

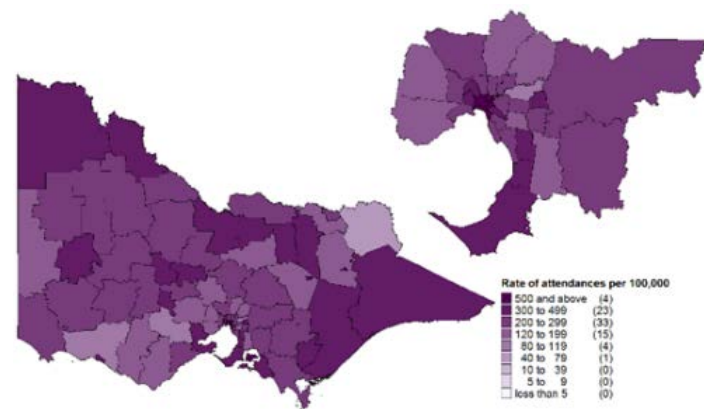
Examining ambulance attendances across the lifespan: acute alcohol-related attendances across metropolitan and regional Victoria

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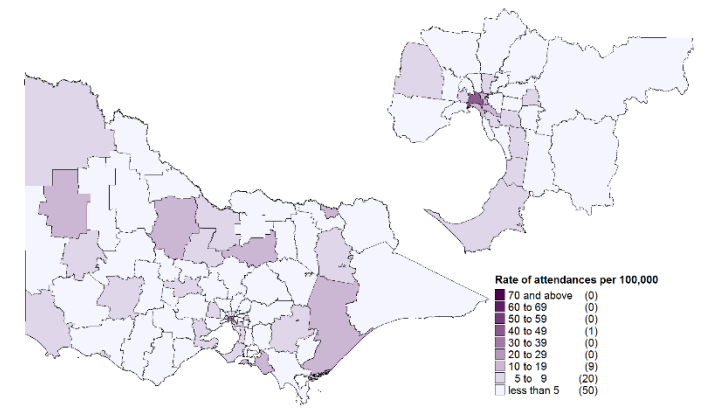
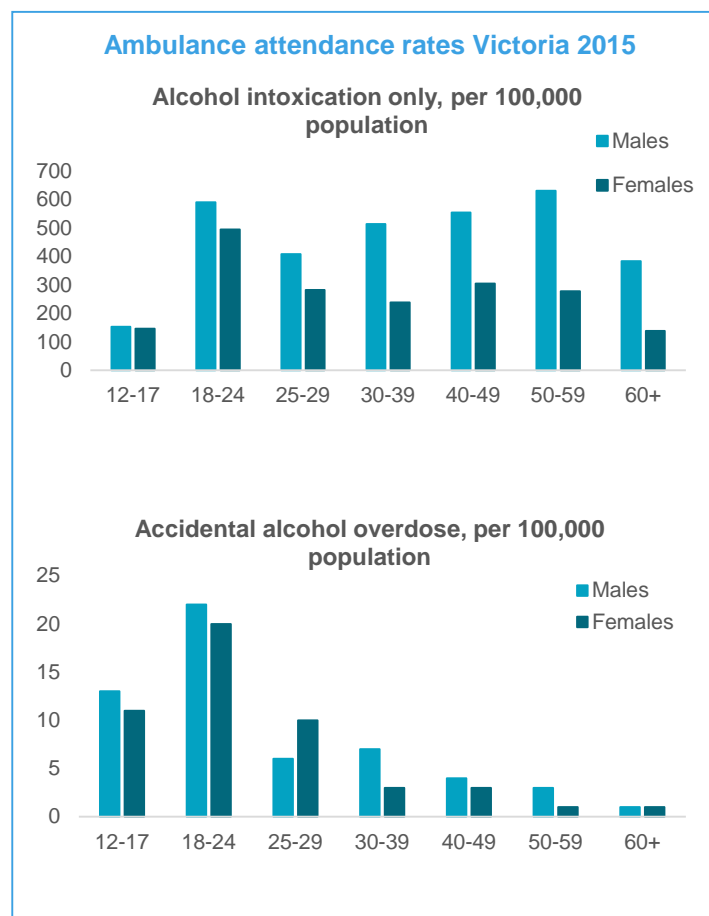
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Rates of alcohol intoxication only per 100,000 population, Victoria 2015



Rates of accidental alcohol overdoses per 100,000 population, Victoria 2015

Introduction

Harms associated with acute alcohol consumption are significant in terms of community concern, and the economic and social costs.

The Ambo Project utilizes detailed records of ambulance attendances across Victoria, providing an objective measure of the impact of acute alcohol consumption on services and individuals across all age groups, which has previously been lacking in alcohol research.

This poster explores recent patterns of alcohol intoxication (only) and accidental alcohol (only) overdose-related ambulance attendances across age groups, including data from metropolitan and regional areas of Victoria. Accidental alcohol overdoses are of interest as a way of distinguishing more acute cases of alcohol use; above and beyond intoxication.

A number of known determinants contribute to the levels of short-term harm associated with excessive alcohol use, including the physical environment and context in which people drink. Thus, the effects of seasonality, location and social contexts on alcohol-related ambulance attendances are explored in this poster.

Method

Data has been derived from the Ambo Project: Alcohol and Drug Related Ambulance Attendances; a collaborative project between Turning Point and Ambulance Victoria, and is funded by Victorian Department of Health and Human Services.

Data presented relates to all relevant ambulance attendances occurring in metropolitan and regional areas of Victoria. 2015 was the most recent full calendar year of data available for analyses and includes presentations for alcohol intoxication only as distinguished from attendances that involve other drugs. Attendances for alcohol intoxication only were identified, and accidental alcohol overdoses form a subset of this group.

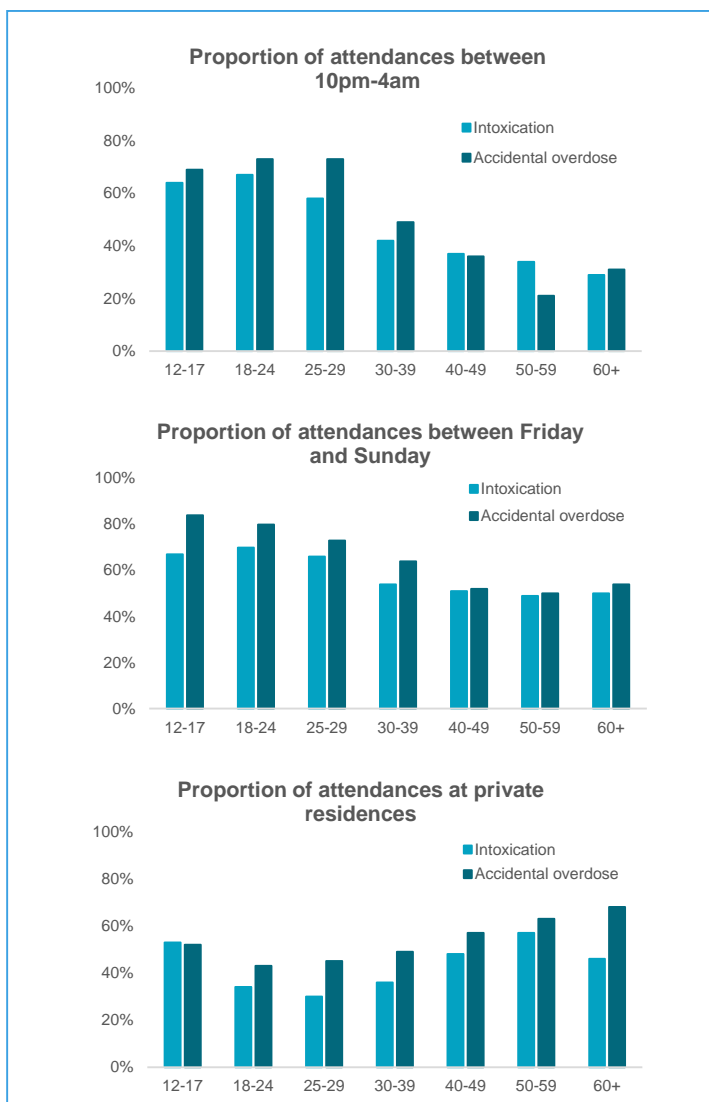
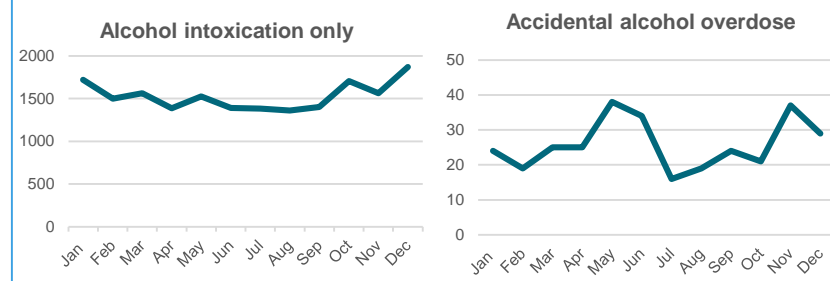
Definitions:

Alcohol intoxication only refers to the immediate or recent over or inappropriate ingestion of alcohol and where the assessment of causality is that only alcohol was involved in causing the attendance.

- **Alcohol (only) overdose** form a subset of the above group, representing attendances related to more acute cases of alcohol intoxication which often involve a life threatening situation. This is determined by details provided of the clinical assessment of the patient.
- **Accidental alcohol (only) overdose**, as referred to hereinafter, takes into account the intent of the overdose. Only those patients which had no intention of suicide are included in the data presented.

Results are presented as rates (per 100,000 population), proportions or numbers of ambulance attendances related to acute alcohol use, by age group. Seasonality, location and social context of acute alcohol presentations are explored by examining numbers of monthly attendances, proportion of attendances between 10pm and 4am, between Friday and Sundays (weekends) and proportions occurring at private residences.

Number of attendances by month, Victoria 2015



Results and Discussion

- In 2015, 18,101 alcohol intoxication only cases were recorded across Victoria, of which 311 cases were acute accidental alcohol overdoses
- Among males, rates of intoxication only-related attendances were highest among 50 to 59 year olds, while among females intoxication rates peaked among 18 to 24 year olds
- Rates of accidental alcohol overdoses were highest among 18 to 24 year olds for both males and females and decreased with age
- The number of alcohol intoxication only-related attendances peaked during the month of December, while cases of accidental alcohol overdoses peaked during May and November 2015
- Among those aged less than 30, the majority of alcohol intoxication and accidental overdose-related attendances occurred between 10pm and 4am, while among age groups 30 and above the majority of attendances occurred outside of these hours
- Among those aged less than 30, the majority of intoxication only and accidental alcohol overdose-related attendances occurred between Friday and Sundays
- The proportion of intoxication and accidental alcohol overdose attendances occurring at a private residence were lowest among the 18 to 24 and 25 to 29 year old age groups and peaked among the 50 to 59 year old group

Conclusions

The use of routinely collected ambulance data enables exploration of differing patterns of acute alcohol use and associated harms in populations not captured in other research.

These findings provide evidence for policy and prevention approaches to reduce harms and improve outcomes for individuals, communities and service providers.

Acknowledgments

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