

## Assessment of patient knowledge and awareness of the occurrence of addiction

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## Summary

**Introduction.** Drug treatment and substance abuse treatment centers are mostly involved in the treatment of alcohol or drug addicts. At present, an increasing number of patients depend on several psychoactive substances simultaneously. These people have a phenomenon called mixed addiction.

**Aim.** The aim of the study was an attempt to answer the question about the state of mind of psychiatric hospital patients about the occurrence of addiction.

**Material and methods.** The study included a group of 100 patients in the Neuropsychiatric Hospital's Neuropsychiatric Ward and the SPZOZ Psychiatric Day Ward in Kraśnik. The survey was conducted between February and August 2017. The author's questionnaire method was fully anonymous.

**Results.** Misuse of psychoactive substances is a serious social problem. The phenomenon of addiction is more common among men living in rural areas, working professionally in the age range of 31 to 40 years. The respondents acknowledge that their knowledge of narcotics is based on their experience and their friends.

**Conclusion.** Respondents are aware of the occurrence of mixed dependency.

**Keywords:** Mixed addiction, psychoactive substances, drug treatment.

## Introduction

Drug treatment and substance abuse treatment centers are mostly involved in the treatment of alcohol or drug addicts. At present, an increasing number of patients depend on several psychoactive substances simultaneously. These people have a phenomenon called mixed addiction.

Addiction according to the American Society of Addiction Medicine is a chronic disease of the system of reward, motivation, memory, and related areas of the brain. These disorders lead to changes in both biological, psychological, social and spiritual nature, resulting in individual, pathological coercion of receiving rewards and / or relief after adoption or behavior. [1]

Mixed dependency is the phenomenon of alternating psychoactive substances from the same or different groups. You can use them as replacements, but also to increase and accelerate the operation. Mixed addiction is said to occur when a pattern of substituting or combining substance data is frequent and constant. The importance of problems resulting from excessive and incorrect consumption of alcohol in Poland is significant, both in the context of health and social effects [2]. Also, the problem of abuse of psychoactive substances raises many health problems for man. It leads to negative consequences on the physical and mental level, which contributes to lowering the quality of life. And also on the level of social and family functioning contributes to emotional and economic problems, due to rising medical costs caused by an increasing number of addicts.

In Poland, the division of psychoactive substances into three main groups:

- alcohol, opiates, sedatives and sleeping pills (mainly relaxing, sedative, hypnotic)
- cannabinoids and other hallucinogenic substances, volatile solvents (mainly euphoric, causing hallucinations, delusions); cocaine and other stimulants, nicotine (stimulant, mood enhancing).

**Table 1. Distribution of psychoactive substances.**

Depressed CNS	ethyl alcohol, barbiturates, benzodiazepines	They reduce the signs of central nervous system activity
CNS stimulants	amphetamine, methamphetamine, cocaine	stimulate central nervous system action
Opioids	morphine, codeine, tebain, semisynthetic and synthetic opioids	primarily analgesic, euphoric action
Cannabinoids	marijuana, hashish	dose-dependent inhibitory / stimulant effect
Hallucinogens	hallucinogenic mushrooms, synthetic preparations (ecstasy)	They cause hallucinations, hallucinations, delusions

The ICD - 10 classification distinguishes mental disorders and behavior from the following psychoactive substances:

- alcohol
- opiates
- kanabinoli
- sedative and hypnotic medicines
- cocaine
- other than cocaine stimulants, including caffeine
- hallucinogenic substance
- tobacco
- volatile solvents
- using several psychoactive substances or substances other than those listed above.

In Poland, alcohol is predominant. The use of other psychoactive substances is as follows:

- Stationary medicine:
- First place - mixed addiction (several psychoactive substances)
- II - opiates about 20%
- III - tranquilizers and hypnotics about 11%
- IV - stimulants (amphetamine) ca. 8%
- V - cannabinole 3%
- VI - inhalation ca. 2%
- VII - cocaine 0.6%

People who take several substances at the same time are exposed to a synergistic effect.

By using various psychoactive substances, it is important to have awareness of cross-tolerance. The phenomenon is that increasing tolerance for one type of psychoactive substance may be accompanied by an increase in tolerance for another drug that is not consumed. This situation usually only applies to drugs from the same pharmacological group.

### **Aim**

The aim of the study was an attempt to answer the question about the state of mind of patients in psychiatric hospital about the occurrence of addiction.

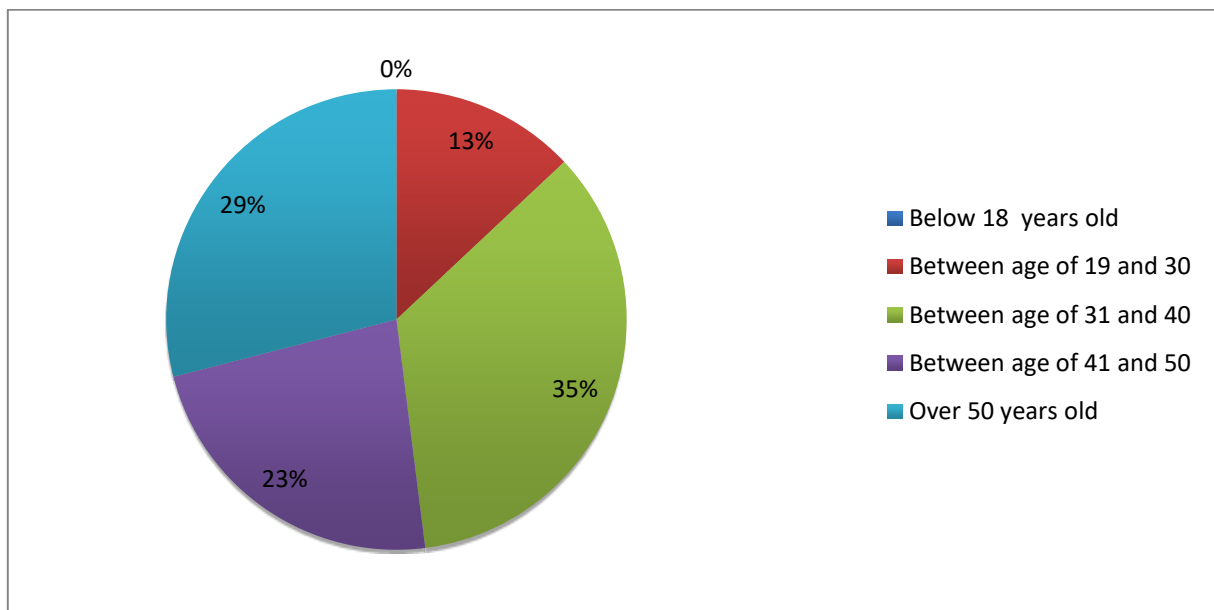
## Material and methods

The study included 100 patients, 84 men and 16 women. The study group consisted of patients of the Neuropsychiatric Hospital's Department of Neuropsychiatry and the Psychiatric Day Care Unit in Kraśnik. The survey was conducted between February and August 2017. The author's questionnaire method was fully anonymous. Answering the 10 questions included in the questionnaire was voluntary, respondents could at any time refuse to participate in the survey. The survey was divided into two parts. The first part contained the characteristics of the research group. The questions in this section concerned age, gender, education, occupational status and place of residence. The second part contained questions about respondents' knowledge about addictions and psychoactive substances. The questionnaire consisted of closed questions, 8 single and 2 multiple choice.

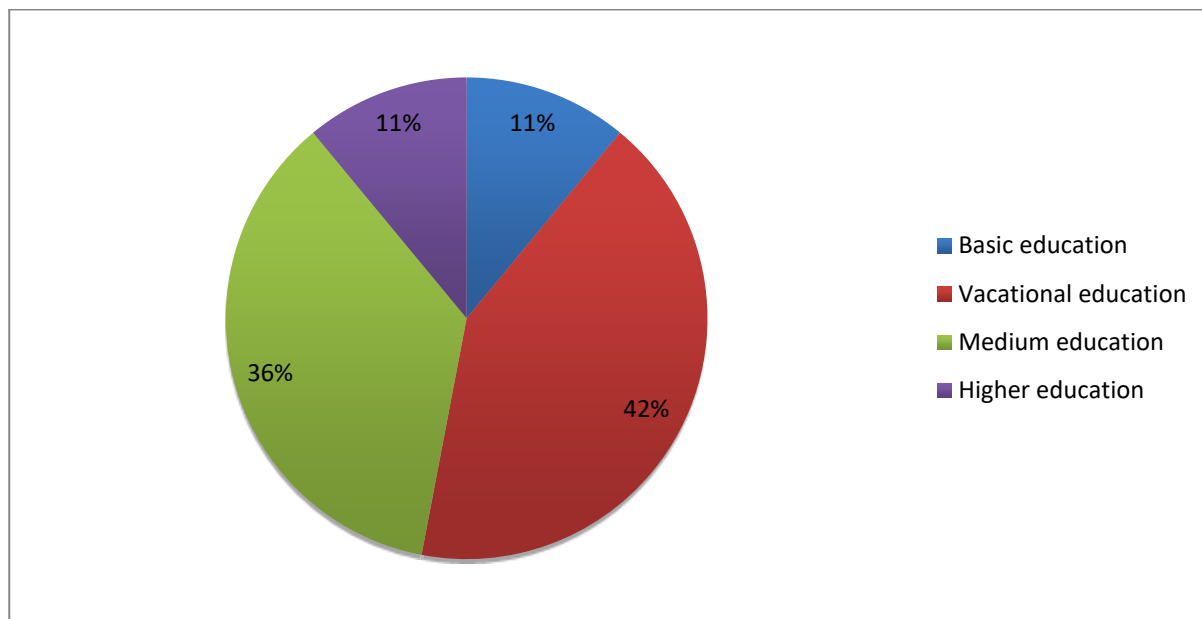
## Results

The age of the surveyed patients in 35% ranged from 31-40 years, people aged 50+ accounted for 29%, 23% were between 41 and 50 years of age, and 13% were 19-30.

**Figure 1. Age.**

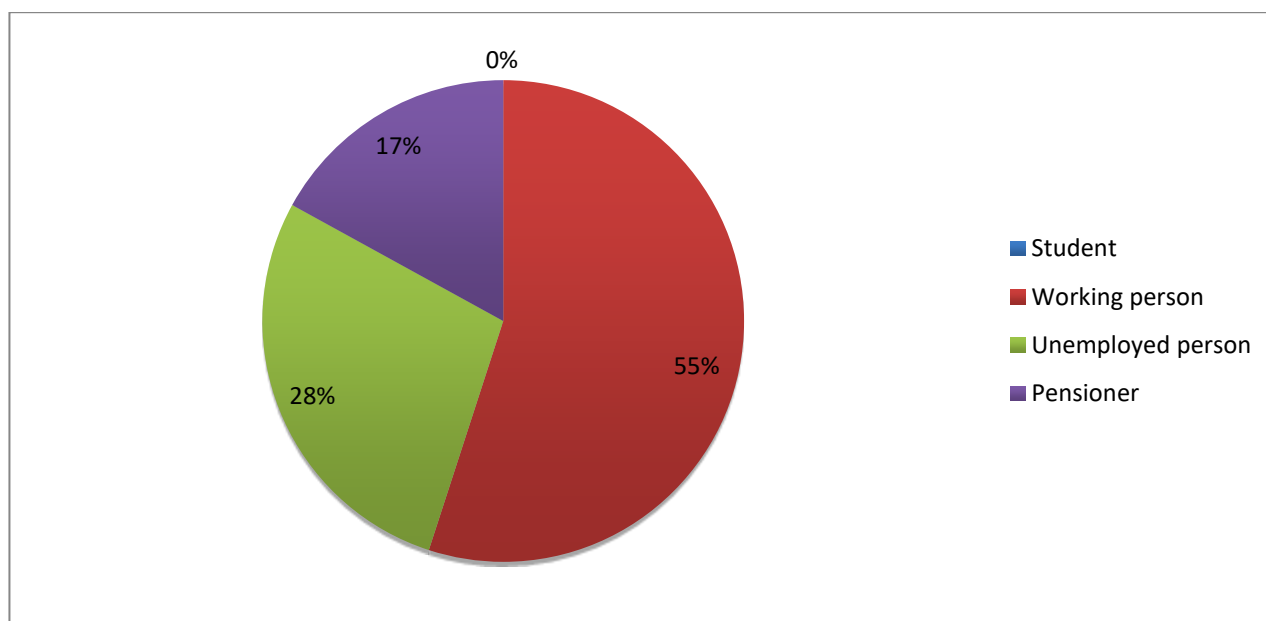


**Figure 2. Education of the surveyed patients.**



Age ranges of respondents enrolled In terms of education, 42% were people with vocational education, 36% with medium, 11% with higher and basic education. 55% of respondents were active, 28% were unemployed, and 17% were pensioners.

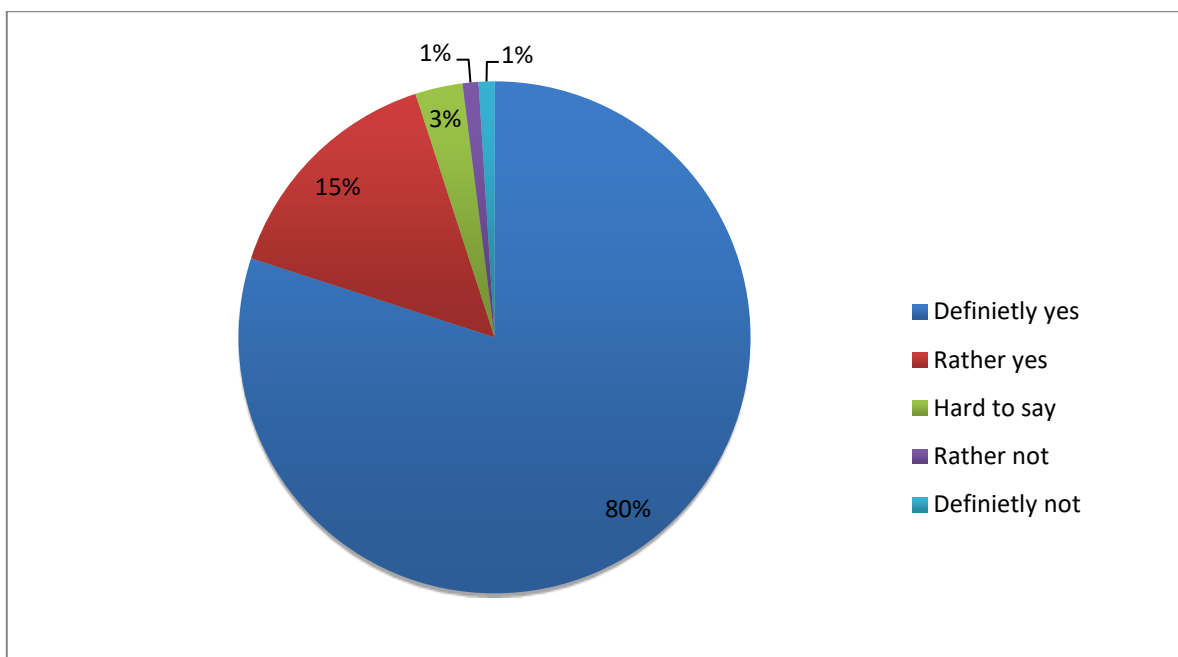
**Figure 3. Professional status of the respondents.**



The 73% of the respondents declared that they knew what the mixed dependency was. Questions about the substance of the addiction and sources of addiction knowledge were questions of multiple choice. 93% of respondents indicated that it was a disease, 20% did not, 19% said it was a strong need to take some substance. The smallest number of respondents believe that there is a way of life and a problem for young people. One person stated that addiction is due to lack of activities. The

surveyed knowledge about addictions in 60% derive from their own experience, 38% from friends, 32% from the internet, 30% from scientific articles, 21% from television and radio, and 9% from family. 81% of the respondents claim that they know what a psychoactive substance is. Most of the respondents, ie 80%, believe that the phenomenon of abuse of psychoactive substances is a serious social problem, while 1% argue that this is not a significant problem. By analyzing the answers in terms of residence, people living in rural areas accounted for 44%, urban areas 56%, including cities up to 50 thousand. residents as much as 22%.

**Figure 4. Misuse of psychoactive substances as a social problem.**



## Discussion

The 2002 National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Centers shows that nearly half of the more than one million people treated for addiction depend on more than one psychoactive substance. 'Finding a person who is struggling with just one addiction is like finding a dinosaur. Most people are addicted to more than one substance, says Wayne Rushlow, licensed therapist and addiction consultant at Leominster (Mass.). According to a report prepared by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 48% of the 1,136 million people treated for addiction in 2002 were exposed to two types of addiction: alcohol and drugs.

The issue of using psychoactive substances other than alcohol and tobacco, starting from the first half of the nineties, has been repeatedly researched both locally and nationally. However, the research was mainly limited to schoolchildren. Recent research on a nationwide sample of representative youth of higher education was implemented in 2007 [3]. Their results showed a significant range of experimentation with psychoactive substances, both illegal and legal. Already earlier national

research undertaken in the nineties pointed to the increase in the prevalence of these substances. The lack of research among adults was due to the conviction of little interest in these older generations. Both qualitative data, such as the colloquial observation of social life, clearly pointed to the lack of acceptance of drugs among the adult population.

Survey data among adult residents of large European metropolis indicate a significant level of prevalence of drug use, mainly cannabis. The increasing problem of abuse of psychoactive substances has serious social consequences. The costs incurred by local government units are constantly increasing due to the increasing number of hospitalizations of patients addicted to both alcohol and other intoxicants. The importance of issues related to excessive or harmful alcohol consumption has been highlighted for many years by European governments, including: operating under the so-called. Healthy European Cities, eg London, as one of the priorities for local health strategies [4].

The World Health Organization is the most active international organization on alcohol policy issues. The European Bureau has been taking initiatives to reduce harm in 52 Member States for years [5]. In the publications most attention is paid to the escalation of politoxykomania in Poland, but the information about the phenomenon ends only on the statement of this fact [6,7].

## **Conclusions**

The questionnaire survey conducted among patients of the Neuropsychiatric Hospital Department of Neuropsychiatry in Lublin and the Department of Psychiatric Daycare in Kraśnik from February to August 2017 showed that:

1. The problem of addiction is more common among men than among women.
2. Dependence on psychoactive substances is present in the adult world visibly at the level of the voivodeship. Their users are also old people.
3. Problem related to the use of psychoactive substances is more common among people with vocational education than the higher.
4. People who depend on psychoactive substances are more likely to come from rural areas and small towns and most often they are working people.
5. Most respondents know the definition of mixed addiction and psychoactive substance.
6. The vast majority of respondents consider addiction to be a disease, a weak will, and a strong need to take a substance.
7. From sources of information on psychoactive drugs, addicts often report their own experience and friends.
8. According to the respondents, the phenomenon of abuse of psychoactive substances (alcohol, nicotine, drugs) is a serious social problem.





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