

MISUSE OF MEDICINES – REVISION OF THE EMQ MODULE

Karoliina Karjalainen, PhD,
Senior Researcher

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METHODOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN MONITORING MISUSE OF MEDICINES THROUGH GENERAL POPULATION SURVEYS (GPS)

- Project conducted during 2017
- Objective of the project:
 - to develop a common revised module of the European Model Questionnaire (EMQ) with a set of items on misuse of medicines, in order to collect data on the misuse of medicines among general population at the European level

SPECIFIC AIMS OF THE PROJECT

- To conduct GPS mapping exercise (collect questionnaires and methodological procedures from EU countries as well as from the US and Canada)
- To revise the conclusions concerning GPS indicator in a report 'Audit of the EMCDDA data collection tools on misuse of medicine' from 2012
- To organize a workshop during the GPS Experts' meeting in 2017
- To develop a draft module on misuse of medicines

RESULTS FROM THE GPS MAPPING EXERCISE

- 28/30 countries (EU countries + Norway and Turkey) responded to the query (Does your questionnaire include questions concerning pharmaceuticals / misuse of medicines, non-medical use of prescription drugs etc.?)
- 10/28 countries had included questions about misuse of medicines in their previous surveys (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Sweden, UK)
 - Themes: Non-medical use/misuse, motivation for use, the use with alcohol, obtaining the medication, problematic/dependent use, use of prescription drugs, other
- 2 countries (Estonia and Slovenia) were planning to include questions about misuse of medicines in their next survey



THL

RESULTS FROM THE GPS MAPPING EXERCISE

- Questions used varied significantly between countries
 - By definition:
 - prescription-only painkillers that were not prescribed for you
 - sedatives/tranquillizers without a doctor's prescription
 - sedatives or tranquillizers available on prescription only without doctor's recommendation
 - tranquillizers which was NOT prescribed to you by a doctor
 - prescription drugs used for a non-medical purpose
 - By medicines included
 - sedatives/tranquillizers, painkillers
- Variation how widely the misuse of medicines was surveyed – from only one to several different questions



CONCLUSIONS FROM THE GPS MAPPING EXERCISE

- Although there is no module for the misuse of medicines in the EMQ, one third of the countries is collecting data about the phenomenon
- Questions about the misuse of medicines in different surveys and countries lack comparability
- Almost impossible to form an overall picture about the misuse of medicines at the European level with the existing data

PROPOSED EMQ MODULE ON MISUSE OF MEDICINES

- 'Non-medical use of prescription drugs' instead of 'misuse of medicines'
- Benzodiazepines, opioids, stimulants (available on prescription only)
- Six core questions and six voluntary questions – example from benzodiazepines

INTRO

NON-MEDICAL USE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Next questions concern medicines that are sold in pharmacies with a doctor's prescription only. Sometimes these medicines are used without a prescription and in ways or amounts that are different from the usual medical practice.

NON-MEDICAL USE OF BENZODIAZEPINES

Benzodiazepines (such as *diazepam – list of trade names®*, *temazepam – list of trade names®*, or...) are sedatives, tranquilizers and sleeping pills available on *prescription only*. 'Non-medical use' refers, for example, to the use of these medicines without personal prescription from an appropriate practitioner; on larger doses, for longer period, or for different purposes than prescribed.

CORE QUESTIONS

LYP

During the last 12 months, have you used benzodiazepines non-medically?

Yes; No

Frequency of use

During the last 12 months, how often did you use benzodiazepines non-medically?

4 times a week or more; 2-3 times a week; 2-4 times a month; Once a month or less

CORE QUESTIONS

LMP

During the last 30 days, have you used benzodiazepines non-medically?

Yes; No

Frequency of use

During the last 30 days, on how many days did you use benzodiazepines non-medically?

On _____ days OR 20 days or more; 10-19 days; 4-9 days; 1-3 days



CORE QUESTIONS

Motivation for use

Have you used benzodiazepines [non-medically] in order to get intoxicated/high?

Yes; No

CORE QUESTIONS

Supply

The last time you used benzodiazepines non-medically, how did you obtain them?

- a) From a prescription written for you;
- b) From a friend, spouse or relative;
- c) From a drug dealer or other stranger;
- d) From the internet (buying online without prescription);
- e) From forging a prescription;
- f) Other, how? _____

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONS

LTP

Have you ever used benzodiazepines non-medically?

Yes; No

Age of onset

At what age did you use benzodiazepines non-medically for the first time?

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONS

Supply

Would you go for illegal sources (drug dealer, internet etc.) to acquire benzodiazepines if you could not obtain them through a prescription?

Yes; No

Risk perceptions

In your opinion, to what extent people risk harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they use benzodiazepines non-medically

a) occasionally (a few time in the live) Not at all; Slightly; Moderately; Greatly

b) regularly (several times per year) Not at all; Slightly; Moderately; Greatly



VOLUNTARY QUESTIONS

Diversion

During the past 12 months, did you ever give for free or sell benzodiazepines that were prescribed for you?

Yes; No

Perceived availability

If you would like to get benzodiazepines [available on prescription only], how difficult do you think it would be to obtain them within 24 hours?

Impossible; Very difficult, Quite difficult; Quite easy; Very easy; I don't know

NEXT STEPS

- The proposed EMQ module needs testing
 - Experiences and results from Estonia and Slovenia?
 - Core questions on benzodiazepines and opioids are included to the next Finnish GPS (autumn 2018)
 - Other countries interested in testing?
- Need for further development before including it to EMQ for wider use