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Addictions research facility hires staff with specialized training

by Stella Shepard

Research & Development



Dr. John Weekes, Acting Senior Director of Addictions Research Centre in Montague.

The Addictions Research Centre was established in 2000 in Montague. Its aim is to reach out to help substance abusers within the federal prison system under the direction of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC).

“We deal with about 22,000 offenders under federal jurisdiction,” says Dr. John Weekes, Acting Senior Director of Addictions Research Centre in Montague. “About 80 percent of the offender population has a problem with alcohol or drugs.”

John says they welcome applicants who have a Masters or PhD in social science and are interested in doing research and development.

“We are keen to receive applications from Islanders who have the educational requirements and are interested in addictions research,” says Dr. John Weekes.

Intervention programs

“More than half the offender population tells us that substance abuse is related to their criminal activity, often as a result of acquiring money for drugs.

“The programs and products we develop are implemented in correctional facilities across Canada. This research is a preventative measure to help reduce the offender’s risk of becoming involved in crime related to substance abuse when released from penitentiary. Our focus is on public safety.

“We have developed specialized programs for women offenders. The reasons why women use drugs and alcohol are different from men, and they require different treatments. We have also developed unique treatment programs for our Aboriginal populations that combine advanced addictions science with a traditional healing, cultural and spiritual orientation.”

Present staff

About 20 staff work at the Montague research centre. Some of the jobs available are: **Research Officer, Research Manager, Senior Research Manager** as well as senior level staff who are experienced researchers and take on management roles.

“Generally, our research staff have a social science background with degrees in psychology, sociology, and/or criminology. A number of our staff, including myself, have a PhD.”

Salaries

- Senior Research Managers: \$80,000 to \$90,000
- Associate Directors: \$90,000 to \$100,000
- Research Officers (considered entry-level jobs): \$50,000 to \$60,000

Hiring needs

“Within the next few months, we will likely have openings for several researchers,” says John. “Indeed, in the spring, we will be advertising for one or more senior research manager positions. We recently hired three research officers, and the job posting for an associate director position recently closed.”

John says it can be challenging to attract the right staff. He also says there are opportunities for job promotions within the centre.

Applying for positions

“If interested in this opportunity, we encourage you to consult the Government of Canada website, which advertises jobs open to the public and allows you to apply on-line,” says John.

“When applying, it’s really crucial that you show how you meet all the criteria listed on the job posting. If you don’t, you will be screened out.”

Student employment

One or two students are hired for summer employment through the **Federal Student Work Experience program (FSWEP)**. Ideally, summer work placements are suited for social science students interested in addictions research.

