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METHADONE MAINTENANCE THERAPY(MMT): LOW VERSUS HIGH REGULATED MODEL

A.R. Rusdi, R. Masturah, N. Robson, H. Habil

University of Malaya Center for Addiction Sciences(UMCAS), Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

Introduction: In Malaysia, MMT started with low regulated model since year 2002 to address increasing prevalence of HIV/AIDS among intravenous drug users. However, fear of widespread diversion and overdose death forced the government to implement high regulated MMT model. Universiti Malaya conducted both model among self-sponsored(low supervision) and government-sponsored(high supervision) program.

Objectives: To investigate the biodemographic profiles, psychosocial correlates, pattern of substance use, methadone dosing and client satisfaction level among the two groups.

Methods: We conducted a cross sectional study involving 50 clients from each model. The inclusion criteria includes opiates dependents age >18 years and above with written consent using convenience sampling from October to December 2008. Semistructured questionnaire for demographic and pattern of substance use interview, MINI Neuropsychiatric interview for psychiatric morbidity and CSQ-8 for client satisfaction measurement. Analysis was done using SPSS version 16.

Results: All the participants are males with the mean age of 40 years. 61% are married and 90% are employed during the interview. 80% received MMT more than one year and 65% achieved maintenance dose more than 50mg daily. 68% used substance more than 10 years prior to the MMT and 73% starts using heroin below age of 20 years old. 57% have comorbid psychiatric illness(anti-social personality, major depression and psychotic disorders) and 33% have medical illness(HIV+, Hepatitis B/C and tuberculosis). There were no significance difference in demographic profiles, pattern of substance use, psychiatric/medical comorbidities and clients satisfaction level between the two groups.
Conclusion: Both group are similar from the clients satisfaction perspectives.