

THE ROLE OF THE WORKPLACE IN WORKERS SEEKING TREATMENT FOR ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE: THE WORKERS' PERSPECTIVE

Mpofu, N¹, Dunn M^{1,2}

¹ School of Health and Social Development, Deakin University, ² NDARC, University of NSW

Introduction and Aims: Workplaces have been identified as a setting where harm minimization policies may be effective. However, the role that the workplace has on AOD use or treatment seeking behaviours remains unclear. The aim of this study was to gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations for workers who use AOD services regarding their work circumstances and treatment seeking behaviour.

Design and Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted with workers from the construction industry who had accessed services from a privately run, non-profit treatment centre. Those who had sought treatment in the past year were invited to complete an online, anonymous, survey. Questions included demographics, health status, treatment services, AOD use, and workplace schedules.

Results: Thirty-one participants completed the survey, including 24 men (mean age 41 years, range 24-60 years). One-third were attending treatment for alcohol addiction, with 16% each attending for alcohol addiction & gambling, drug addiction, or drug addiction & gambling. 'Difficulties at home with family or friends' was the most influential reason for seeking treatment, followed by 'difficulties at work'; 'concerns about workplace DOA testing' was the least influential reason. Families and friends were the greatest source of encouragement/pressure to enter treatment, with the least encouragement coming from coworkers. Two in three respondents indicated that their workplace did not have any AOD interventions in place.

Discussion and Conclusions: Availability of treatment services on its own does not guarantee treatment seeking behaviour, and can only be effective if users actively engage with service providers for treatment.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: The Australasian Professional Society for Alcohol and other Drugs (APSAD) recognises the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in all written publications.

The authors report no conflicts of interest.