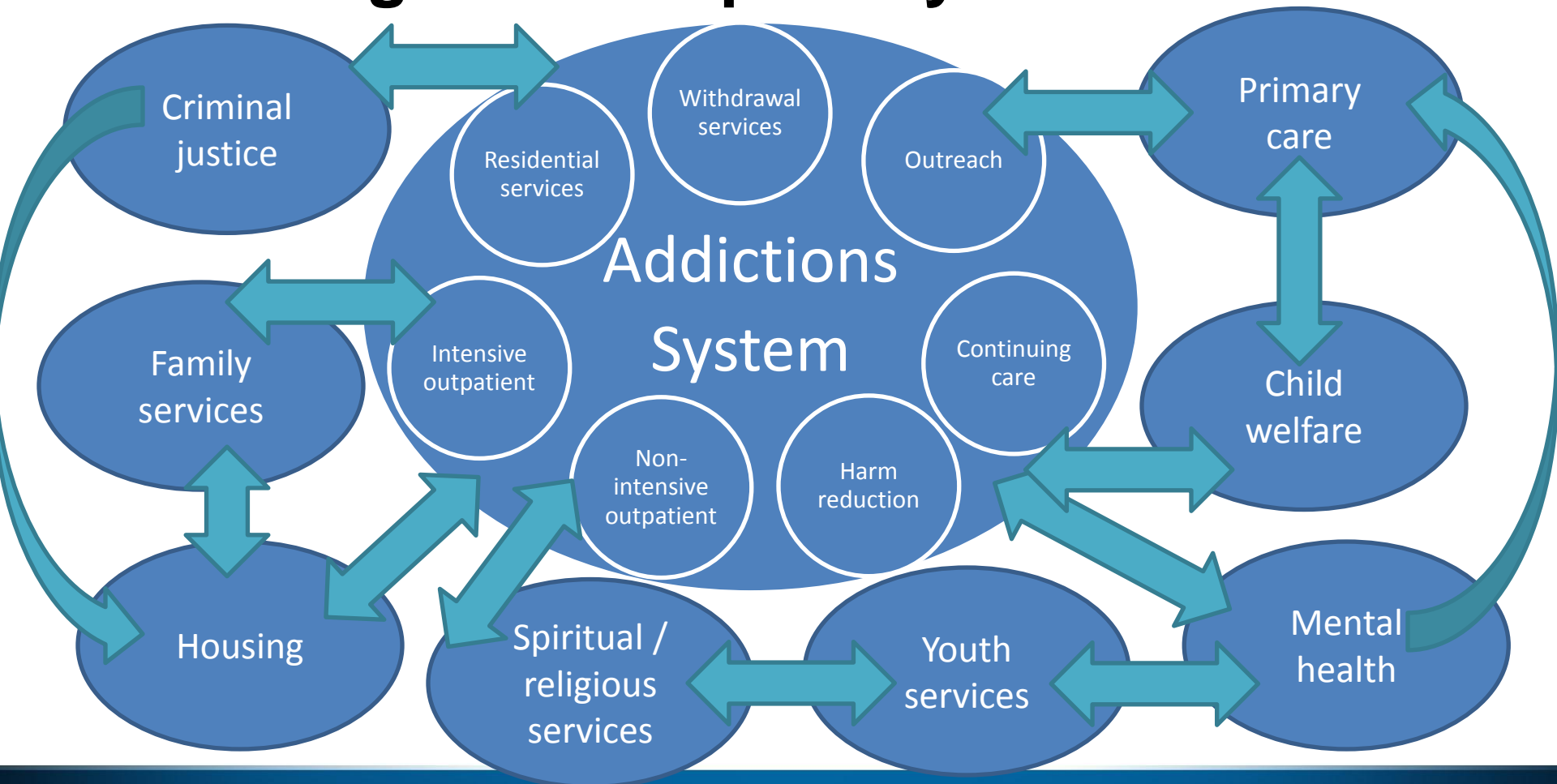


Working in a Complex System

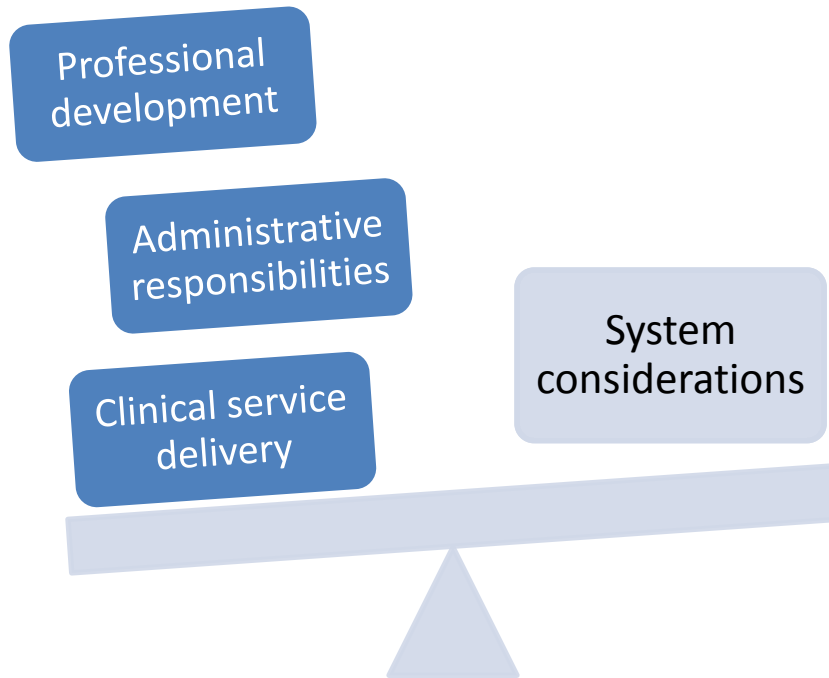
Systems theory

- Rooted in general systems theory from the physical sciences
- A 'system' is simply a set of interconnected things
- Systems theory deals with the characteristics of systems:
 - Shifts the analytical lens away from linear assumptions
- One popular model (Snowden) presents three categories:
 - Ordered, chaotic, complex
- Which best describes your professional context?

Working in a Complex System



Balancing Priorities



- Often, a choice needs to be made
- Providing clinical services and fulfilling the tasks needed to do so take priority



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Working in a Complex System

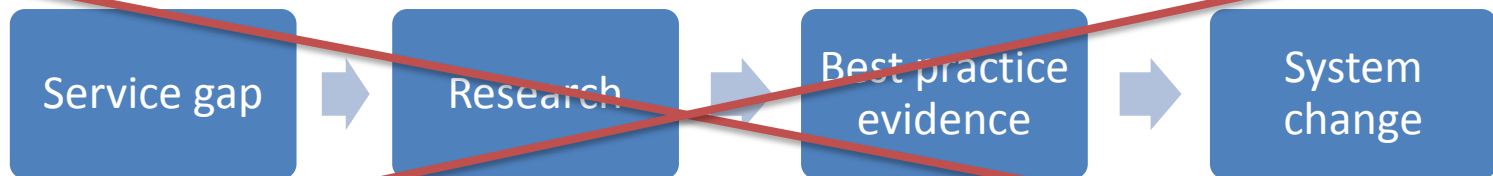
Complexity theory

- Similar assumptions and concepts as systems theory
- Growing in popularity for leadership, organizational development, evaluation and change management
- Provides an ordered way of looking at systems
- A lot of this is familiar from approaches to client care

Working in a Complex System

So what?

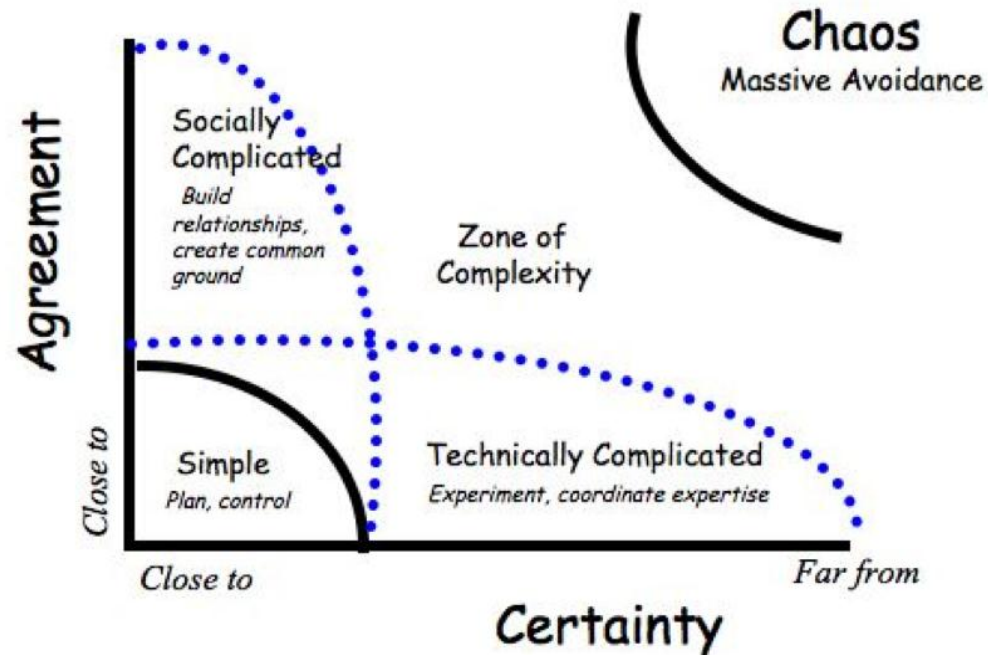
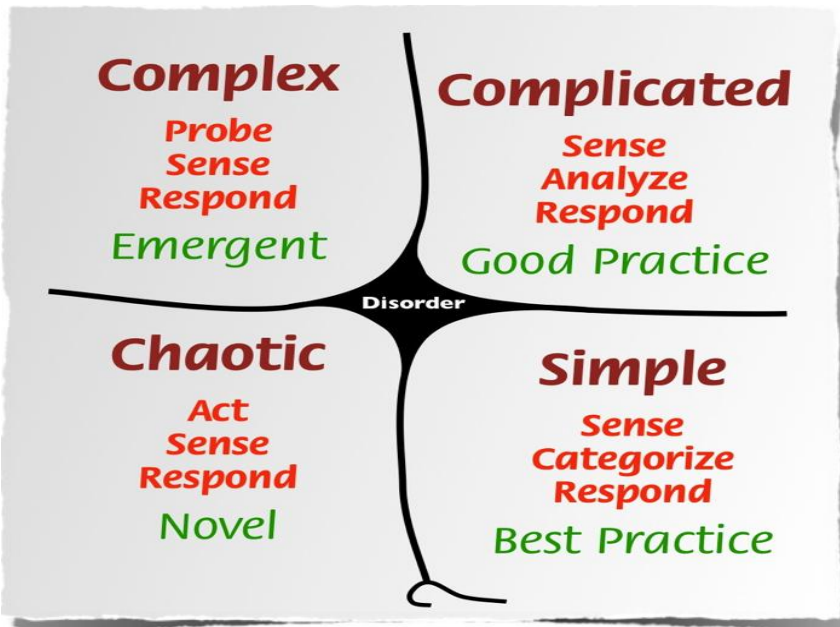
- Systems theory and complexity theory both tell us that a simplistic approach to a complex context won't get us very far
- Systems and complexity theory provide a useful framework for analysis



System Complexity Models

Cynefin: David Snowden

Michael Quinn-Patton





System-Level Trends and Issues

What are the 'agents' influencing the system?

- Regionalization and centralization
- Integration
- Workforce development
- Fiscal constraint
- Measurement and monitoring
- Criminal justice legislation
- National, provincial/territorial and municipal strategies



System-Level Trends and Issues

What do they mean to me?

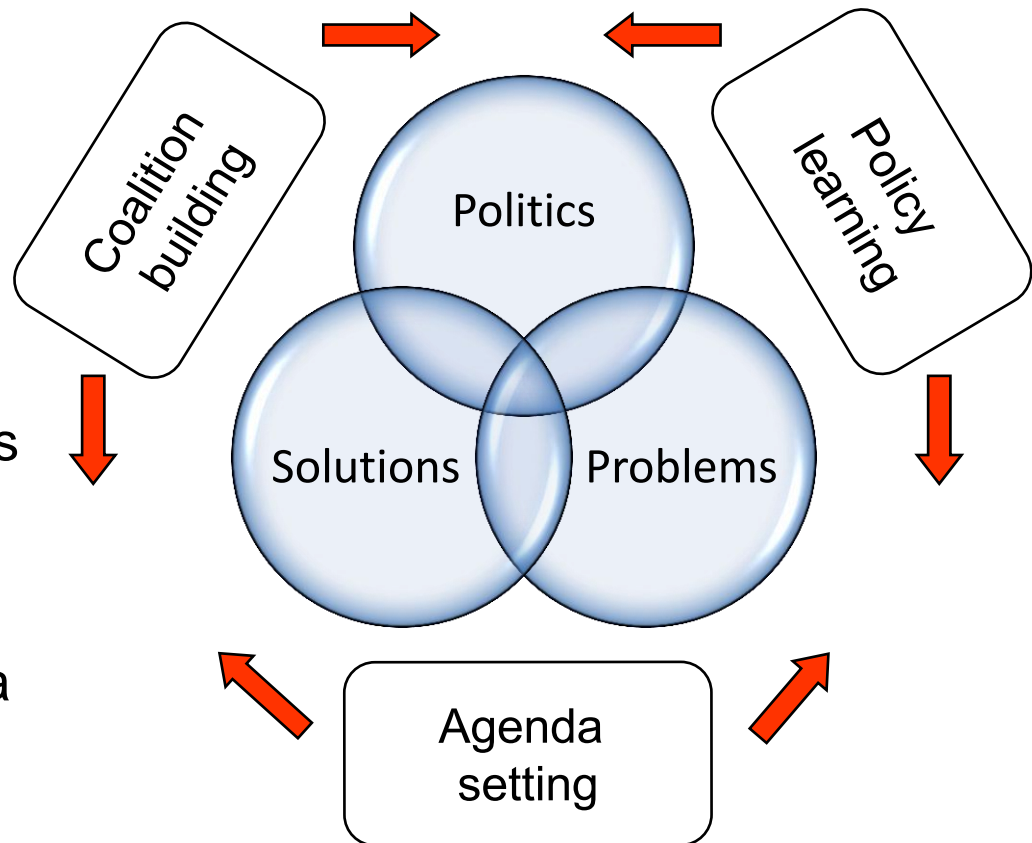
- Service delivery context:
 - Client service journeys
 - Resources
 - Workforce environment
- Partnership and collaboration opportunities
- Administrative requirements
- Information and knowledge exchange

Better understanding of the system in which you work!

Influencing the System

How does policy change happen?

- Opportunity is created when politics, problems and solutions intersect
- Clinicians can help in a number of ways





Influencing the System

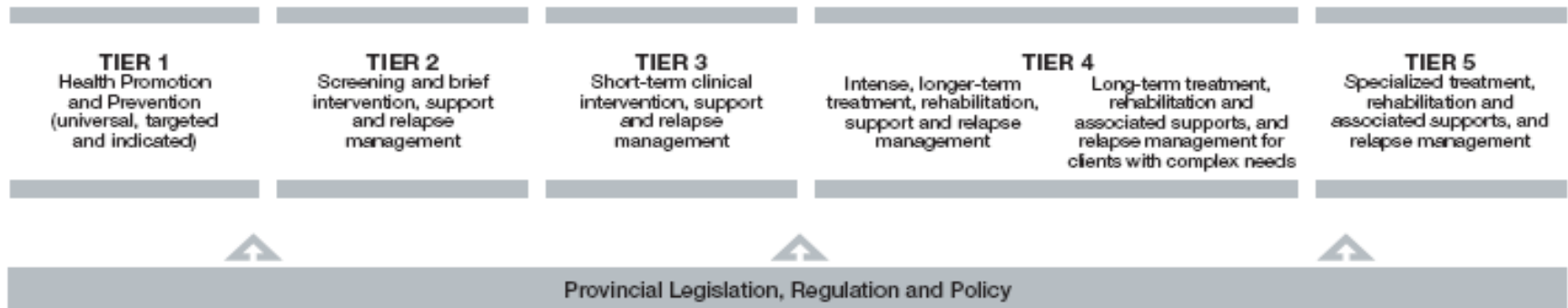
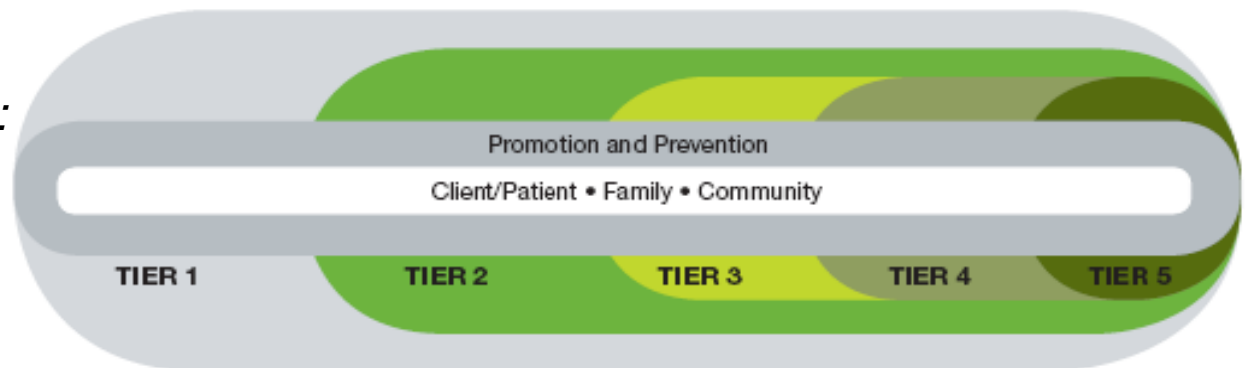
Policy

- Change leaders are needed
- Ways to influence system change include:
 - Translating system-level strategies to implementation
 - Aligning with strategic priorities
 - Driving research and knowledge exchange
- Remember the importance of taking system complexity into account

Influencing the System

From strategy to reality

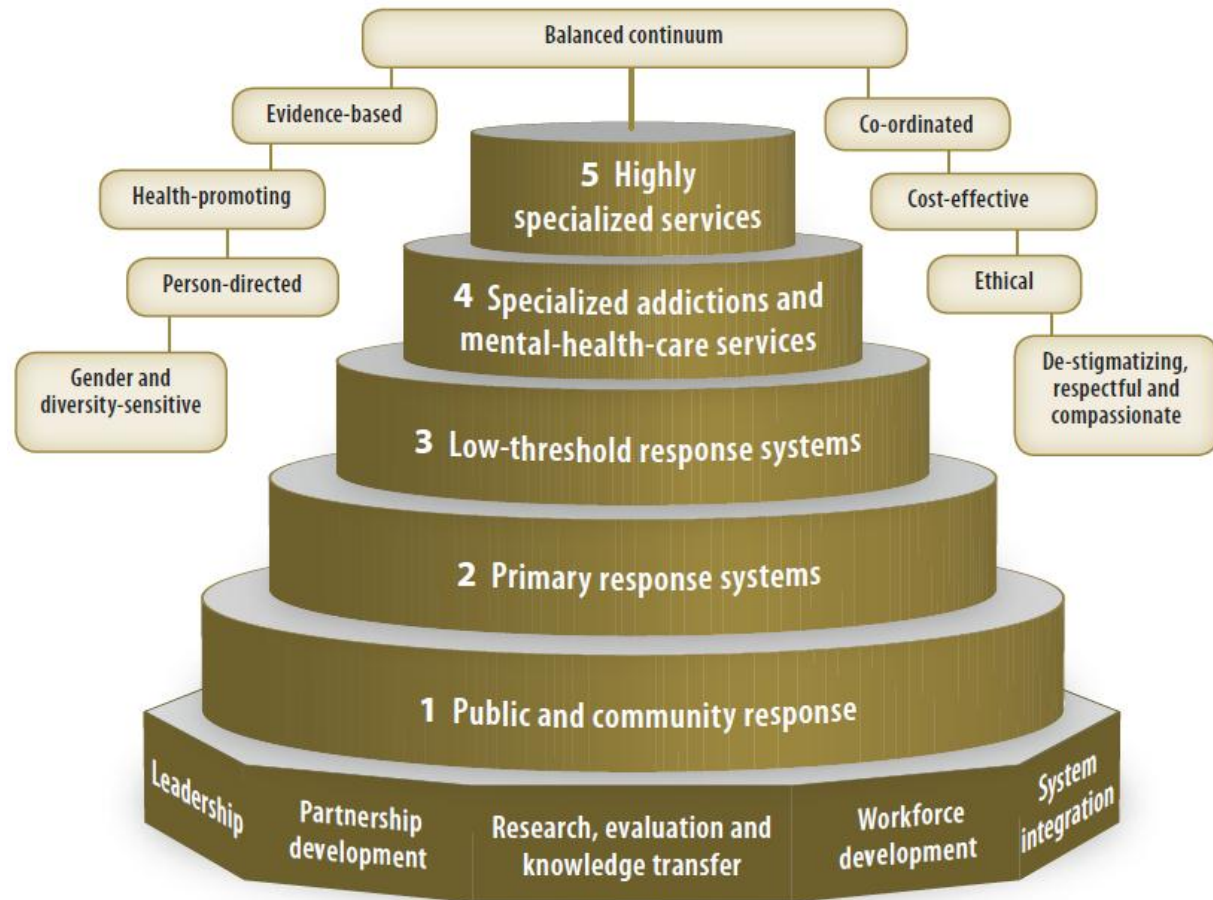
*Creating Connections:
Alberta's Addiction
and Mental Health
Strategy (2011)*



Influencing the System

From strategy
to reality

*The Action Plan for
Mental Health In New
Brunswick, 2011-18*





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Influencing the System

Research and knowledge exchange

- Nobody knows what we don't know better than clinicians
- What are the knowledge gaps that influence your work?
- How can frontline clinicians drive the research agenda?

Influencing the System

Contributing to the research agenda

- Research forums
- Recognition of clinical practice evidence
- Knowledge-user participation in grant processes
- Networks and communities of practice





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Contact

Rebecca Jesseman

Research and Policy Analyst

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse

rjesseman@ccsa.ca

(613) 235-4048 ext. 228