



Alcohol-Drug Addiction Research, Treatment and Training Centers (AMATEM) in the Treatment of Substance Use Disorder

Madde Kullanım Bozukluğu Tedavisinde Alkol-Madde Bağımlılığı Araştırma, Tedavi ve Eğitim Merkezleri (AMATEM)

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Dear Editor,

Addiction is a brain disease that is manifested by compulsive substance use despite negative consequences (1, 2). People with addiction have an intense focus on using a certain substance, such as alcohol or drugs, to the point that it takes over their life (3, 4). They keep using alcohol or a drug even when they know it will cause problems. Yet a number of effective treatments are available and people can recover from addiction and lead normal, productive lives (5). Untreated alcohol and drug addiction continues to be a major health issue worldwide (6, 7). Addiction treatment is carried out in Alcohol-Drug Addiction Research, Treatment and Training Centers (AMATEM) in our country (8-10). Our aim in this paper is to provide general information about AMATEM, so that all clinicians will benefit.

AMATEM clinics have been serving since the 1980s in Turkey (8). These clinics serve for the termination of substance addiction and re-functioning of individuals (10, 11). There is no a standard treatment. Medical, psychological and social interventions are individual. The priority is to focus on patients' denial mechanisms (9). Patients are informed about possible negative consequences of addiction. In the treatment process, a combination of medication and individual or group therapy is most effective. Medications are used to control drug cravings and relieve severe symptoms of withdrawal. Therapy can help addicted individuals understand their behavior and motivations, develop higher self-esteem, cope with stress and address other mental health

problems. Treatment may also include hospitalization, therapeutic communities, outpatient programs. Motivational talks are held. Withdrawal symptoms may be indication for inpatient treatment. However, inpatient treatment is voluntary (8, 12). Post-discharge follow-up continues at AMATEM outpatient clinics (10, 13).

One of the leading institutions in the fight against addiction in our Turkey is Yeşilay. According to the data of Yeşilay, the number of AMATEM inpatient unit in the city centers is 31; the number of AMATEM outpatient unit is 27; the number of child substance addiction treatment center (ÇEMATEM) inpatient unit is 7; the number of ÇEMATEM outpatient unit is 7. Apart from these city centers, AMATEM units can be provided in some counties (e.g., Adıyaman Kahta State Hospital) (14). These centers are located in many different regions and cities of the country. It is appreciated that the social, economic and cultural variables of each region are different. These differences are reflected in substance use characteristics. Considering that AMATEM data shows regional changes, interventions based on regional differences will be beneficial. Also AMATEM data varies over time (8). For this reason, AMATEM data of the regions should be revealed regularly and compared with previous years. Various AMATEM findings are reached through the literature (9, 10). Based on these data, it is possible to make various comparisons. The mean age, gender, psychiatric diagnoses vary from region to region. The substance use characteristics of individuals determined by external factors. Over the years, the difficulties or conveniences experienced in achieving the substance, the state policy, the changes in the drug production areas, the

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market shares of the substances, the powers dominating the substance market are some conditions affecting the substance use orientation (8-10).

As a result, epidemiological studies are of great importance in the fight against substance abuse, which continues to be a serious public health problem. Sharing the findings of all AMATEM clinics regularly will increase the success of social interventions.

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