HOW TO ASSESS NON-MEDICAL USE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS?

- Nature and extent of the problem
  - Lack of epidemiological data.
- Assessment/screening tools & urine testing.
- Physician education
- Time allocation and incentive for assessment
- Addressing co-occurring disorders.
- Assessing treatment outcomes
- Need for further research.
The most successful prevention strategy is **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION** between the healthcare provider and the patient.
NOT YET.

THE NEED TO DEVELOP A MULTI LEVEL (3 levels) GUIDELINE BASED NOT ONLY ON BEST PRACTICES BUT ALSO ON THE ACTUAL CONTEXT/SETTINGS.
Treatment programs should make medical assessment a standard part of treatment for prescription drug abusers.

Treatment programs should address co-occurring disorders and, where appropriate, combine evidence-based behavioural therapy with available pharmacological interventions.

Research has to be undertaken to look into the possibility of identifying medication to block cravings for specific drugs other than opioids.

The need for medical and social research in the treatment of substance abuse as well as rehabilitation, has become more urgent, particularly with the worldwide increase in abuse and addiction among young people (Youth and the United Nations, 2009).
RECOMMENDATIONS (II)

- Improved screening tools and better education of physicians concerning the issue of nonmedical use of prescription drugs in general are needed - {Many tools used to screen for substance abuse do not include items on nonmedical use of prescription drug use (Savage, 2009) }

- Studies which utilize e-health tools such as computers and portable digital and wireless devices are also needed to improve access to treatment for prescription drug abuse and/or augment provision of treatment by health care providers.
RECOMMENDATIONS (III)

- Research is needed to determine the factors that may affect access to treatment for prescription drug abuse and addiction.
- There is a need to develop and evaluate innovative science-based education approaches for health professionals (NIDA, 2008).
THE CHALLENGE

- How to adapt treatment to the needs of those who engage in nonmedical use of prescription drugs only, those who are poly-substance users, or those with a comorbid illness (especially mental illness)
THANK YOU