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Research Proposal: Beyond Detox –Exploring the Effective strategies in Long-Term Recovery from Drug Addiction in the United Kingdom

1.Topic:

Beyond Detox –Exploring the Effective strategies in Long-Term Recovery from Drug Addiction in the United Kingdom

Review Question: What are the most effective strategies for supporting long-term recovery from drug addiction in the United Kingdom beyond the detoxification stage?

2.Objectives:

- To identify the key factors influencing relapse prevention and long-term abstinence.
- To assess the effectiveness of medication-assisted and behavioural therapies in sustaining recovery beyond detox.

- To recommend strategies that strengthen recovery support systems for individual's post-detox.

3.Rationale:

Detoxification alone does not ensure recovery, as many individuals relapse within months without continued treatment (NIDA, 2025). Evidence indicates that integrating medication for opioid use disorder with behavioural therapies significantly enhances retention and abstinence rates (Biondi et al., 2022). Contingency management, which provides positive reinforcement for abstinence and engagement, has been shown to deliver long-term benefits (Ginley et al., 2020; Better Care Playbook, 2025). A meta-analysis found that CM combined with medication improved adherence and relapse prevention (Kellogg et al., 2023). Therefore, this research seeks to evaluate the combination of these approaches to determine their role in sustained recovery.

4.Methods:

Research Design:

This study will utilise a qualitative secondary research design employing a scoping review methodology to investigate effective long-term recovery strategies beyond detoxification. The research will concentrate on identifying, reviewing, and summarising existing published evidence rather than gathering new primary data, while integrating insights from studies involving individuals who have undergone detoxification and participated in recovery programs (Flick, 2023)

Database:

Data will be collected from Google Scholar and analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-step thematic analysis to identify recovery themes.

Keywords:

Drug addiction, long-term recovery, detoxification, relapse prevention, behavioural therapy, qualitative research, scoping review, thematic analysis, United Kingdom.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Studies published between 2013 and 2024.
- Research focused on long-term recovery from drug addiction beyond detoxification.
- Studies conducted in the United Kingdom.
- Peer-reviewed articles available in English.
- Studies including adults (18 years and above).
- Publications accessible through Google Scholar.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Studies published before 2013.
- Research focused solely on detoxification or short-term treatment.
- Studies conducted outside the United Kingdom.
- Articles not peer-reviewed or lacking full-text access.
- Publications not in English.
- Studies involving participants under 18 years old.

5.Ethical Considerations:

This secondary research will adhere to ethical standards by utilising only reliable, publicly accessible sources, thereby ensuring transparency, equity, and respect for intellectual property. We will get ethical approval, and we will report all our findings accurately, with proper citations and privacy protections (BHBIA, 2020).

6.References

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