

Abstract

Background: The Prison Officers in Czech Republic are classified as high-risk in terms of alcohol abuse, mostly because of challenging and stressful working environment. Work exhaustion and the challenging situations could lead to development of alcohol-related problems. However, this topic is in the sphere of the military forces taboo mainly due to fears of termination of employment.

Objectives: The main objective of this diploma thesis is to map and describe the degree of risk patterns of alcohol use among Prison Officers in Czech Republic. The second objective of the thesis is to compare individual departments and length of service in connection with alcohol use.

Methods: In the research we used quantitative methods which included a questionnaire survey. The non-proportional statistical sampling was used during the research with set of selected 249 respondents. The analysis of the questionnaire was carried out using descriptive statistical methods.

Results: According to the questionnaire results; more than a fifth of respondents, are at high risk or at direct risk to become addicted to alcohol. Furthermore, the results shows that the officers with highest risk of alcohol addiction are from the detention department or those who are at the beginning of their careers, i.e. they have a temporary employment relationship of up to 5 years. From the determined time perspective, the increased consumption of alcohol was recorded only after starting the career of a prison guard, when the increase was by more than a one third. It is important to point out that up to 17% of members occasionally drink alcohol alone, and drinking is often associated with driving away bad mood or feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Conclusion: Due to the challenging and stressful working environment, physical and mental exhaustion, Prison Officers face a risk and problems connected with use of alcohol. It would be useful and essential to de-taboo the mentioned topic and build a network of services focusing more on the physical and psychological health of members in the organizational units of the prison service.

Key words

alcohol - prison service - patterns of use - challenging working conditions - stress