



EMCDDA DOCUMENTATION CENTRE INFORMATION BULLETIN

CORONAVIRUS, 11 September 2020

EVENT

Drug and alcohol problems in remote and rural Scotland: responding during Covid and beyond

Friday 11 September 2020 - 13:00-14:00 BST
Scottish Drugs Forum

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted positively and negatively on this service provision to some of the most vulnerable people in remote and rural Scotland. This webinar will hear from local service providers and policymakers about the challenges and opportunities presented and the changes they would want to remain in the future

<http://www.sdf.org.uk/event/drug-and-alcohol-problems-in-remote-and-rural-scotland-responding-during-covid-and-beyond/>

Mental health care, policy, and COVID-19: the renewed role for psychiatric and addiction nursing

Dadakhah-Chimeh Z, Jozaghi E.
Policy, Politics & Nursing Practice
3 September 2020
DOI:10.1177/1527154420957305

Evaluating the impact of COVID-19: A cohort comparison study of drug use and risky sexual behavior among sexual minority men in the U.S.A

Starks TJ, Jones SS, Sauermilch D, et al.
Drug Alcohol Dependence, 2020, 216, 108260

Background:

Sexual minority men who use drugs have high sexual HIV transmission risk. Sexual interactions may also increase COVID-19 risk. This study compared marijuana use, other illegal drugs use (i.e. cocaine/crack, methamphetamine, MDMA/ecstasy, GHB, and ketamine) and sexual behavior with casual partners among sexual minority men active on social networking and dating applications before and during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Methods:

This cohort-control study compared 455 adult respondents (surveyed May 6th to 17th, 2020) and a matched sample selected from 65,707 respondents surveyed pre-COVID. Participants were recruited on social networking and dating applications and completed surveys online.

Results:

The proportion reporting marijuana use declined significantly in the COVID cohort (34.5 % versus 45.7 % pre-COVID, $p < .001$) as did their illegal drug use (11.0 % versus 22.9 % pre-COVID, $p < .001$). While the number of casual partners per month was stable, the proportion reporting condomless anal sex with casual partners declined significantly during COVID (26.4 % versus 71.6 % pre-COVID, $p < .001$). The effect of illegal drug use (excluding marijuana) on number of casual partners per month (aRR = 1.45 pre-COVID versus 2.84, $p < .01$) and odds of condomless anal sex (aOR = 2.00 pre-COVID versus 5.22, $p = .04$) were significantly greater in the COVID cohort.

Conclusions:

While the proportion of participants reporting drug use and condomless anal sex with casual partners declined in the COVID cohort, the association between drug use and sexual behavior was magnified. Sexual minority men who use drugs are significantly more likely to engage in sexual behaviors that place them at risk for HIV and COVID-19 transmission.

Rapid upscale of depot buprenorphine (CAM2038) in custodial settings during the early COVID-19 pandemic in New South Wales, Australia

Roberts J, White B, Attalla D, Ward S, Dunlop A.
Addiction
4 September 2020
DOI:10.1111/add.15244

Psychological, addictive, and health behavior implications of the COVID-19 pandemic

Zvolensky, M J, Garey, L., Rogers, A H, et al
Behaviour Research and Therapy, 2020, 134, 103715

Don't forget our dual public health crises

Moe, J., Buxton, J A
Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine, 2020, 22, 4

Transmurale verslavingszorg in COVID-19-tijden

[Transmural addiction care in times of COVID-19 outbreak]
de Cauwer, H, Leenders, J, Vloemans, P, Mondelaers, R, Viaene, M
Tijdschrift voor Psychiatrie
62, 5, p.329-331, 2020

Treatment of opioid use disorder during COVID-19: Experiences of clinicians transitioning to telemedicine

Uscher-Pines, L ; Sousa, J ; Raja, P ; et al
Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment
29 August 2020

Objective

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed care delivery for patients with opioid use disorder (OUD); however, little is known about the experiences of front-line clinicians in the transition to telemedicine. This study described how, in the context of the early stages of the pandemic, clinicians used telemedicine for OUD in conjunction with in-person care, barriers encountered, and implications for quality of care.

Methods

In April 2020, we conducted semistructured interviews with clinicians waived to prescribe buprenorphine. We used maximum variation sampling. We used standard qualitative analysis techniques, consisting of both inductive and deductive approaches, to identify and characterize themes.

Results

Eighteen clinicians representing 10 states participated. Nearly all interview participants were doing some telemedicine, and more than half were only doing telemedicine visits. Most participants reported changing their typical clinical care patterns to help patients remain at home and minimize exposure to COVID-19. Changes included waiving urine toxicology screening, sending patients home with a larger supply of OUD medications, and requiring fewer visits. Although several participants were serving new patients via telemedicine during the early weeks of the pandemic, others were not. Some clinicians identified positive impacts of telemedicine on the quality of their patient interactions, including increased access for patients. Others noted negative impacts including less structure and accountability, less information to inform clinical decision-making, challenges in establishing a connection, technological challenges, and shorter visits.

Conclusions

In the context of the pandemic, buprenorphine prescribers quickly transitioned to providing telemedicine visits in high volume; nonetheless, there are still many unknowns, including the quality and safety of widespread use of telemedicine for OUD treatment.

Clinton Foundation works to put naloxone in recovery homes as opioid epidemic is overshadowed by COVID-19 pandemic

Overdose deaths are rising at double-digit rates this year as people recovering from addiction have been locked down and shut out of their usual support systems | USA Today, USA

<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2020/08/31/clinton-foundation-joins-efforts-supply-naloxone-recovery-homes/5637522002/>

Psychedelics and mental health in the COVID-Era

Psychedelics, mental health, COVID-19, and our drug laws: The Silent Pandemic and the search for innovation in the treatment of mental health problems. Please read this article by Beatrix Vas – and watch the movie they produced about research on psychedelics! | Drug Reporter, Hungary

<https://drogriporter.hu/en/psychedelics-and-mental-health-in-the-covid-era/>

Darknet, online underground market thrives in COVID health crisis

<https://mybigplunge.com/tech-plunge/cyber-society/darknet-online-underground-market-thrives-covid-health-crisis/>

How COVID-19 affects U.S substance use: what Reddit data tells us

<https://americanmarijuana.org/substance-use-covid-19/>

Online messaging indicates Americans turning to drugs to cope with coronavirus pandemic, study shows

<https://www.bostonherald.com/2020/09/06/online-messaging-indicates-americans-turning-to-drugs-to-cope-with-coronavirus-pandemic-study-shows/>

Drug and alcohol use through the pandemic

The Global Drug Survey's COVID-19 survey finds that many people in the UK increased their use of cannabis and alcohol | Russell Webster, UK

<http://www.russellwebster.com/gds-covid-uk/>

Coronavirus: Boredom driving force behind alcohol and drug use during Covid-19 pandemic, but consumption didn't spike

A global study of drug and alcohol use through the Covid-19 pandemic presents a mixed picture of how people responded to lockdowns in New Zealand and around the world | Stuff.co.nz, New Zealand

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/122709385/coronavirus-boredom-driving-force-behind-alcohol-and-drug-use-during-covid19-pandemic-but-consumption-didnt-spike>