



European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

The EMCDDA Best Practice Portal

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Zagreb 26-27 September 2012

Best Practice Promotion

EU action plan EU Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012

...enhance the quality and effectiveness of drug demand reduction activities(...)

➤ Action 17

To develop, implement and exchange good practice guidelines/quality standards for prevention, treatment, harm reduction and rehabilitation interventions and services

➤ Action 19

To develop an EU consensus on minimum quality standards and bench-marks for prevention, treatment, harm reduction and rehabilitation interventions and services taking into account needs of specific groups and the work done at national and international level



EMCDDA

Best Practice Portal



European Monitoring Centre
for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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Best practice portal

Prevention

Evidence base

- Families
- School students
- Community members
- General population
- Methodology

Prevention standards and guidelines

Prevention projects in Europe (EDDRA)

Treatment

Evidence base

- Amphetamines users
- Cannabis users
- Cocaine users
- Opioid users
- Methodology

Treatment standards and guidelines

Treatment projects in Europe (EDDRA)

Harm reduction

Evidence base

- Opioid injectors
- Stimulant injectors
- Non-injecting drug users
- Methodology

Harm reduction standards and guidelines

Harm reduction projects in Europe (EDDRA)

General best practice tools and resources

Standards and guidelines

Exchange on Drug Demand Reduction Action (EDDRA)

Best practice portal

The EMCDDA's Best practice portal is a resource for professionals, policymakers and researchers in the areas of drug-related prevention, treatment, harm reduction and social reintegration. The portal concentrates on illicit drugs and polydrug use and has a clear European focus. [More information >>](#)

Available modules

The content in the portal is structured by thematic modules. Each module below provides the current scientific evidence base for the corresponding type of intervention.

Prevention: [families](#) | [school students](#) | [community members](#) | [general population](#)

Treatment: [amphetamines users](#) | [cannabis users](#) | [cocaine users](#) | [opioid users](#)

Harm reduction: [opioid injectors](#) | [stimulant injectors](#) | [non-injecting drug users](#)

Best practice resources

Standards and guidelines

This section compiles quality standards and guidelines for the implementation of practices.

EDDRA

The Exchange on Drug Demand Reduction Action (EDDRA) provides real-life examples of evaluated practices in the European Union.

EIB

The Evaluation Instruments Bank (EIB) is an online archive of freely available instruments for evaluating interventions.

OTHER RESOURCES

- Tools for evaluating practices

News and recent updates

- May 2012: Evidence updates on prevention interventions for alcohol misuse for school-students, families and communities >
- March 2012: Evidence updates on harm reduction interventions for opioid injectors >
- March 2012: Evidence updates on treatment interventions for opioid users >
- December 2011: European drug prevention quality standards published >

Collaborations



THE COCHRANE
COLLABORATION®



GRADE



DECIDE
Developing and Evaluating
Communication strategies to support
Informed Decisions and practice
based on Evidence



World Health
Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Europe

We are a source of
evidence for the WHO
Health Evidence Network
(HEN)

www.emcdda.europa.eu



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Harm reduction standards and guidelines

Harm reduction projects

Best practice portal:

Treatment options for opioid users

This page refers to the current evidence on the effectiveness of the available treatment options for opioid users. We refer here to the broad family of opioids including heroin, fentanyl, morphine, etc. Information on the methodology used and the definition of terms can be found on the [methodology page](#).

Date of last update: 28.07.2011. **Next update:** March 2012.

About opioid use

Case definition [\[+\]](#)

Aetiology [\[+\]](#)

Prevalence [\[+\]](#)

Treatment [\[+\]](#)

Outcomes [\[+\]](#)

Primary outcomes [\[+\]](#)

Prognosis [\[+\]](#)

References [\[+\]](#)

Ongoing trials [\[+\]](#)

Observational studies [\[+\]](#)

Available treatments for opioid users – evidence base

Summary: The current available evidence strongly supports opioid agonist maintenance treatment, combined with psychosocial assistance for keeping patients in treatment and reducing illicit opioid use, and mortality.

Note: The GRADE symbol [GRADE](#) indicates that a GRADE profile is available for the intervention. [Learn more about GRADE](#).

Beneficial

Methadone maintenance therapy [\[+\]](#)

Buprenorphine maintenance therapy [\[+\]](#)

Psychosocial interventions in maintenance treatment [\[+\]](#)

Psychosocial assistance in addition to pharmacological assistance for opioid withdrawal [\[+\]](#)

Case management for reducing drug use [\[+\]](#)

Opioid assisted withdrawal with buprenorphine [\[+\]](#)

Likely to be beneficial

Naltrexone for preventing relapse [\[+\]](#)

Maintenance agonist treatments for opiate dependent pregnant women [\[+\]](#)

Psychosocial interventions to retain patients in treatment [\[+\]](#)

Trade-off between benefits and harms

Heroin maintenance treatment for chronic heroin users [\[+\]](#)

Note: The GRADE symbol [GRADE](#) indicates that a GRADE profile is available for the intervention. [Learn more about GRADE](#).

Beneficial

Methadone maintenance therapy [\[+\]](#)

Buprenorphine maintenance therapy [\[+\]](#)

Psychosocial interventions in maintenance treatment [\[+\]](#)

Psychosocial assistance in addition to pharmacological assistance for opioid withdrawal [\[+\]](#)

Case management for reducing drug use [\[+\]](#)

Opioid assisted withdrawal with buprenorphine [\[+\]](#)

Likely to be beneficial

Naltrexone for preventing relapse [\[+\]](#)

Maintenance agonist treatments for opiate dependent pregnant women [\[+\]](#)

Psychosocial interventions to retain patients in treatment [\[+\]](#)

Trade-off between benefits and harms

Heroin maintenance treatment for chronic heroin users [\[+\]](#)

Unknown effectiveness

Naltrexone in place of methadone [\[+\]](#)

Assisted opioid withdrawal with methadone or alpha-2 agonists [\[+\]](#)

Assisted opioid withdrawal with methadone or buprenorphine [\[+\]](#)

Opioid withdrawal with antagonists under heavy sedation [\[+\]](#)

Opioid withdrawal with antagonists under minimal sedation [\[+\]](#)

Maintenance agonist treatments (methadone compared with buprenorphine) for opiate dependent pregnant women [\[+\]](#)

Pharmacological detoxification treatment for adolescent opioid users [\[+\]](#)

Therapeutic communities for the treatment of drug misuse and dependency [\[+\]](#)

Therapeutic communities in prison [\[+\]](#)

Evidence of ineffectiveness

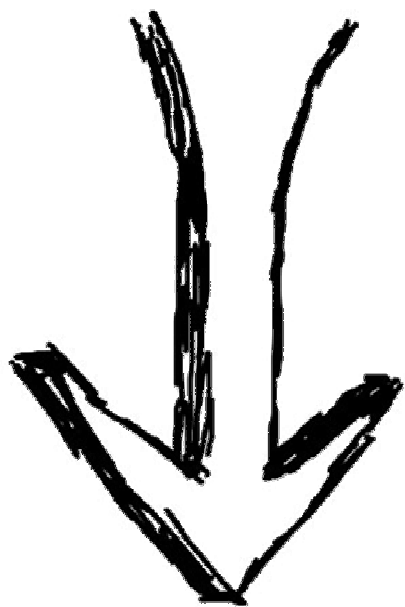
Opioid withdrawal with antagonists under heavy sedation [\[+\]](#)

References and definitions

List of references [\[+\]](#)

Dissemination of scientific evidence

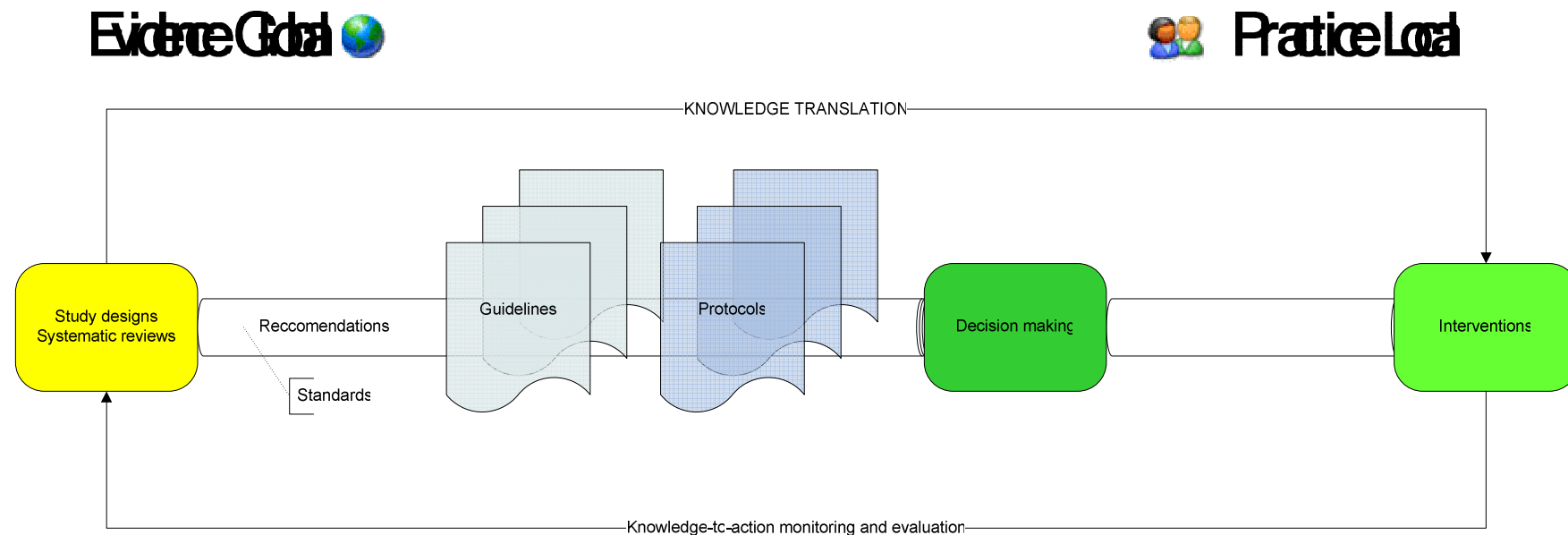
Ranking of evidence according to the level of
expected impact on patients



Beneficial	suitable for most patients
Likely to be beneficial	suitable for most patients, with some discretion
Trade-off between benefits and harms	limitations or adverse effects need to be assessed before providing the intervention to patients
Unknown effectiveness	interventions without clear proofs of effectiveness
Evidence of ineffectiveness	interventions that gave negative results when compared to a placebo. Not recommended.

Knowledge translation and implementation

- Instruments for the improvement of quality
- Contribute to transfer evidence into practice
- Knowledge translation science studies the theories and the processes to transform knowledge into results



Inventory of European guidelines and standards

www.emcdda.europa

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Evaluation Instruments Bank (EIB)

Glossary of best practice terms



Standards and guidelines for practices

Introduction

Prevention

Treatment

Harm reduction

What are quality standards and guidelines for practices?

This section compiles quality standards and guidelines for the implementation of practices. The aim is to provide an overview on available standards and guidelines in EU Member States.

Quality standards and guidelines aim at improvement of quality and effectiveness of interventions.

Guidelines

Guidelines Guidelines are "statements that include recommendations intended to optimize patient care that are informed by a systematic review of evidence and an assessment of the benefits and harms of alternative care options" (Institute of Medicine, 2011). They are aimed designed to assist carers' and clients' decisions about appropriate interventions in specific circumstances.

Quality standards

Standards and quality standards are principles and sets of rules based on evidence used to implement the interventions recommended in guidelines. They can refer to content issues, processes, or to structural (formal) aspects of quality assurance, such as environment and staffing composition.

Other terms

Protocols are documents that specify the procedures to follow to perform some tasks, typically those used to conduct a study.

Clinical pathways are structured, multidisciplinary plans of care designed to support the implementation of clinical guidelines and protocols.

Guidance is a general term that covers documents such as guidelines and quality standards.

Benchmarking is the process of comparing service processes and performance metrics to best practices from other services. Dimensions typically measured are quality, time and cost.

Accreditation is the process by which an institution delivering a service is independently assessed for quality against some pre-defined criteria. Accreditation requires a set of minimum standards, which are set by the accrediting body.

Adaptation of existing standards and guidelines

Quality standards and guidelines should be seen within the context in which they were developed. When applying existing standards and guidelines, these must always be checked for validity and, if necessary, adapted locally. To adapt guidelines (The ADAPTE Collaboration, 2011) to a specific context requires that a local group of stakeholders identify specific questions, searching for, retrieving and assessing available guidelines, and preparing the draft adapted guideline.

ADAPTE collaboration (2011). *The ADAPTE process: resource toolkit for guideline adaptation* (version 2.0 - <http://www.g-i-n.net>)

Institute of Medicine (2011). *Clinical practice guidelines we can trust*, The National Academies Press, Washington, DC.

Study on the Development of an EU Framework for minimum quality standards and benchmarks in drug demand reduction (EQUS)

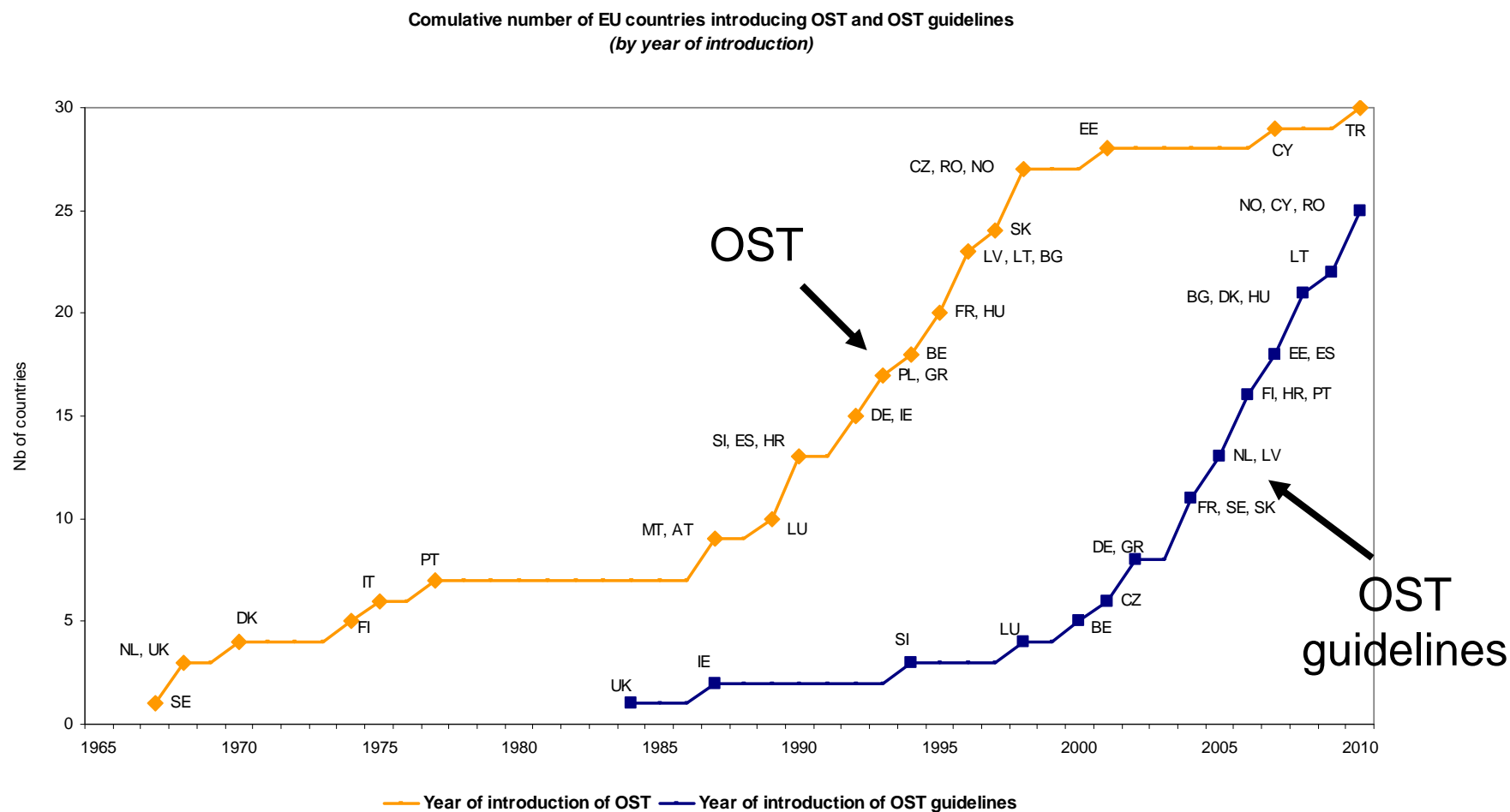
The EU drugs action plan 2009–12 tasks the European Commission — in cooperation with the EMCDDA — to develop a European consensus on minimum quality standards and benchmarks in the field of drug demand reduction. Over 120 stakeholders — including policymakers, practitioners, NGOs and researchers — met in Brussels from 15–17 June 2011. The event analysed the initial findings of the EQUS study and, among the themes addressed, there was the translation of standards into practice and overcoming barriers to implementation. Stakeholder feedback was incorporated into the final study report due in December 2011. The European Commission will draw on the study's recommendations to propose an EU consensus on minimum quality standards in drug demand reduction planned for 2013.

EU drug treatment guidelines

- Body of evidence on the treatment of drug dependence developed since the 1980s
- Growing interest in, and understanding of the effectiveness of interventions 1990s



Opioid substitution treatment



Current European situation

Best Practice Portal

- 145 treatment guidelines
- 23 prevention guidelines
- 16 harm reduction guidelines



EU drug treatment guidelines



European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

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Recent publications

Summary of the 2011 ESPAD report
May 2012
This is a summary of the 2011 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) which aims to collect comparable data on substance use among 15–16 year-old European students in order to monitor trends within as well as between countries.

1 2 3 4 5 6 Pause

Spotlight

Reitox network of national focal points
The key epidemiological indicators

Drug profiles

European legal database on drugs

EMCDDA publications

Best practice portal

Leading experts to review global developments in new drugs and 'legal highs'
(07.06.2012) The United States National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the EU drugs agency (EMCDDA) bring together leading US, European and international experts this week to take stock of the global 'new drugs' phenomenon. In the framework of the 2012 NIDA International Forum, taking place in Palm Springs (CA) from 8–11 June, the organisations will co-host the Second interdisciplinary forum on new and emerging psychoactive substances gathering over 300 participants from 72 countries. [Continue reading »](#)

New ESPAD study shows overall stable drug use among school students and a reduction in 'heavy episodic drinking', but no decrease in cigarette smoking
(31.05.2012) Overall, the use of illicit drugs among 15–16-year-old school students appears to have stabilised, according to the latest European study of this group published today by the European school survey project on alcohol and other drugs (ESPAD). The report, based on a 2011 survey in 36 European countries, also reveals a reduction in 'heavy episodic drinking' (five drinks or more per occasion). But the survey highlights country differences and the need for vigilance where cannabis, inhalant and tobacco use has been seen to rise. [Continue reading »](#)

EMCDDA and UNODC sign joint work plan
(02.05.2012) Cooperation between the EMCDDA and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) took a further step forward today with the adoption of a new joint work programme for the period 2012–14. Meeting in Vienna, EMCDDA Director Wolfgang Götz and UNODC Deputy Executive Director Sandeep Chawla endorsed the document, which supplements the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two agencies in 1998. The talks covered joint projects, priority areas of work and the evolving drug situation in Europe and worldwide. [Continue reading »](#)

EMCDDA-Europol Annual report reviews new drugs entering market
New drugs detected in the EU at the rate of around one per week, say agencies

Events
2012 NIDA International program awards of excellence (08.06.2012) EMCDDA Scientific director, Paul Griffiths, M.Sc., has been selected as a winner of the 2012 United States National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) International Program Awards of Excellence. »

Events
First EMCDDA Reitox week (24.05.2012) The EMCDDA will open up the May meeting of the Reitox network of national focal points to its partners from: Candidate and Potential Candidate countries to the EU; Eastern and Southern Partnerships countries; and Russia. »

Events
European summer school 'Illicit drugs in Europe: supply, demand and public policies' is open until 15.06.2012. The summer school programme is organised by the Lisbon-based Instituto Superior das Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (ISCTE) and the EMCDDA. »

Events
World TB Day 2012 (24.03.2012) (23.03.2012) World TB Day raises awareness about the global epidemic of tuberculosis (TB) and efforts to eliminate the disease. Due to marginalisation and lifestyle, drug users face

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- Google: 'EMCDDA' and 'Best practice'