

P-02 - USE OF CODEINE CONTAINING MEDICINES BY IRISH PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF REGULATIONS ON THEIR SUPPLY

V.I.Agyapong¹, K.Sighn², M.Savage², T.Thekiso², M.Finn², C.K.Farren¹, D.McLoughlin¹

¹Department of Psychiatry, University of Dublin, Trinity College, ²Department of Psychiatry, St Patrick's University Hospital, Dublin, Ireland

Background: On the 1st of August 2010 guidelines aimed at ensuring the safe supply of over-the-counter codeine containing medicinal products came to force in Ireland.

Objectives: The study aimed to examine the frequency of use as well as reasons for the use of non-prescription codeine containing medicines in an Irish psychiatric population before and after the introduction of regulations on the supply of codeine containing medicines.

Methods: Self administered questionnaires were designed and administered to patients before and after the introduction of guidelines regulating the sale of non-prescribed codeine containing medicines in Ireland. The results were compiled and analysed using descriptive statistics and chi-square test.

Results: Significantly more patients reported that they often or regularly used codeine containing medicines before the introduction of the regulation compared to the period after that (33.3% vs. 17.4%, $\chi^2 = 6.354$, $p = 0.01$). Significantly more patients also reported that others had expressed concerns about the frequency with which they used codeine containing medicines before the introduction of the regulation compared to the period after the introduction of the regulation (15.5% vs. 4.8%, $\chi^2 = 7.29$, $p = 0.03$). Finally, significantly more patients stated that they would use codeine containing medicines either for the 'feel good' effect or to curb cravings before the introduction of the regulation than after the introduction of the regulation (15.9% vs. 1.9%, $p = 0.00$).

Conclusion: Tight regulations on the supply of non-prescription codeine containing medicines have the potential to reduce the abuse of such medicine among psychiatric patients in general.