



Research Snippet

Comparing the Mental Health Treatment and Abuse Histories of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Participants of the Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program (MMTP)

KEY WORDS: *Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT), mental health, aboriginal offenders*

Impetus

Among Canadian Aboriginal populations, high rates of suicide and trauma, such as being the victim of abuse, have been observed. Individuals with mental health issues or who have experienced trauma, and who also abuse substances may need additional support in the treatment of their substance abuse problem, as both mental health issues and trauma are risk factors for substance abuse (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 2009). Gaining a better understanding of the prevalence of mental health issues and trauma among Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program (MMTP) (currently known as the Opioid Substitution Therapy Program (OSTP)¹) participants will help CSC in meeting the needs of program participants.

What we did

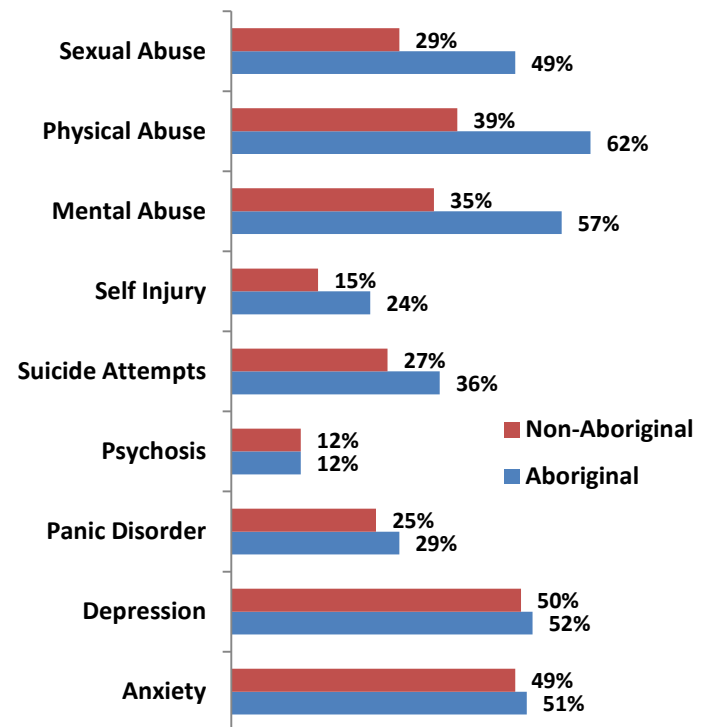
The Addictions Research Centre, in partnership with Health Services, collects and manages administrative MMTP data for program participants. Using data collected from 676 men and women offenders initiated in CSC's MMTP between January 1, 2009 and September 1, 2011, we compared the mental health treatment and abuse histories of Aboriginal (n = 121) and Non-Aboriginal (n = 555) MMTP participants.

What we found

While high rates of treatment for mental health issues and history of abuse were found for both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal offenders, a greater proportion of Aboriginal offenders reported histories of sexual, physical, and mental abuse, as well as self injurious behavior and suicide attempts. Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal offenders had relatively similar rates of treatment for other mental health issues (Figure 1).

¹ In 2008, CSC expanded the Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program (MMTP) to also provide Suboxone to offenders meeting the eligibility criteria, thus becoming the Opioid Substitution Therapy Program (OSTP).

Figure 1: Percentage of Offenders Reporting Lifetime History of Mental Health Treatment and Abuse Histories by Aboriginal Status



What it means

These results indicate the need to consider mental health issues, and in particular history of abuse in the treatment of opioid dependent offenders, especially within Aboriginal offender populations.

References:

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. (2009). *Substance abuse in Canada: Concurrent disorders*. Ottawa, On: Author.

Prepared by: Mary-Ann MacSwain & Madelon Cheverie

Contact

Research Branch
(613) 995-3975
research@csc-scc.gc.ca

