

Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research

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Feature



Tracy Simpson, PhD

Tracy L. Simpson, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the University of Washington in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, School of Medicine. She is also currently co-Director of the Women's Trauma and Recovery Center at the Seattle Division of the VA Puget Sound Health Care System.

Dr. Simpson's research has focused on the relationship between trauma exposure, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and substance abuse. She is particularly interested in the day-to-day interactions between PTSD symptoms, substance use, and craving. Her early research at the VAPSHCS focused on determining whether it was feasible for patients in early recovery from alcohol dependence to call an automated data collection system each day to provide information on their symptoms and use. Having found that these patients could do this reasonably consistently and with little apparent effects from the measurement itself, she went on to apply this technology to an outcome study of a medication, prazosin, that holds promise for treating both PTSD and alcohol dependence. She and her colleagues, Drs. Andrew Saxon and Charles Meredith, obtained funding from the UW Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute to evaluate prazosin for alcohol dependence without PTSD in a randomized double-blind placebo pilot trial. The promising results from this initial study led to an R01 submission to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) to further evaluate prazosin for alcohol dependence as well as to inclusion of a trial to evaluate prazosin for comorbid alcohol dependence and PTSD in a Center grant submitted to NIAAA.

Dr. Simpson has incorporated the daily monitoring methodology into a current R21 that she and Dr. Jane Luterek were awarded by NIAAA. This study, which is administered by SIBCR, evaluates two brief behavioral interventions for comorbid PTSD and alcohol dependence. The interventions teach patients how to use either cognitive restructuring or experiential acceptance to cope more effectively with troubling thoughts and feelings, including cravings. Her future career direction will include a shift away from clinical administration and towards more full-time research, which will continue to focus on better understanding and treating comorbid disorders in the complex VA patient population.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

★ NIH News:

The newly revised "Application for a DHHS Public Health Service Grant" (PHS 398, rev. 11/07) instructions and forms are now available and will be accepted for due dates on or after January 25, 2008. All applications received for May 25, 2008 and subsequent due dates **must** use the new instructions and forms. Please go to the following site for more information <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-028.html>.

For updated 2590 forms, please refer to the following:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-030.html>

★ Clinical Trial Update:

Effective March 26, 2008, the VA has mandated that research collaborations with pharmaceutical companies (clinical trials, investigator-initiated industry grants, etc.) must be established using the new CRADA template. CRADAs are binding agreements among SIBCR, VAPSHCS, and the industry collaborator. Clinical Trial Agreements (CTAs) between SIBCR and the industry sponsor cannot be signed after 3/26/08. For more information, contact Kenji in the SIBCR office (kenji@sibcr.org, x62731)

Welcome!

SIBCR is pleased to welcome the following new employees: Darla Chapman, Maria Cone, Clara Doctolero, Dana Jackson, Boguslaw Kwiatkowski, Stephanie Magone, Amy Morgan, Bhavesha O'Byrne, David Powell, Arlene Saito, Shannon Thomas, Dao Tran, Michelle Vitali-Brown, and Magdalena Wojtowicz.