Tramadol-related deaths

2016 Survey overview

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Parallel workshop Opioids, medicines and focus on Tramadol
Background and rational

• One of the missions of EMCDDA is to collect, register, analyse information on ‘emerging trends in polydrug use, including combined use of licit and illicit psychoactive substances’

• Particular attention to the medicines with high potential for misuse or for which alerts or signals of public health concerns have been reported

• Increase of UK tramadol-related deaths
  → Ad-hoc data collection exercise launched in September 2013: National DRD experts were asked to provide information on Tramadol related deaths registered in their countries. Data were provided by 9 countries.

• A new call for data was launched in 2016
EMCDDA project on tramadol

- A new call for data was launched in 2016 in view of the new EMCDDA project on misuses of tramadol in the context of poly drug use;

- To be implemented in 2017 with selected number of MS (France, UK, Germany, Sweden) and in collaboration with the EMA in London;

- The objective of the study is to provide a comprehensive overview of tramadol, including its pharmacology and toxicology; availability and legal status, information on the levels of misuse and the risk and harms related with tramadol consumption, in the context of polydrug use,

- Based on the case studies but will strive to provide a European perspective where possible (EMCDDA and EMA) - e.g. data sets and today meeting as a first step
Methods

Short questionnaire on:

- number of deaths
- age
- gender
- trends since 2000
- intentionality
- background on regulation
Results

13 countries provided data:

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<th>Country</th>
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<th>2016</th>
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For 2016 survey Cyprus, Hungary, and UK provided qualitative information only
Tramadol-related deaths – 2013 survey

Number of cases reported

Country

UK: 110
FI: 18
CZ: 16
AT: 13
SK: 12
SI: 5
LV: 2
LT: 1
HU: 1
Tramadol-related deaths – most recent data (2016 survey)

Number of cases reported

Country:

- UK
- FI
- CZ
- AT
- SK
- SI
- LV
- LT
- HU
- FR
- IE
- EE
- ES
- CY

Number of cases:

- UK: 22
- FI: 22
- CZ: 4
- AT: 13
- SK: 13
- SI: 0
- LV: 0
- LT: 0
- HU: 4
- FR: 4
- IE: 26
- EE: 5
- ES: 30
- CY: 0

Source: emcdda.europa.eu
Tramadol-related deaths – 2013 vs 2016 survey

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>CY</td>
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emcdda.europa.eu
Finland – trend in the number of tramadol-related deaths

2000-2008 according to 2013 data
2009-2014 according to 2016 data
Finland – trend in the % of tramadol-related deaths (selection D)

2000-2008 according to 2013 data
2009-2014 according to 2016 data
Ireland – trend in the number of tramadol-related deaths (NDRDI)
Ireland – trend in the % of tramadol-related deaths (NDRDI vs ST6 selection D)
Spain – trend in the number of tramadol-related deaths
Spain – trend in the % of tramadol-related deaths (selection D)
Austria – trend in the number of tramadol-related deaths
Austria – trend in the % of tramadol-related deaths (selection D)
Trends comparison in the numbers of tramadol-related deaths

- Finland

- Spain

- Ireland

- Austria
Trends comparison in the numbers of tramadol-related deaths

- Finland
- Spain
- Ireland
- Austria
Finland – age and gender profile of the tramadol-related deaths, 2011 (N=18)

Slide 2013 left for comparison. Note: n was 18, now for 2011 n = 23

83% males
Mean age 27.8
Finland – age and gender profile of the tramadol-related deaths, 2014 (N=22)

- 82% males
- Mean age 31.3
Ireland – age and gender profile of the tramadol-related deaths, 2014 NDRDI (N=26)

61.5% males
Mean age 40.7

Number of deaths reported
-10 -8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10

Female
Male

>=65
60-64
55-59
50-54
45-49
40-44
35-39
30-34
25-29
20-24
15-19
<15
Spain – age and gender profile of the tramadol-related deaths, 2014 (N=30)

Number of deaths reported

60% males
Mean age 45.5
Changes in sales

- Increase in sales are reported by France, Ireland, Latvia

- Stable sales are reported in Finland, Lithuania, Hungary

- A reduction of 5% occurred in UK in 2015 after a pick in 2013 and 2014

- Caution: absolute numbers - do not take into account changes in the population
Notes on regulations at a national level

- **Cyprus:** In 2002 Tramadol was included in the list of controlled substances. In 2003, relevant regulations were issued; besides penalties for illegal trading, prescription rules were included, as well as a need of notification in case of addiction from the particular drug.

- **Latvia:** Despite the fact that there already were tramadol control actions (prescription to specific recipes, registration in the strict accountability register and inclusion of narcotic analgesics lists), changes in legislation were made in 2014: tramadol was classified as psychotropic substance and it was included in the list of controlled substances.

- **Spain:** Tramadol is a legally commercialized pharmaceutical drug which requires medical prescription under the rules of the Spanish Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. However, apparently, this opiate derivative can be “easily” purchased in the Internet bypassing the medical prescription requirement.
Discussion & conclusions

- Limited information (short time series)
- Small number of cases
- Large countries and countries having issues with medicines-related harm are missing in this survey
- Different trends in different countries. Trend profiles similar both considering absolute numbers and percentages of cases among DRD
- Different age profiles of the tramadol-related deaths across countries
- Apparently no recent change in regulations / availability of tramadol (except in Latvia)
- Standard Table 5 – Toxicology reporting should be encouraged
Some comments

• Some updates of previously reported numbers
  • Finland now there were 24 cases in 2009 instead of 16, 30 in 2010 vs 27, 23 in 2011 vs 18, 21 in 2012 vs 18; I
  • Austria in 2008 now result 7 cases in 2008 instead of 5;
  • Latvia in 2012 now 0 instead of 2
  • Lithuania in 2012 now 0 instead of 1

• Ireland: data from NDRDI

• For some questionnaires, we may ask you some clarifications and tables filled in, where possible

• Some analyses limited to the countries with at least 10 cases
Acknowledgements

• To the national experts and or focal points who contributed with data analysis and comments
• To João Matias who did the analysis of the previous survey
United Kingdom – trends in the number of tramadol-related deaths

To be updated
United Kingdom – age and gender profile of the tramadol-related deaths, 2012 (n=110)

To be updated

61% males
Mean age 43.5 years
(male 43, female 50)

Female
Male

>=65
60-64
55-59
50-54
45-49
40-44
35-39
30-34
25-29
20-24
15-19
<15

Number of deaths reported