Registration of treatment demands for substance use disorders in Belgium: Why are some clients registered anonymously?

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Introduction

- The Treatment Demand Indicator (TDI) collects data on patients entering treatment for their drug use at EU level on behalf of EMCDDA
- Belgium started the registration in 2011 in a wide range of treatment facilities using the national population register number (NRN) of clients in order to
  - tag multiple records and follow clients through different treatment episodes over time
  - allow the linkage with other national databases
- However the protocol leaves the possibility to register clients episodes without any identifier

Research question

- The objective is to describe the factors linked with the use of the NRN

Material and Methods

- Focus on TDI data between 2011 and 2014
- Selection of first-time treatment episodes for substance use (n=17593)
  - 69% with NRN | 31% without NRN
- Multivariate analysis performed including clients socio-demographic characteristics, the main substance used and centers characteristics
- Logistic regression provided the adjusted odds ratio of reporting a NRN at each level comparing with the reference level

Results

Figure 1: Odds ratio estimates and 95% Wald Confidence Intervals

Factors
- TYPE CENTER (base=ambulant)
- Crisis centre
- Psychiatric hospital
- Psychiatric unit in general hospital
- Socio-sanitary care services
- Therapeutic community
- REGION (base=Flanders)
- Brussels
- Wallonia
- NATIONALITY (base=Belgian)
- Non Belgian, EU
- Outside EU
- AGE AND SEX
- Male (base=Female)
- PRIMARY DRUG (base=alcohol)
- Opiates
- Cannabis
- Hypnotics and sedatives
- Stimulants
- EDUCATION (base=No or primary)
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- EMPLOYMENT (base=working)
- Not economically active/unemployed
- STUDENT
- LIVING SITUATION (base=alone)
- With friends
- With parents
- With partner
- LIVING PLACE (base=permanent place)
- In institution/in jail
- No stable place

- There is little evidence that clients characteristics had a major impact on the NRN reporting
- The main factors associated with the NRN reporting were:
  - the nationality
  - the main substance used
  - the type of treatment center
  - the region where the client is treated

Conclusions

- This study allows us to better understand the use of the NRN in TDI registration in Belgium
- These findings help to target specific groups of centres/regions to improve the NRN registration
- It gives insights in the « missing » population in linkage studies using TDI