

**School of Health Sciences
Honours Research Project**

Title (*approximate*)

Investigation of Neurotransmitter genes involved in Addiction susceptibility

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Project Details (*Brief Description of the Project*)

Addiction is becoming a very common and serious disorder that affects a significant proportion of the Australian population (around 10% of the Australian population for alcohol consumption and more than 10% of this population for ecstasy use).

Despite intensive research during the last decade, genes involved in addiction process, remain to be identified. The aim of this project will be to develop for the first time, in Illawara region, a bank of DNA (part of body containing the genes of an individual) from addicted people (alcohol, illicit drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines...) and we will study the genetic profile of each individual according their addiction.

Genetic research is a very powerful tool and may be the key to help addicted people in the future. The effectiveness of addiction medications vary from person to person due to differences in genetic make-up. By characterizing "addiction genes", genetic tests could be used to determine which genetic variation a patient has and prescribe the best addiction medication for that individual.

Number of Students: 1

Special requirements (*eg early starts, late finishes, lab skills, body composition assessment, good interviewing/communication skills*)

Flexible working hours, basic lab experience (pipetting) and overall motivated student!

Skills required (*eg computer skills, laboratory skills, etc*)

Basic lab experience (pipetting)