

Poster presentation

Study of the socio-demographic characteristics of admissions in the Detoxification Unit of the Psychiatric Hospital of Thessaloniki within five years

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Background

Substance users seeking help at the Counseling Station of the Psychiatric Hospital of Thessaloniki are admitted to the Detoxification Unit after a waiting time of about three weeks. Of the 532 users that have attended the Counseling Station in 2004, 270 were admitted to the Detox unit, 52 were referred to the dual diagnosis unit, 23 to the out-patient programme, and the rest interrupted their treatment against professional advice. The Unit admits patients over 18 years of age. Aim of this study was an attempt to determine any changes in the socio-demographic characteristics of our patients in the course of time.

Materials and methods

We studied all first admissions only of the years 1999 and 2004 and tried to compare the socio-demographic data.

Results

There were 106 first admissions in 1999 of a total of 192, whereas in 2004 the first admissions were 111 of a total of 270.

There were 85.8% male admissions in 1999 vs 90% in 2004. Female admissions were 14.2% in 1999 vs 10% in 2004.

The average age was 27.8 years in 1999 vs 26.3 in 2004, that is 1.5 years less.

The unemployment rate was 44.3% in 1999 and 58.3% in 2004.

84.9% of all admissions in 1999 were unmarried comparing to 91.7% in the year 2004.

There were no statistically significant differences in the educational level of our admissions: non-completion of elementary school 0.9% in both years, completion only of the six year-elementary education 10.3% vs 11.8%, non-completion of the intermediate education 47.1% vs 47.5%, completion of the six years of intermediate education 37.7% vs 36.6%. Non-completion of university level education 1.8% vs 2.9% and completion 1.8% vs 0%.

Intra-venous use was 90.4% in 1999 vs 87.2% in 2004.

In 1999 75.5% were from Thessaloniki and 24.5% from other areas of the country. In 2004 74.4% were from Thessaloniki and 25.6% from other areas of the country.

Discussion

The data indicate no major alterations in the socio-demographic characteristics of our population. The most obvious observation is the low percentage of women attending the Detox Unit in both years. There is an attrition in the number of women seeking help at the Counseling Station and entering the Detoxification Treatment. Our women percentage is lower than the greek ratio of men to women seeking help (5:1) [1]. The mean age has decreased con-

sistently to the overall decrease in the age of initiation of substance use in Greece [1].

The majority of the admissions, over 80%, live with their parents, which indicates the necessity of involving the parents in the treatment process. This explains the fact that very few users are homeless in Greece.

There is a reduction in the percentage of unmarried users.

The educational level seems to remain unchanged.

References

1. Annual Report of the Greek Focal Point of EMCDDA for the situation on drugs and alcohol in Greece 2003.

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