

Abstract

Objective: The main objective of this study was to analyze the basic characteristics of Harm Reduction services (types, availability and scope of programs), customer analysis offered interventions, funding and status of HR services within the system of care for drug users.

Background: Harm reduction (HR) pattern is contained within the drug policy of the European Union and is also one of the components of the National Drug Strategy of the Slovak Republic. Even though there is no comprehensive material which analysis HR services available in Slovakia

Research file: The research file consisted providers outreach programs, low threshold contact centers and providers of substitution treatment. The study invited all providers of HR services, Centers for drug treatment and psychiatric clinic specializing in the field of drug addiction. The sample interviewed either by e-mail or phone finally constituted 4 HR organizations, 6 Centers for drug treatment and 15 outpatient clinics specializing in drug addiction. After several calls completed, questionnaire was able to obtain data from seven HR programs (provided with four HR organizations), two centers for the treatment of drug addiction and one clinic specializing in drug addiction.

Methods: Data collection was conducted by questionnaire structured into 4 main areas. The data were processed in the tables and charts in Microsoft Excel.

Results: There was only 7 functioning low threshold services (provided by four organizations). Needle and syringe exchange programmes are generally available only in five cities (Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Sered and Kosice), this means that in the entire eastern Slovakia is available an exchange program in one city. Budget of 2/3 services from 2011 to 2013 declined significantly (by two respondents was reduced to half), as a consequence of the fact that 87.50% of the programs does not have money to develop services that reflects the needs of clients. Seven of the eight respondents do not have sufficient funds to cover physical security services. Even after a 20 year history of the functioning of HR services HR programs perceive their position in the system of services underrated, do not feel sufficient financial appraisal and recognition of professional quality in their field

Conclusions: Bachelor thesis provides summary information about the characteristics, availability, clients, funding and status of HR services in Slovakia. The research results are useful as an argument to the completion of the services and the need to invest in the state of HR programs.

Key words: Harm reduction approach - Typology of services - Analysis - Public health - Slovak Republic