

Methamphetamine Dependency Treatment: Topical Issues



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SUMMARY: *Methamphetamine (pervitin) has a unique position on the Czech drug scene. The problem use of this substance entails a range of health consequences, as well as having serious implications in terms of public health. The problem users of pervitin account for two thirds of all the problem drug users in the Czech Republic. Pervitin use-related indicators such as that of lifetime prevalence have been relatively stable in the Czech Republic, with the exception of the populations of adolescents and dance party-goers. As far as treatment is concerned, the users of pervitin comprise the largest group of drug users in treatment, and their number is slowly growing. In the Czech Republic, the treatment of pervitin dependency is exclusively oriented towards abstinence, and no major medication support may be expected as regards this type of dependency. Substitution treatment of methamphetamine users as a therapeutic alternative has been increasingly discussed abroad. The existing (approved) treatment approaches pursued in the Czech Republic do not include substitution treatment of dependency on pervitin and other stimulants. Foreign studies investigating the effectiveness of substitution treatment of those dependent on stimulants indicate promising, although not totally convincing, results. However, no rigorous randomized double-blind controlled multicentric clinical trial has been conducted. Substances with potential for substitution treatment include methylphenidate hydrochloride, modafinil, and dextroamphetamine. Products containing methylphenidate hydrochloride which have received marketing authorisation for the Czech Republic include Ritalin[®] and Concreta[®], and modafinil authorized as Modafinil-Teva[®].*

KEY WORDS: METHAMPHETAMINE – STIMULANTS – DEPENDENCY – SUBSTITUTION TREATMENT – CLINICAL TRIAL

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