

## Abstract

**Background:** Buprenorphine is currently the most widely used opioid-type drug in the Czech Republic. According to the annual report of the National Monitoring Centre, buprenorphine substitution treatment was prescribed to almost 7.8 thousand patients in 2022. This thesis discusses the possibilities of substitution treatment in Prague, mapping the knowledge and experiences of buprenorphine substitution treatment clients through semi-structured interviews. It also discusses the risk of potential black market trade in buprenorphine, why it occurs, and whether it can be prevented.

**Aims:** The study aims to evaluate the impact of the form of dispensing the substitution substance buprenorphine on the quality of life of clients of buprenorphine substitution treatment in the facility Cadas established by Sananim Z. ú. (from now on referred to as Cadas) and in the non-state health care facility Remedis s.r.o. (from now on referred to as Remedies). Another aim is to identify problematic aspects of the impact of the form of substitution substance dispensing on the quality of life of selected clients.

**Methods:** For this thesis, I have chosen a qualitative research strategy based on semi-structured interviews composed as a data collection technique. I selected the respondents using the convenience sampling method. I chose the computer program MAXQDA (version 24.4) to process and analyze the qualitative data. This software program, designed primarily for qualitative data analysis, better enables the data to be analyzed by using hierarchical coding and segmentation.

**File:** The base file consists of individuals who are in legal substitution for buprenorphine and also regularly attend a Cadas or Remedies dispensing center. Selection of specific respondents was done through institutions by approaching persons who visit the institution for regular substitution dispensing. The sample included all clients who were willing to participate in the survey and were also over 18 years of age. I stopped interviewing respondents once the sample was saturated. In total, I was able to collect 15 interviews.

**Results:** The results of this thesis present the demographic characteristics of the selected clients attending one of the facilities, as well as map the method and frequency of buprenorphine dispensing about client satisfaction and preferences. The positives of substitution for clients are presented, as well as the areas where clients see pitfalls or potential for improvement. Practical suggestions are outlined that clients believe would make the implementation of substitution more efficient and thus ensure greater client satisfaction. The following section focuses on the potential correlation of the method of dispensing buprenorphine along with the illicit trade in buprenorphine. Respondents indicate their motives for trafficking while outlining suggestions for possible solutions or prevention of the problem.

**Conclusion:** Positive responses were prevalent from all respondents and satisfaction from the majority of clients. The findings provided insights into the current status of buprenorphine substitution treatment and also outlined possible interventions to make buprenorphine an effective drug and prevent its proliferation as a street drug that is risky to abuse.

**Keywords:** Addictive substances, Substitution, Buprenorphine, Black market, Prevention

