

In a glimpse

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Opioid substitution treatment in France: 2023 report

The aim of this report, produced by the French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (OFDT), is to present updated data on opioid substitution treatment in France. It is based on the latest available data, the year of which may vary from 2019 to 2022 depending on the source and the treatment period.

The first part of the report describes the sociodemographic breakdown of people receiving payment for opioid substitution medications (OSM) in primary care in 2020, as well as their treatment methods. These data come from the simplified generalist sample of recipients (EGBS) of the French National Health Insurance Fund. They are supplemented by the data on prescriptions and supply of OSMs in CSAPA specialised drug treatment centres (2019), data on the prescriptions and supply of OSMs in prisons (2020), and data of sales of OSMs in France (2022). The second part of the report presents data on misuse, deaths related to OSM drugs, and the sale of naloxone.

The number of people given an OSM in France in 2019 in primary care and specialised drug treatment centres was estimated at 177 000 patients. In relation to the estimated proportion of the problematic opioids users, the estimated coverage rate of opioid substitution treatment (OST) is 87%.

Buprenorphine remains the most widely supplied OST in primary care. The use of buprenorphine accounted for 57% of OST sales in 2022, but the percentage of methadone continued to rise, reaching 43% in 2022 (38% in 2019). Prescribers of OSM were mainly GPs practising in primary care settings.

With regard to misuse, the use of buprenorphine and methadone in this context is still mainly oral. However, there has been an increase in the injection of methadone capsules among users in very vulnerable situations.

In 2020, OSM drugs were involved in almost half (49%) of all deaths due to substance and medication abuse. Between 2016 and 2021, almost 45 000 naloxone kits were ordered by specialist centres, hospitals, and pharmacies.

Further reading (in French)

The overview report [Traitements de substitution aux opioïdes en France : bilan 2023](#), 14 p.
