



**NÁRODNÍ
MONITOROVACÍ
STŘEDISKO
PRO DROGY
A DROGOVÉ ZÁVISLOSTI**



NÁRODNÍ
MONITOROVACÍ
STŘEDISKO
PRO DROGY
A DROGOVÉ ZÁVISLOSTI

Methamphetamine use in the Czech Republic: situation and solutions

Roman Pešek

National Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction



History of methamphetamine use

- n 1950s – Misuse of psychostimulative medicines (Psychoton)
- n 1960s – Misuse phenmetrazine
- n Since 1970s – more info on methamphetamine (pervitin)
(manufactured home-made in a „kitchen“ labs)
- n Pervitin was mostly made either of ephedrine coming from ephedrine company in Roztoky nearby Prague or of Solutan containing pseudoephedrine



Prevalence of methamphetamine use in the Czech Republic

- n General population survey carried out in 2008
- n Life time prevalence: 5%
 - 9 % among people in age from 25 till 34
- n Last year prevalence: 2%
- n Last month prevalence: 1%

- n ESPAD 2007: 3,5% - a decline in comparison with year 1999

- n Slight increase in the use of pervitin within nightlife settings
 - Last month prevalence in 2003 was 14%, in 2007 was 16%



Problem drug users preferring methamphetamine

- n In the long term: 30 000 PDU
- n 20 000 PDU preferring pervitin
- n 95% injecting users

- n In 2009: 25 000 in total
- n increase by 4000 in comparison with 2008
- n Usti nad Labem region (4000), Prague (3000)



Treatment

- n pervitin users accounted for 60% of all the treatment demands
- n 2009: 5 209 in total, 1/3 women
 - the average age: 25 years, 20% people under 19 years
 - secondary drugs: 55% cannabis, 15% opiates.

Psychiatric comorbidity:

- n acute toxic psychosis, anxious and depressive disorders
- n higher level of irritability (attacks of anger), paranoid syndromes, unexpected mood/emotional changes, pathological jealousy, memory and concentration disorders, social phobia etc.



Pervitin related infections and deaths

- n 2009: 18 cases (19 in 2008) of fatal overdoses (direct drug related deaths) in terms of pervitin
- n HIV prevalence in IDUs very low: cca 1 pro mile
- n 2009: 7 new HIV positive persons probably infected by injecting use of drug. At the end of 2009: 1 344 HIV positive persons in total, 65 out of them IUD (cca 5%)
- n Prevalence of hepatitis C: 20 - 40% among IDU
 - n multivariate analysis: after adjustment for duration of injecting and needle sharing no statistical difference between pervitin and opiate users



Services for pervitin users

- n No specific interventions for pervitin users are stably implemented in practise nowadays

Harm reduction services – low thresholds programmes (about 95)

Distribution of gelatine capsules like per os alternative for use of pervitin (drug user put pervitin into capsule and use it by a mouth instead of injecting use)

Treatment modalities – inpatient and outpatient facilities (various forms)

- n Psychopharmacotherapy for treatment of psychiatric comorbidity

Sporadic methamphetamine substitution

by methylphenidate (Ritalin) and/or by vigabatrin (Sabril)

- lack of evaluation, just case reports

- n Psychotherapy is based especially on cognitive-behavioral therapy

CA tests incentive therapy based on behavioral therapy

P centrum tests psychotherapy programme based on 12 steps (AA)

- n Socioterapy, aftertreatment care, supportive accommodation and work



Gelatine capsules for oral use of pervitin





Consumption and production of methamphetamine

- n Estimation for 2008: 4,5 tons with 80% purity
0,1 tons for export mainly to Germany
- n Until 2004 pervitin often made of ephedrine, afterwards a production of ephedrine in Roztoky nearby Prague was stopped and ephedrine was replaced by pseudoephedrine only (e.g. Modafen, Neurofen Stop Grip)
- n Small laboratories in small flats, producers are mostly users at the same time
- n About 400 labs seized every year
- n 4-6 kgs of pervitin seized every year, each one seizure max up to 50g
- n 2009: restriction of sales of medicaments containing pseudoephedrine in pharmacies, due to this measure higher level of import of medicaments containing pseudoephedrine especially from Poland (estimation: 95% of all medicines intended for pervitin production at present)



Meth Lab





Medicines containing pseudoephedrine in illicit lab





Price and purity

- n Only/mostly retail level of market
- n Average price is stable: 1000 CZ crowns (about 40 €) per 1g
- n Average purity: 70% (in the long term) pervitin is often cut by piracetam
- n Sporadically wholesale level of market
- n 500 000 CZ crowns (about 20 000 €) per 1kg



Pervitin related criminality

Primary drug related criminality

- n according to drug related sections of the Penal code
- n drug use is not illegal/punished in the CZ Republic
- n possession of drugs for personal use: up to 2g

- n 2500 persons is prosecuted, 90% of them is charged, 1 400 is sentenced (in total for all types of drugs)
- n Proportion of drug crimes related to production and trafficking: 80%
- n Proportion of drug crimes related to pervitin: 50%



Pervitin related criminality

Secondary criminality

- n committed by drug users to obtain money for buying drugs
- n 20% of all crime, mostly stealing things from cars

Criminality committed under influence of drugs

- n 2% of all crime (7000 in total) committed under non alcoholic drugs, mostly influence of pervitin
- n For comparison: 18% is committed under influence of alcohol



Summary and prospects

- n In 2008 the Government Council for Drug Policy Coordination established the **methamphetamine working group**, an inter agency, multidisciplinary body containing representatives came from important state authorities, institutions, academic bodies, NGO´s etc.

Discussed topics:

- n **Treatment** (new specific interventions like programmes of 12 steps, incentive therapy, substitution)
- n **Harm reduction** (eg. gelatine capsules)
- n **Supply reduction** (measures to decrease of availability of precursors and other chemicals (**red phosphorus**))



Thank you for your attention

<http://www.drogy-info.cz>