

ABSTRACT

Background: Owing to current demographic trends reflecting an aging population, there is an increase in the group of older individuals facing issues related to alcohol consumption. This group is increasingly seeking assistance within the network of addiction services, including medium-term institutional treatment. Due to the unique physical, emotional, and cognitive characteristics associated with aging seniors and older adults respond differently to treatment compared to younger adults. Currently, healthcare providers often lack sufficient interventions related to treatment and harm reduction for substance use among older adults, addressing a broad-spectrum risk associated with substance use in this age group.

Goals: The goal of the thesis is to use needs analysis to determine the needs of older users in medium-term institutional treatment and to assess whether the range of interventions meets these needs. Additionally, the thesis aims to identify potential improvements to the service better address these needs.

Methodology: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with clients undergoing medium-term institutional treatment. The research sample, consisting of 7 men and 6 women aged 65 and older, was selected through intentional (purposive) sampling, specifically employing purposive selection through institutions. The data analysis utilized the method pattern capturing (“gestalts”).

Results: The findings of the thesis indicate that the respondents are predominantly satisfied with the provided services, considering the service offerings generally interesting and beneficial for them. Overall, the majority of clients are also satisfied with the approach of the staff, whom they rated as friendly and professional. The analysis further reveals that older users face several barriers hindering their access to treatment, unnecessarily reducing the service’s availability for them. Most respondents also emphasized that they appreciate the age diversity among clients and would not prefer to undergo treatment solely in the company of individuals of the same age. Instead of age-specific treatment, respondents would prefer if certain program elements were adjusted or designated within the existing system to be more accessible to their age group.

Conclusion treatment system and allocate certain parts of the program specifically for them. It is also beneficial to make efforts to develop treatment approaches tailored to better address this growing clientele. Along with enhanced collaboration with primary care and institutions: To meet the needs of older users, it is advantageous to internally structure the existing focusing on

senior care, this can contribute to improving the utilization of substance use treatment among older users.

KEYWORDS: medium-term institutional treatment, alcohol, seniors, needs analysis