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[Senter for rus- og avhengighetsforskning - SERAF - Prosjektbanken \(forskingsradet.no\)](https://forskingsradet.no/prosjektbanken/seraf)

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<https://prosjektbanken.forskingsradet.no/project/FORISS/181880?Kilde=FORISS&distribution=Ar&chart=bar&calcType=funding&Sprak=no&sortBy=score&sortOrder=desc&resultCount=30&offset=0&Fritekst=seraf>

- Centre for Substance Abuse and Addiction Research – SERAF
- Awarded: NOK 100.9 million.
- Source: Research Council
- Project manager: Professor Thomas Clausen
- Project number: 181880
- Application type: Institutional strategic project (until 2018) / Institutionally anchored strategic project (until 2018) - No application type variant
- Project period: 2007 – 2020
- The funds are received from:  
TREATMENT-Good and accurate diagnostics, treatment and rehabilitation
- Organisation: Higher education sector/ Universities / UNIVERSITY OF OSLO / FACULTY OF MEDICINE / Department of Clinical Medicine
- Geography: Oslo
- Areas of expertise: Medicine and health sciences / Clinical medical subjects

For 10 years, the grant from the Norwegian Research Council has enabled SERAF to develop and conduct clinical drug research at a high international level. We have contributed to better, evidence-based treatment of substance abuse and addiction disorders in Norway by contributing to a locally based and anchored knowledge base about the treatment provided within our health system. A main focus of SERAF has been addiction to illicit drugs and treatment, with a strong focus on heroin addiction, OMT and overdose mortality. Research also includes addictive drugs, tobacco and alcohol.

SERAF's future focus and centre of gravity will depend on access to external funding. Our position as a leading national and international institution in the field of substance abuse will therefore to some extent follow the developments that are prioritised by organisations that fund substance abuse research.

SERAF has been responsible for extensive dissemination activities, through publications, media contributions, lectures, further and one-off training courses, counselling and teaching of master's and doctoral students. SERAF is involved in a number of national and international networking activities. SERAF is involved in the development and implementation of courses in the new medical speciality "Substance abuse and addiction medicine", together with other professionals in the field.

Networking through collaboration in major multi-centre research projects such as NorComt, Naloxone nasal spray, prison research and the Naltrexone study have been key initiatives. SERAF has recruited national and international researchers, which has laid the foundation for a formalised national network for clinical drug research and a large international network.

Research at SERAF is currently organised under 2 research groups:

### 1. Drug-assisted rehabilitation

SERAF plays a key role in keeping track of, collaborating on and reporting to the authorities on DAR treatment at a national level and on overdoses. We have contributed to a comprehensive survey of overdoses in Denmark, which has led to further Nordic co-operation. In recent years, changes in opioid-related mortality have received increased attention. SERAF considers opioid users who receive prescriptions for chronic pain to be an important future focus area. In 2019, SERAF received funding from Hdir for collaboration with FHI to strengthen the knowledge base on the use of opioids in chronic pain treatment.

Research on substance use and health in prisons and among prisoners released from prison has been awarded funding from the South-Eastern Norway Regional Health Authority and the Norwegian Research Council for new initiatives, including Nordic co-operation. Another important project is the trialling of naloxone nasal spray as an overdose prevention measure. The research on naloxone has attracted international interest. The research group is also conducting a national clinical study, the NorComt study, a study of people who start in DAR or a residential institution. Here, 3 PhD projects were completed in 2017/18. An extension of the project with a special focus on ageing in OMT was funded by the South East Norway Regional Health Authority in 2019 and beyond. Naltrexone as relapse prophylaxis was a key focus. This resulted in the world's first randomised study of the effect of naltrexone injections on overdose prevention. The main results were published in a highly ranked journal in 2017. Several PhD projects were finalised in 2018/19. The project is being continued at AHus, where SERAF is a partner.

### 2. E-health and addiction treatment

SERAF has invested in web-based technology for use in addiction treatment and interventions. The smoking cessation programme Change is an eHealth programme designed to support health-promoting behaviour. Balance is an early intervention programme on alcohol use where the main intention is to prevent future problems. The effect of Balance has been evaluated through two RCT studies and was part of a broad international collaboration.

In 2019, SERAF developed a pilot for a broader "health-promoting eHealth platform" where smoking, alcohol use, diet and physical activity are all included. The pilot will be trialled in 2020. SERAF wants to strengthen the prevention of harmful substance use and contribute to health-promoting behaviour, where one focus area is via eHealth-based interventions. The eHealth platform is included in funding applications from SERAF in 2020 and beyond.

SERAF, together with NIVA as part of an EU consortium, has analysed wastewater to investigate the use of legal and illegal drugs in urban populations. SERAF was central to the development of the application of this new technology.

SERAF's most developed methodological approach to research in the field of substance abuse has been via register-based studies. Over the past 10 years, SERAF has strengthened register-based research and has ambitions to expand its methodological platform, with a particular focus on Nordic collaborative projects.

In the autumn of 2018, SERAF won a tender for the study of a treatment programme for heroin-assisted treatment. The project was approved on SERAF's recommendation as a 5-year trial project. The study forms the basis for a major treatment trial in the field of substance abuse in Norway. The project will provide internationally relevant knowledge in the future.

SERAF has contributed a significant volume of knowledge about drug and alcohol treatment and outcomes. More than 500 scientific articles have been published, more than 35 PhD degrees and more than 50 Master's degrees have been awarded. To a large extent, SERAF is considered to have achieved its goal of strengthening the knowledge base and expertise in the field in Norway. SERAF was, has been and is today a key professional actor with strong national and international contact networks and cooperation. SERAF's activities, research and specialised production have contributed to changes in clinical practice in the field of overdose in Norway, as well as contributing to improvements in national guidelines and strategies. Key SERAF employees are used as members of public committees, professional reference groups and the development of national professional guidelines. SERAF has a good dialogue with user organisations in the field of substance abuse and involves user participation in ongoing research projects. All of Norway's health trusts currently have employees in the field of substance abuse with a PhD or Master's degree from SERAF.