

Alcohol Use Disorder and Treatment in Ontario Between 2011 and 2013

A Brief Report by the Ontario Drug Policy Research Network

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The study was approved by the research ethics board of Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

OBJECTIVE

This report aims to provide preliminary data on the use of first-line medications for Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) among public drug plan beneficiaries with a diagnosis of AUD in Ontario.

METHODS

SETTING

We conducted a retrospective cohort study among individuals aged 18 and older who were eligible for the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program and who had a hospital visit (inpatient or emergency department) with an AUD diagnosis between April 2011 and March 2013.

STUDY DRUGS

First-line AUD medications: Naltrexone and Acamprosate.

DATA SOURCES

Information regarding a diagnosis for AUD was abstracted from the Canadian Institute for Health Information Discharge Abstract Database (CIHI-DAD) and the National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (CIHI-NACRS). Public drug plan eligibility status and prescription claims for first-line AUD medications were obtained from the ODB database. The Registered Persons Database (RPDB) was used to make cohort exclusions. These datasets were linked using unique encoded identifiers and analyzed at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES).

KEY FINDINGS

Between April 2011 and March 2013, 16,212 individuals eligible for the ODB program with an AUD diagnosis were identified. Of these, 0.22% (N=36) were dispensed a prescription for a first-line AUD medication within a year of their diagnosis.

CONCLUSIONS

A small proportion of individuals with a hospital AUD diagnosis receive a first-line AUD medication within a year. Further research is needed to describe characteristics of these individuals more thoroughly.