



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

An Oifig Náisiúnta don Chuimsiú
Sóisialta
Rannóg Cúram Príomhúil
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17th January 2018

Deputy Louise O'Reilly, TD
Dáil Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2.

PQ 1073/18

* To ask the Minister for Health the number of persons treated for steroid use or abuse in each of the years 2009 to 2017, by sex and age ranges; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position:

The National Drug Treatment Reporting System (NDTRS) started collecting specific information on cases treated for problem steroid use in 2010. See attached Appendix on the NDTRS.

Between 2010 and 2016 (most recent year currently available) 30 cases were treated for steroids as a main problem drug. Between 2010 and 2012 less than 5 cases were treated annually, but since then between five and 10 cases were treated for steroids as a main problem annually. The vast majority were male. Most cases were aged between 25 and 34 years of age.

In the period 2010 to 2016, an additional 85 cases reported steroids as an additional problem drug. Again almost all were male and most were aged between 20 and 39 years of age.

For the Deputy's information please see:

a general guide to bodybuilding in a safe and enjoyable manner (pages 20 – 21 re Performance Enhancing Drugs).

http://www.drugs.ie/resourcesfiles/guides/The_SMART_method.pdf

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Doyle
National Planning Specialist

Appendix

National Drug Treatment Reporting System

Treatment for problem alcohol and drug use in Ireland is provided by statutory and non-statutory services, including residential centres, community-based addiction services, general practices and prison services.

For the purpose of the NDTRS, treatment is broadly defined as 'any activity which aims to ameliorate the psychological, medical or social state of individuals who seek help for their substance misuse problems'. Clients who attend needle-exchange services are not included in this reporting system. From 2004 onwards, clients who report alcohol as their main problem drug have been recorded by the system. These data have been presented in an earlier paper in the HRB Trends Series (Fanagan et al. 2008). Drug treatment options include one or more of the following: medication (detoxification, methadone reduction, substitution programmes and psychiatric treatment), brief intervention, counselling, group therapy, family therapy, psychotherapy, complementary therapy, and/or life-skills training.

Compliance with the NDTRS requires that one form be completed for each new client coming for first treatment and for each previously treated client returning to treatment for problem drug use. Service providers at treatment centres throughout Ireland collect data on each individual who attends for first treatment or returns to treatment in a calendar year.

Staff at the NHIS unit in the HRB compile anonymous, aggregated data, which are analysed and reported at national and EU levels. The main elements of the reporting system are defined as follows:

All cases treated – describes cases who receive treatment for problem drug and/or alcohol use at each treatment centre in a calendar year, and includes:

Cases assessed only - describes cases who were assessed but who did not progress to treatment

Previously treated cases – describes cases who were treated previously for problem drug/alcohol use at any treatment centre and have returned to treatment in the reporting year;

New cases treated – describes cases who have never been treated for problem drug/alcohol use; and

Status unknown – describes cases whose status with respect to previous treatment for problem drug/alcohol use is not known.

Each case refers to an episode of treatment. Therefore 'previously treated cases' could appear more than once in the database, in a calendar year, if for example they receive treatment at more than one centre or at the same centre more than once per year.