

Abstract

Introduction: Aging and old age have their own characteristic manifestations that affect individuals from the perspective of physical, psychological and social aspects. Old age is associated with certain risks, e.g. in association with changes of health status. This can affect the individual and influence the risk of the development of addiction. Harmful use of addictive substances and the risk of addiction are not related only to young people, but also to the elderly. Addictive substances which are used the most commonly include alcohol, psychoactive drugs and tobacco.

Aims: The aim of the study was to map and describe patterns of substance use among seniors who use social services, specifically retirement homes for elderly and nursing services in the Central Bohemia region.

Methods and sets: Data were obtained using a questionnaire survey within the quantitative research carried out in retirement homes for the elderly and nursing services in the Central Bohemia region. The social services were selected by the method of multi-stage random selection. The research set, which was selected by the method of deliberate sampling, consists of 100 respondents.

Results: Respondents most often use alcohol, psychoactive drugs and tobacco. Prevalence use of tobacco and psychoactive drugs is higher among respondents than in the general population - 65+. Conversely, the prevalence of alcohol use is higher in the general population - 65+ than among respondents except for the daily prevalence. A small percentage of respondents reported experience with cannabis, no other addictive substances were mentioned. A rate of exposure to risk of addiction to nicotine is lower among respondents compared to the general population. In the case of alcohol, it is higher for respondents compared to the general population - 65+. Respondents also show higher problematic use of psychoactive drugs. The preferred alcoholic beverage is beer and among the drugs are Lexaurin, Stilnox and Tramal. The majority of respondents have an awareness of the issue, but interest in information and addiction services is rather lower.

Conclusion: The use of addictive substances among seniors is evident and at the same time they are at risk of developing addiction. Crucial is also ageing of the population and the associated ageing of substance users. For these reasons, it seems appropriate to map the use of addictive substances by seniors and take into account the specific needs of the elderly in addiction services.

Key words: senior, retirement home, nursing service, alcohol, tobacco, psychoactive drugs, cannabis, awareness