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abstract

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Treatment Outcome Evaluation of Five Therapeutic Communities for Drug Users - Analysis of Selected Baseline Data from 2007



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Therapeutic Community Nemčice

SANANIM

Background: The treatment outcome evaluation of clients in therapeutic communities is the first project in the Czech Republic with the aim of the long-term monitoring and evaluation of clients receiving treatment from five therapeutic communities by means of a unified methodology, instruments, and indicators. **Objectives:** Evaluation of indicators: substance use and risk behaviour, mental and physical health, social functioning, criminal behaviour, and the quality of life. The data presented here provide the first outcomes indicating clients' characteristics at the beginning of their treatment.

Methods: A prospective cohort study without a control group. The data were collected by means of a structured interview facilitated by a number of research instruments. The clients were observed from their admission to the therapeutic community until one year after they finished their treatment.

Participants: Clients of five therapeutic communities for substance users who began their treatment episodes in the period from 1st January 2007 to 31st December 2007. The sample consisted of 104 clients.

Findings: The most frequent problem is the long-term (more than 6 years on average) usage of pervitin and of more than one addictive substance at the

same time, including alcohol. Almost all the clients had experienced long-term (6 years on average) injecting substance use; more than 20% of them had repeatedly shared injecting equipment. Two thirds of the clients had committed criminal activities, and 25% mentioned their experience of prison. One third of the clients mentioned difficulties in the sphere of mental health; on the other hand, the occurrence of viral hepatitis C is relatively low (22%). There are significant differences in a number of indicators among the groups of clients receiving treatment from individual TCs.

Conclusions: The clients of therapeutic communities demonstrate high figures in the range and gravity of the indicators monitored, which is unfavourable for both themselves and their social environment. For therapeutic communities this presents the necessity to respond to the gravity of the difficulties in the target population. The multiple difficulties of TC clients call for the participation of various social and health services with the aim of providing an adequate and compact solution.

Key words: Therapeutic community, substance user, treatment outcomes, Maudsley Addiction Profile

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