Experiences of drug use and ageing: Health, quality of life, relationships and service implications.

Funding country: United Kingdom
Project starting year: 2009
Project ending year: 2010
Area(s) of research: Prevalence, incidence and patterns of drug use, Harm reduction responses, Consequences of drug use

Objectives:
An exploratory qualitative study was undertaken using semi-structured interviews with prompts. The aim of the study was to explore older people’s experiences of substance use in the context of ageing, and its impact on health, quality of life, relationships and service use.

Scientific discipline(s) involved: Epidemiology

Initial identified needs:
Use of illicit drugs by older people is a neglected policy, research and service provision and is generally perceived as a lifestyle of younger populations. In the United Kingdom (UK), the proportion of problematic drug users aged 50 and above in contact with drug treatment services in Cheshire and Merseyside has increased statistically significantly. Problematic drug use is defined in the UK as use of opiates and/or crack cocaine (Home Office 2008). However, recent reviews suggest that services specifically for older people misusing drugs in the UK are not widely available or accessed by them, and that diagnosis of drug and substance misuse among this population is missed and access to services and treatment not provided.

Performed by: Center for Public Health, Liverpool John Moores University
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Summary references:
Website:
Published reference(s):