Analysis of service-users attending Matt Talbot Services (MTS) from 2007-2010.

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A descriptive analysis of service-users attending an outpatient treatment centre during 2007 - 2010

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Background:
- More than a quarter (27.3%) of 15–24 year-olds in Ireland experimented with illegal substances in their lives¹.
- Nearly 1-in-12 (8.2%) drug treatment cases was to a service-user under 18 years of age².
- Approximately 1-in-7 (14.8%) deaths due to drugs occurred in under-25s³.
- Matt Talbot Services (MTS) is a day treatment service for young substance-users within Cork/Kerry area of Ireland.
- They provide a specialised, individualised counselling service for 14 – 23 year olds, and an after-care service to reduce the incidence of relapse.
- This exploratory work will serve as a base for future pharmaceutical care interventions and research on adolescent use of illegal and prescription substances.

Aims:
The aims were as follows:
1. Analyse demographic information on service-users attending MTS between 2007 and 2010.
2. Describe the type and nature of substance use among service-users.
3. Perform inferential statistics to detect patterns in service-user behaviour.

Method:
- Data from the records of entrants to the service between 2007 and 2010 (n=291) was collected and included:
  - Demographic data
  - Educational and employment history
  - Substance use history
  - Treatment details
- Data was analysed using Predictive Analytics SoftWare Statistics (PASW; SPSS Inc. Chicago, Ill.) version 18.0.
- Descriptive analysis was performed on the data. Inferential tests measuring for association were also performed.

Results:
Results of the analysis of service-user demographics and substance history can be seen in Table 1, and Figures 1 and 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Demographics of service-users (n=291)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service-user Demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age mean ± SD (years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with parents/family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in an urban area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Primary substance of abuse

- Those who first experimented before 13 years of age were 1.4 times more likely to be daily users (p=0.033)
- Greater number of substances used monthly by urban dwellers (p=0.004) and early school-leavers (p=0.018)
- Those who first experimented before 13 years of age were 3.9 times more likely to have used benzodiazepines in the previous month (p=0.003)

Figure 2. Polysubstance use among service-users

- Tobacco use was not surveyed; it is often the 1st substance to be experimented with⁴.
- Study was based on self-reported data; patients may not remember details of past use accurately.

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