

Dr Cathal Ó Súilliobháin

ACCESS TO COMMUNITY BASED DRUG  
TREATMENT

# **The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)**

## **European drug report 2014**

**Drug related deaths are decreasing across europe—  
but increasing in Ireland**

Ireland has the third highest rate of drug related deaths in Europe with a rate of 70.5 deaths per million population in 2011 compared with an average EU rate of 17.1 deaths per million.

The 220 drug-induced deaths in 2011 outstripped the 186 road deaths recorded the same year.

Deaths associated with methadone increased from 66 in 2010 to 113 in 2011.

68% of deaths associated with methadone were not in treatment.



# The Walking Dead

Courtesy of The HSE...

# Dún Laoghaire Methadone Clinic

DLRPA would like to bring the following to your attention:



The doctors in the Dún Laoghaire HSE Drug Distribution Centre are administering 60% more Methadone than their European counterparts.



Throughout Europe, a patient is treated for a maximum of two years on a Methadone programme, while your Dún Laoghaire HSE Drug Distribution Centre keeps patients, through no fault of their own, in a catatonic state indefinitely.



Has Ms Faye, head of the clinic, any medical or addiction Counselling Qualifications?



Patients are warehoused from as far away as Wexford.

stop it Now!

PLEASE POST THIS CARD

Lee Varadkar,

Minister for Health,

Hankins House, Hankins Street,

Dublin 2, Ireland

  
dlrpa

Issued by Dún Laoghaire Rate-Payers Association

UK Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs  
report on AIDS and Drug Misuse;

“the spread of HIV is a greater danger to  
individual and public health than drug misuse”  
(ACMD.1988).

# National AIDS Strategy Committee

“any strategy to deal with the problem of HIV transmission must pay particular attention to the drug user as a prime source of infection. In order to do this, services must be provided in a community based, client friendly, comprehensive and integrated manner”(1992)

The report also endorsed the findings of the Government Strategy to Prevent Drug Misuse (1991), which recommended treatment of drug users in their communities by GPs after stabilization

The Irish Government's response to the situation was to implement a change in policy direction regarding drug treatment from psychiatric led, centralized services based in an abstinence philosophy to community based services delivered by GPs practicing locally from a harm reduction perspective.



The Methadone Protocol scheme which has been in place since 1998 is proving very successful in engaging community GPs and Pharmacists in the treatment of drug users. It would appear from the numbers participating since Oct. 1998 and the constant expansion of the system that there will be ample treatment capacity in the community to cater for increased numbers if needed in the future.

(See the attached report for MDP 2001)

Distribution of Level 2 GPs=Direct Access to GP treatment

Total...63.

Number Outside Dublin...10

Grand-fathered/mothered (pre protocol)...49

New Level 2GPs (since 1998)...14





## Opioid Treatment Protocol Review, Prof Michael Farrell (2010).

- Recommended development of a governance structure in Addiction Services.
- Recommended change in the focus on testing for drug use and a move to broader criteria in assessment of patient progress.
- Recommended development of new treatment guidelines.

DR SAKET PRIYADARSHI 2012

“The criteria are seen as inappropriate- not currently evidence based, not conforming to practice in most other countries, with practice in other areas, inflexible and in some cases may be restrictive to recovery and person centred care. They are based on the 2008 guidelines but not consistent with current evidence base. These findings relate most to weekly appointments, frequency of urine testing and dosing limitation of methadone to 80mg/day. Criteria measuring patient outcomes are not part of the audit and we agree with this view of the vast majority of stakeholders.”

# Present situation

- Limited or no local access to treatment.
- Abstinence based treatment models
- Absence of evidence based peer reviewed treatment guidelines.
- Lack of governance structures in Addiction services.

# Home News

## Fears raised over potent cannabis

### Drug adviser warns over grow-house crops

**CONOR LALLY**  
Crime Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT'S leading adviser on illegal drugs has expressed concern about the high potency of cannabis being cultivated in cannabis grow-houses here, saying it is much more likely to cause psychosis than other forms of the drug.

The chairman of the National Advisory Committee on Drugs, Dr Des Corrigan, said the levels of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the substance that gives cannabis its potency, are much higher in the cannabis "skunk" now being grown here.

He was aware that those growing the crops were mixing THC chemicals into water being used to water the plants, and this was greatly increasing the potency. The same issue arose when cannabis grow-houses became popular in Britain midway through the last decade.

found in other cannabis, like cannabis resin, is in fact anti-psychotic, and this is absent from the skunk cannabis here, which contains pro-psychotic THC," he told *The Irish Times*.

Dr Corrigan yesterday appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children, where drug use, including alcohol, was being discussed.

As well as chairing the drugs advisory body, Dr Corrigan is also the director of the school of pharmacy at Trinity College Dublin.

He said an advisory subcommittee on emerging trends around drug use had also noticed an increase in the number of young people accruing financial debts relating to their use of cannabis skunk from grow-houses.

The potency and consumption of the drug had increased to such an extent since cannabis grow-houses were first discovered here three years ago that the drugs body is now researching cannabis

would be published late this year, Dr Corrigan said.

Minister of State Róisín Shortall, who has responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy, has said she is concerned at the increasing grow-house phenomenon and the higher potency levels of the cannabis being produced in them.

She told the committee that gardaí had been successful in uncovering many of them and that the problem was not confined to the Republic, but was a feature in many European countries.

The Garda National Drugs Unit has set up a dedicated investigation, Operation Nitrogen, to combat the problem.

Officers working on the investigation have become the most prolific gardaí combating organised crime, finding scores of grow-houses to date.

The first grow-houses in the Republic appeared in Co Monaghan in 2008. Once dominated by Asian gangs, more and more Irish



"Arthur Guinness" leads the celebration at 17.59 in the Latin Quarter in Galway, where thousands turned out to celebrate Arthur's Day. Photograph: Reg Gordon

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He was aware that those growing the crops were mixing THC chemicals into water being used to water the plants, and this was greatly increasing the potency. The same issue arose when cannabis grow-houses became popular in Britain midway through the last decade.

"We also know that a substance called CBD [cannabidiol] that is

found in other cannabis, like cannabis resin, is in fact anti-psychotic, and this is absent from the skunk cannabis here, which contains pro-psychotic THC," he told *The Irish Times*.

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The findings of the research

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The first grow-houses in the Republic appeared in Co Monaghan in 2008. Once dominated by Asian gangs, more and more Irish suspects are being arrested as grow-houses are being uncovered.