



**Examining the determinants of transitions across a developmental trajectory of harmful behaviour can help with the identification of stage-specific (e.g. risky use, harmful use, cessation of use) determinants, which should result in earlier and more nuanced public health responses to the development of problem behaviour**

Stage-specific determinants  
harmful behaviour  
**transitions**  
public health response

This finding is derived from understanding generated through extensive interdisciplinary discussion of current published evidence by ALICE RAP [Work Area 3](#) discipline experts.

In the review of evidence by discipline experts it was identified that the majority of research around substance use and gambling is focused on the determinants of harmful behaviour, rather than transitions to risky behaviour or cessation of use outside of formal treatment systems. However, from the available literature we were able to identify that a number of different factors may play a role at various stages in the developmental trajectory of harmful substance use or gambling. For example, for transitions in the development of harmful cannabis use:

- ➔ Popular culture, peer influence and lifetime history of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder are determinants for the transition to risky use but have not been identified as determinants for the transition to harmful use or reductions in use.
- ➔ Affordability, depression and social anxiety are determinants for the transition to harmful use but have not been identified as determinants for the transition to risky use or reductions in use.
- ➔ Social networks, marriage or partnership, and individual agency are determinants for the transition from harmful to low risk or cessation of use, but have not been identified as determinants for the transition to risky or harmful use.

Given the variation in determinants across the developmental trajectory, it is important that future research further examines stage-specific determinants of substance use and gambling behaviour, to develop a more detailed understanding of the complex interplay of factors that influence behaviour.

## READ MORE

Lees R, McLeod J, Holmes J, et al. (2012): *Determinants of risky substance use and risky gambling: an interdisciplinary report*. Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe: Reframing Addictions Project (ALICE RAP): [Deliverable 7.1](#)

Gell L, Holmes J, Bühringer G, et al. (2013): *Determinants of harmful substance use and harmful gambling: an interdisciplinary report*. Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe: Reframing Addictions Project (ALICE RAP): [Deliverable 8.1](#)

McLeod J, Gell L, et al. (2014) *Determinants of a reduction in harmful substance use and gambling: an interdisciplinary report*. Addiction and Lifestyles in Contemporary Europe: Reframing Addictions Project (ALICE RAP): [Deliverable 9.1](#)

Gell, L. Bühringer, G. McLeod, J. Forberger, S. Holmes, J. Lingford-Hughes, A. and Meier, P. S. (Eds.) (2016) [‘What determines harm from addictive substance and behaviours?’](#) Oxford: Oxford University Press.