

Volume three of the *International Research Monographs in the Addictions* (edited by Professor Griffith Edwards) has been dedicated to the **community reinforcement approach**, signalling its recognition as an important advance in the treatment of drug and alcohol dependence.¹ This readable and practice-oriented book should give a boost to the approach which topped the most recent research-based ranking of the effectiveness of alcohol treatments. There are also two readily available manuals, one on alcohol treatment,² the other on cocaine.³ **FINDINGS** has touched on this work **LINKS** Nuggets 4.8 4.5 in relation to opiate addiction and family involvement in treatment initiation. It has also been tested with respect to alcoholism (where it started) and cocaine dependence. Despite its research pedigree, community reinforcement has not been widely adopted, perhaps because it is a holistic and therefore relatively complex way of engaging with the client's life. It aims to reconstruct their social environment and lifestyle so that being sober becomes more rewarding than a life dominated by alcohol or drugs. Family, social life, work and play are all probed for the ways substance use is encouraged or discouraged. Where the client lacks the skills to get the most from a non-addicted lifestyle (eg, job-hunting, making new friends) these are developed by the treatment. The same methodology is used to promote activities important to the success of treatment such as presenting in the first place and taking relapse-preventing medication.

1 Meyers R.J. et al, eds. *A community reinforcement approach to addiction treatment*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. Copies through bookshops.

2 Meyers R.J. et al. *Clinical guide to alcohol treatment: the community reinforcement approach*. Guildford Press, 1995. Copies through bookshops.

3 Budney A.J. et al. *A community reinforcement plus vouchers approach: treating cocaine addiction*. US National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1998. Download from www.nida.nih.gov/DrugPages/Treatment.html.