



EMCDDA DOCUMENTATION CENTRE INFORMATION BULLETIN

**CORONAVIRUS, 9 October 2020**

#### GREY LITERATURE

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**Rights in a pandemic – Lockdowns, rights and lessons from HIV in the early response to COVID-19**

UNAIDS

Geneva : 2020

Rights in a Pandemic outlines 10 immediate areas for action for governments towards building effective, rights-based COVID-19 responses. These include taking proactive measures to ensure that people, particularly people in vulnerable groups, can access HIV treatment and prevention services, designating and supporting essential workers, including community-led organizations, and implementing measures to prevent and address gender-based violence. The report builds on Rights in the time of COVID-19, released by UNAIDS in March 2020, which urged countries to take a human rights approach in responding to COVID-19, in line with best practices from 40 years of responding to HIV.

[http://files.idpc.net/library/rights-in-a-pandemic\\_en.pdf](http://files.idpc.net/library/rights-in-a-pandemic_en.pdf)

**COVID-19 and its impact on SUD treatment.**

Friedmann PD, Abraham A, Evans E, et al  
Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 2020, 117, 108091

**Access to healthcare and harm reduction services during the COVID-19 pandemic for people who use drugs**

Stowe, M-J, Calvey, T, Scheibein, F, et al  
Journal of Addiction Medicine  
30 September 2020  
doi: 10.1097/ADM.0000000000000753

Globally, there are concerns about access to healthcare and harm reduction services for people who use drugs (PWUD) during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Members from the Network of Early Career Professionals working in Addiction Medicine shared their experiences of providing treatment to PWUD during the COVID-19 pandemic. Drawing on these qualitative reports, we highlight the similarities and discrepancies in access to services for PWUD in 16 countries under COVID-10 restrictions. In most countries reported here, efforts have been made to ensure continued access to services, such as mobilising opioid agonist maintenance treatment and other essential medicines to patients. However, due to travel restrictions and limited telemedicine services, several Network of Early Career Professionals working in Addiction Medicine members from lower-resourced countries experienced challenges with providing care to their patients during periods of COVID-19 lock-down. The insights provided in this commentary illustrate how the COVID-19 lock-down restrictions have impacted access to services for PWUD.

**COVID-19 upends progress on opioid crisis**

American Journal of Nursing, 2020, 120, 10, 16

The pandemic has stretched resources and complicated the delivery of care.

**Domestic violence and substance use during COVID-19: a systematic review**

Abdo, C; Miranda, E P; Santos, C S; et al  
Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 2020, 62, p.5337-5342

**Introduction:**

As COVID-19 develops around the world, numerous publications have described the psychiatric consequences of this pandemic. Although clinicians and healthcare systems are mainly focused on managing critically ill patients in an attempt to limit the number of casualties, psychiatric disease burden is increasing significantly. In this scenario, increased domestic violence and substance abuse have been recently reported.

**Objective:**

The objective of this study is to perform a systematic review of the literature regarding the consequences of severe acute respiratory syndrome-CoV-2 infection in terms of domestic violence and substance abuse, and compare incidences found.

**Materials and Methods:**

We conducted a literature search using the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses guidelines. The keywords included “domestic violence,” “substance abuse” AND “COVID-19,” including multiple variants from December 2019 through June 2020. An extensive bibliographic search was carried out in different medical databases: Pubmed, EMBASE, LILACS, medRxiv, and bioRxiv. Titles and abstracts were reviewed according to the eligibility criteria. The risk of bias in the retrieved articles was assessed by the Joanna Briggs Institute’s critical assessment instrument.

**Results:**

A total of 1505 papers were initially retrieved after consulting the selected databases. After browsing through titles and abstracts, 94 articles were initially included considering the predefined eligibility criteria. After a more detailed analysis, only six scientific articles remained in our selection. Of these, three were evaluating domestic violence against children, while the other three were about substance abuse.

**Conclusion:**

There is not enough evidence to support the concept that COVID-19 has led to an increase in the rates of domestic violence and substance abuse. The initial decrease in violence reports might not translate into a real reduction in incidence but in accessibility. Apparently, there has been a slight increase in alcohol and tobacco abuse, especially by regular users, which also requires confirmatory studies. The inconsistency between expert opinion articles and the actual published data could be a

result of the limited time since the beginning of the crisis, the fact that psychiatric patients have been chronically exposed to stressful situations, and a possible stimulated increase in demand for psychiatric consultations.

**Overdue for an overhaul: how opioid treatment programs can learn from COVID-19**

Greenblatt, A D, Magidson, J F, Belcher, A M, et al  
Mayo Clinic Proceedings  
95, 10, p.2076-2078, 2020

**Substance use disorder treatment, parenting, and COVID-19**

Cioffi, C C; Leve, L D  
Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 2020, 119, 108148

Prior to COVID-19, options for parenting support while receiving substance use disorder (SUD) treatment were limited. The transition to using mobile technology for SUD treatment due to physical distancing during the pandemic may make parenting resources for people with SUDs even more limited. The rapid integration of parenting supports into telehealth and web-based treatment delivery is essential for improving long-term outcomes for families affected by substance use.

**COVID-19 disrupting mental health services in most countries, WHO survey**

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/05-10-2020-covid-19-disrupting-mental-health-services-in-most-countries-who-survey>

**'There was nothing to help me': how the pandemic has worsened opioid addiction**

US treatment centers have shut down or turned away patients amid as they struggle to adhere to Covid-19 safety protocols | Guardian, UK

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/oct/05/us-coronavirus-pandemic-opioid-addiction>

**Lockdown and drug use - audio**

Charities tell Newsbeat drug taking could be on the rise as local lockdowns mean people can't go out... we take a look as police in Northumbria investigate suspected drugs-related deaths | BBC, UK

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000n4hg>

**Young people in drug policy advocacy – part 2: global issues, local dynamics**

The second part of our series reveals how young people advocating drug policy reform cope with the new challenges and opportunities brought by the COVID-crisis | Drug Reporter, Hungary

<https://drogriporter.hu/en/young-people-in-drug-policy-advocacy-part-2-global-issues-local-dynamics/>

**New evidence on substance use disorders and COVID-19 susceptibility**

As I wrote in April (<https://www.drugabuse.gov/about-nida/noras-blog/2020/04/covid-19-potential-implications-individuals-substance-use-disorders>) when the COVID-19 pandemic was an emerging health threat in the U.S., there is reason to be concerned that people with substance use disorders (SUDs) may be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 and its most adverse health outcomes | NIDA blog, USA

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/about-nida/noras-blog/2020/10/new-evidence-substance-use-disorders-covid-19-susceptibility>