

The BPSS and its implementation as a flexible, tiered model of psychological therapy running concurrently with those on LAIB treatment has shown promising results. Completion of Tier 1 with the BPSS is seen to be associated with lower rate of opiate use and increased likelihood of being free from all illicit drug use compared to those who have not engaged with the service.

Introduction

Working as a partial mu-opioid receptor agonist and kappa opioid antagonist, long acting injectable buprenorphine (LAIB – Buvidal™) is currently licensed for use as substitution treatment for opioid dependence. Prescribed as either as daily maintenance or prolonged released injection LAIB is available as weekly or monthly doses across Wales. With consistently high treatment satisfaction and significant retention rates, LAIB is well established as an opioid substitution therapy.

Buvidal Psychological Support Service (BPSS), works as a specialist organisation service in Cardiff, offering a tiered evidence-based support system for those on LAIB. It is a rapid access service, offering a phase based approach prioritising psychological stabilisation to those referred and ready to engage with psychological support.

Objectives

LAIB as an effective opioid substitution therapy is well recognised. Adopting a 3 tiered model, the BPSS implements psychological therapy concurrent with LAIB treatment. It has seen significant, sustained cost-effective outcomes.^{1,2}

Therefore the aim of this audit is to establish the impact of the BPSS for those on LAIB treatment. With the objective to analyse therapy status, retention on Buvidal opposed to alternative OST and coinciding illicit drug use other than opioids of those referred.

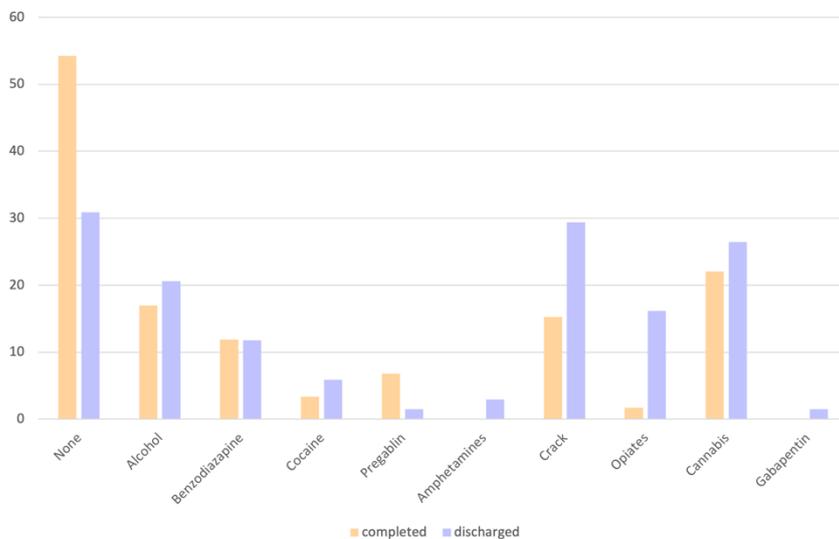
Aiming to therefore determine whether the completion of BPSS Tier 1 is associated with a decrease in long term opioid and overall illicit drug use.

Methods

This audit used the PARIS database to obtain data on 289 referrals thus far to the BPSS. Quantitative data on therapy status, date of initial and latest Buvidal dose and current substance use was obtained and analysed. Individualised chi-squared tests were conducted significance set to $p < 0.05$ to determine the association between completion and discharged. Qualitative data on the status of referrals was also obtained.

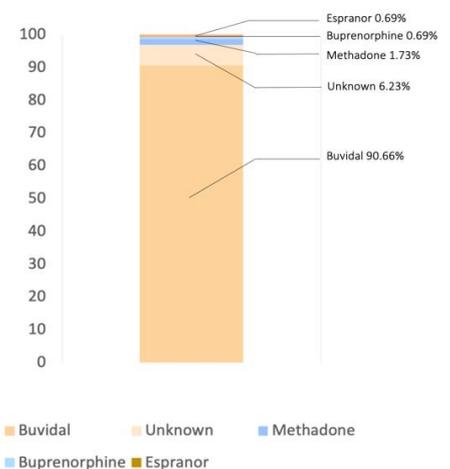
Results

Percentage of illicit drug among BPSS referrals



In order to determine the association between the completion of Tier 1 of the BPSS service and a reduction in illicit drug use an individualised chi-squared tests was conducted significance set to $p < 0.05$. Categorical data of each referral from the PARIS database was used to record individual illicit drug use. Data collected demonstrated significantly lower illicit opioid use (1.5% vs 10.5%, $p < 0.05$) and overall illicit drug use (48.4% vs 20.2%, $p < 0.05$) associated with those who completed Tier 1 of BPSS compared to those who have not engaged or were discharged from the service. Alcohol, benzodiazepine, cocaine, crack, cannabis and gabapentin use did not differ between those who completed Tier 1 to those discharged/not engaged ($p > 0.05$).

Opioid Substitution Therapies



Conclusion

Those on LAIB – Buvidal treatment as an opioid substitute medication can be referred to the BPSS. The BPSS offers a 3 tier based psychological support system, prioritising stabilisation. Of those referred retention on Buvidal as the opioid substitution treatment, is markedly higher than that of alternative OSTs (90.66%). Completion of the Tier 1 BPSS service can be associated with an increased likelihood of being free from illicit drug use and reduced opiates use.

Alcohol, benzodiazepine, cocaine, crack, cannabis and gabapentin use did not differ between those who completed Tier 1 compared to discharged, this could perhaps be associated with the lack differentiation between self-medication or recreational use. Regarding lack of certain referral data, this could most likely be due to inconsistencies from treatment locations, therefore further, more encompassing data from each location be beneficial. Despite this completion BPSS Tier 1 is can be strongly associated with a decreased like hood in illicit drug use, therefore long-term, more comprehensive research could be vital in reinforcing this potential.

References

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- Melichar J, James L, Greenwood R. An Evaluation of the Costs and Benefits of the New Psychological Support Service for Patients On Long-Acting Injectable Buprenorphine. *BJPsych Open*. 2024;10(51):S197-

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