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## **Using ambulance attendance data to measure the acute harms resulting from the misuse of alcohol, drugs, and pharmaceuticals**

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**Introduction / Issues:** The harmful use of alcohol and other drugs makes a significant contribution to the global burden of disease. To understand the impact of drugs within a population, it is important to measure both use and harms (acute and chronic). The acute harms arising from alcohol and other drug use are diverse (e.g. injuries while intoxicated, overdoses, or being the victim of violence). The aim of this paper is to describe the process used in the National Ambo Project (NAP), a unique Australian project designed to assess the acute harms arising from alcohol and other drug misuse.

**Method / Approach:** Data are sourced from the ambulance electronic patient care records. Following primary filtering, these records are provided to Turning Point. The data are internally validated and parsed for import. Data coding occurs in a purpose built system, by a team of specialised research assistants. After the set of electronic PCR records is manually coded, the dataset is reviewed and cleaned prior to analysis.

**Key Findings:** NAP data collection has led to an extensive dataset on AOD-related ambulance attendances across Australia being available for analysis. Victoria has the longest-running dataset; containing approximately 80,000 attendances per year with approximately 400 output variables for each attendance, including demographics, characteristics of the attendance, geospatial data, medical data, and co-occurring issues such as mental health symptoms, self-harm, and violence.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** This methodology and resource is used to improve understanding of the acute harms arising from alcohol, drug, and pharmaceutical misuse.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** These data have become widely used across Australia and informs public policy and clinical practice. This methodology could be duplicated in other countries.

**Implications for Translational Research:** These data provides population level data on the acute harms arising from alcohol and other drug use, to inform translational research.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

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