

Hospital Admissions for Vomiting Among Pregnant Women Who Self-reported Non-medical Cannabis Use

SIYU QIAN¹, SARAH SEDDON¹

¹*Drug and Alcohol Service, Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, Wollongong, Australia*

Presenter's email: Siyu.Qian@health.nsw.gov.au

Introduction and Aims: Cannabis is the most commonly used illicit drug during pregnancy. Nausea and vomiting can be exacerbated by cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome and cannabis withdrawal symptoms. Hospital admission presents a great opportunity for patients to quit cannabis and reduce the likelihood of multiple readmissions for vomiting. The aim of this study was to investigate hospital admissions for vomiting among pregnant women who self-reported non-medical cannabis use.

Design and Methods: A retrospective medical record audit was conducted on hospital admissions of clients who attended the Substance Use in Pregnancy and Parenting Service (SUPPS) from 2015 to 2019 and identified cannabis as their primary drug of concern. Clients who were 18 years or older when pregnant and had at least one non-birth admission during the pregnancy were included in the audit.

Results: A total of 75 SUPPS clients were included in the audit. They had 89 pregnancies between 2012 and 2020. During these pregnancies, they were admitted to the hospital 183 times, with 23% of these admissions for vomiting. Among the admissions for vomiting, 86% were unplanned, 62% had the history of cannabis use identified, 55% were screened for current substance use, 21% had withdrawal symptoms identified and documented and 31% self-reported current cannabis use.

Discussions and Conclusions: Women who self-reported non-medical cannabis use were frequently admitted to the hospital for vomiting during pregnancies. The results of this study will be used by SUPPS clinicians to inform the planning of hospital admissions for pregnant women who use cannabis.

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