

Abstract

Background:

Drug consumption rooms are a service where clients can consume illegal addictive substances under the supervision of trained staff. In some countries, drug consumption rooms have been in operation for over 30 years, and various studies provide positive results that acquaint us with the benefits that drug consumption rooms provide. However, this master thesis does not aim to focus on the already confirmed, but on the specific experiences and needs of individuals who are in almost daily contact with this type of service. The research was done in a low-threshold facility with a drug consumption room in Berlin named Birkenstube. This facility has been in operation since the beginning of 2004 and is thus one of the first facilities with a drug consumption room in the city of Berlin. Despite its long history, tradition and constantly changing needs of its clientele, the activity of this facility was last evaluated in the year 2015.

Aims:

The aim of this work is to investigate and analyse the needs of clients who use the services of a low-threshold facility with a drug consumption room Birkenstube in Berlin. With the help of interviews with selected respondents, we will subsequently find out whether the clients are provided with what they really need from the service, or whether it would be appropriate to focus on improving the services provided, according to the needs of their users.

Methods and research sample:

Qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews with clients of the drop-in center with a drug consumption room and with individual workers of this facility. Research participants were selected by convenience sampling based on availability. There was a total of 10 respondents from the facility's clients. The employees of the service were selected by total sampling and the total number was 7 respondents. The information obtained was subsequently analysed using grounded theory. The Atlas.ti program was used for data analysis.

Results and conclusions:

In many ways, Birkenstube fulfills the needs of its clients and builds on the aims set by the operation of drug consumption rooms in the general context. According to the respondents, this is a place for safe consumption of addictive substances, and at the same time they positively rate the calm and safe environment of the entire facility, which is part of the reason why they come to the Birkenstube. The feeling of security is supported by the presence of staff that clients can trust. As part of the research, the respondents from both groups pointed out some weak points that need to be discussed in the future and efforts should be made to change or correct them. These include, for example, insufficient compliance with the rules on the part of some clients, short opening hours of the facility and low attention aimed at female users.

Keywords:

Drug consumption Room, Drop In Center, Needs Analysis, Illegal Addictive Substances, Berlin