

## **GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF OPIOID PHARMACOTHERAPY TREATMENT IN AUSTRALIA**

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**Introduction and Aims:** Opioid drug use and dependence is connected to various social, emotional and economic costs that can be detrimental to our health and wellbeing. Opioid pharmacotherapy treatment seeks to mitigate these harms by alleviating withdrawal symptoms, reducing demand for drugs (such as heroin) and supporting the management and control of opioid addiction. This poster aims to investigate opioid pharmacotherapy treatment in Australia, including the geographic distribution of dosing points and trends over time.

**Design and Methods:** The analysis used data from the 2018 National Opioid Pharmacotherapy Statistics Annual Data (NOPSAD) collection. This collection compiles jurisdictional information about clients receiving pharmacotherapy treatment, the prescribers of pharmacotherapy drugs (methadone, buprenorphine and buprenorphine-naloxone) and dosing points where clients accessed treatment on a snapshot day each year.

**Results:** In 2018, there were approximately 51,000 opioid pharmacotherapy clients Australia-wide. Nationally, there were 2,852 dosing points in 2017–18, a steady increase since 2013–14 (2,432). In each of the five years to 2017–18, 89% of these were pharmacies. Dosing point sites across states and territories were mostly located in Major cities. However, when considering population rates, there were 13 dosing points per 100,000 population in Very remote areas, compared to 10 dosing points per 100,000 population in Major cities.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** The distribution of dosing point sites varies according to remoteness area and population rate. This generates useful insight about the accessibility and availability of pharmacotherapy treatment in Australia.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** Recognising the distribution of dosing point sites can help to inform evidence-based harm reduction strategies and optimise service provision

**Disclosure of interest statement:** The NOPSAD collection is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health.