

Northern Ireland Substitute Prescribing Database Report

31st March 2015

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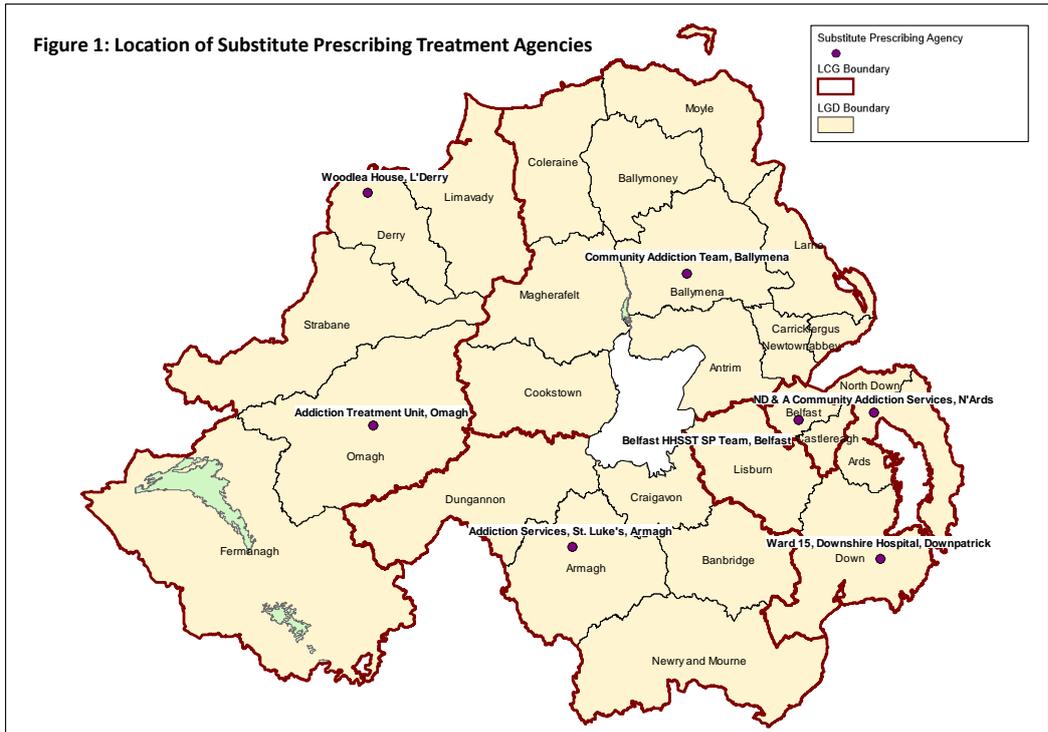
Statistics from the Northern Ireland Substitute Prescribing Database: 31 March 2015

This bulletin summarises information on individuals referred to the Northern Ireland Substitute Prescribing Scheme (SPS). It relates to those referred up to and including the 31 March 2015 and focuses on those patients in contact with Substitute Prescribing treatment services during 2014/15. The figures produced in this report are extracted from the Substitute Prescribing Database held by the Health & Social Care Board (HSCB), Performance Management & Service Improvement Directorate in County Hall, Ballymena. It collects detailed data, including information on drugs misused and injecting behaviour on these individuals at various stages throughout their course of Substitute Prescribing treatment. This is the eighth such report produced since 2004, and the third produced since responsibility for managing the database was delegated to the HSCB from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in 2010.

Summary

- 738 individuals were in treatment across Northern Ireland as of 31st March 2015.
- 865 patients in total received substitute prescribing treatment in 2014/15. This was a 5% increase on the previous year.
- During 2014/15, NHSCT treated the highest number of patients 281(32%) followed by BHSC 211 (24%).
- There were 181 initiations onto the scheme in 2014/15. This compares with 167 initiations in 2013/14.
- 109 patients discontinued from treatment in 2014/15, compared with 112 the previous year. Of these, 38 (35%) underwent “managed discontinuation of SP”.
- 40% of patients have been in treatment for 5 or more years, up slightly from 37% in 2013/14
- 46% of patients were prescribed Buprenorphine while 46% were prescribed Methadone.

The Database relies on the timely and accurate submission of forms from the Community Addiction Agencies. Each Health & Social Care Trust provides a Substitute Prescribing Treatment Service and the location of each Agency can be seen in Figure 1 below:



Summary of Activity 2010-2015

Figure 2 illustrates the number of patients that received Substitute Prescribing Treatment at 31st March each year between 2010 and 2015

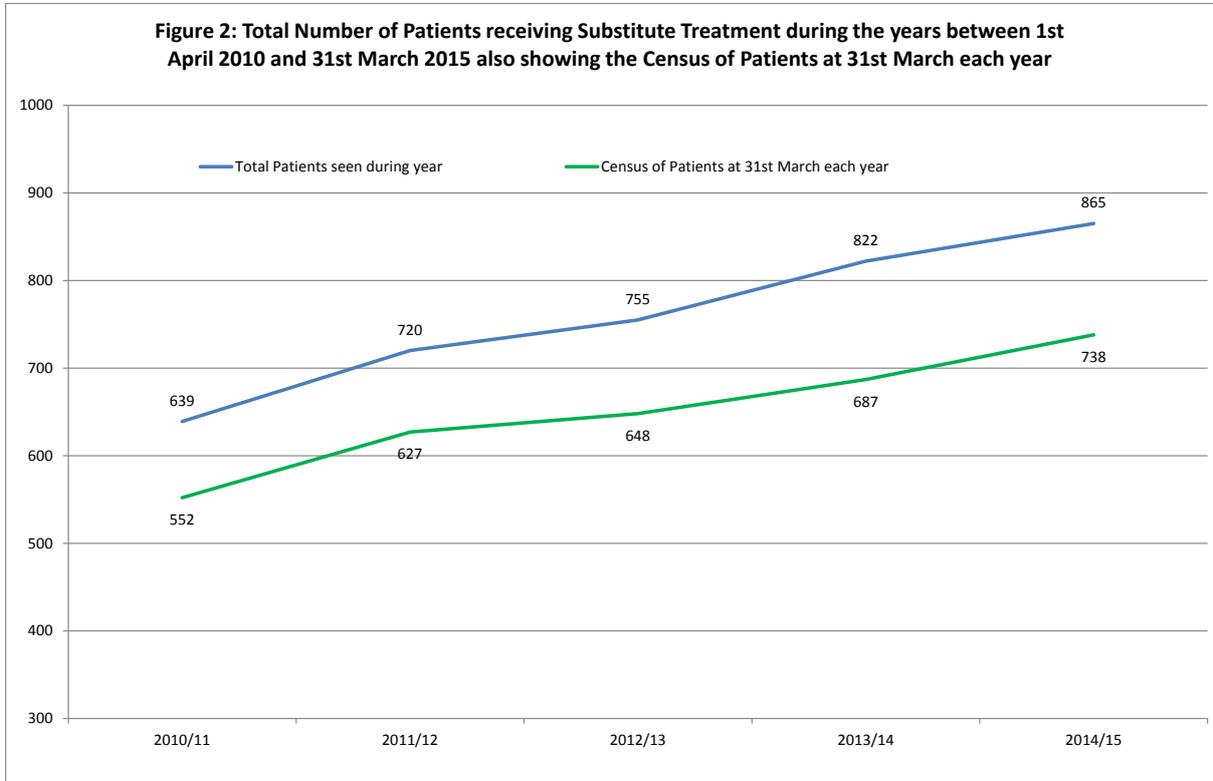
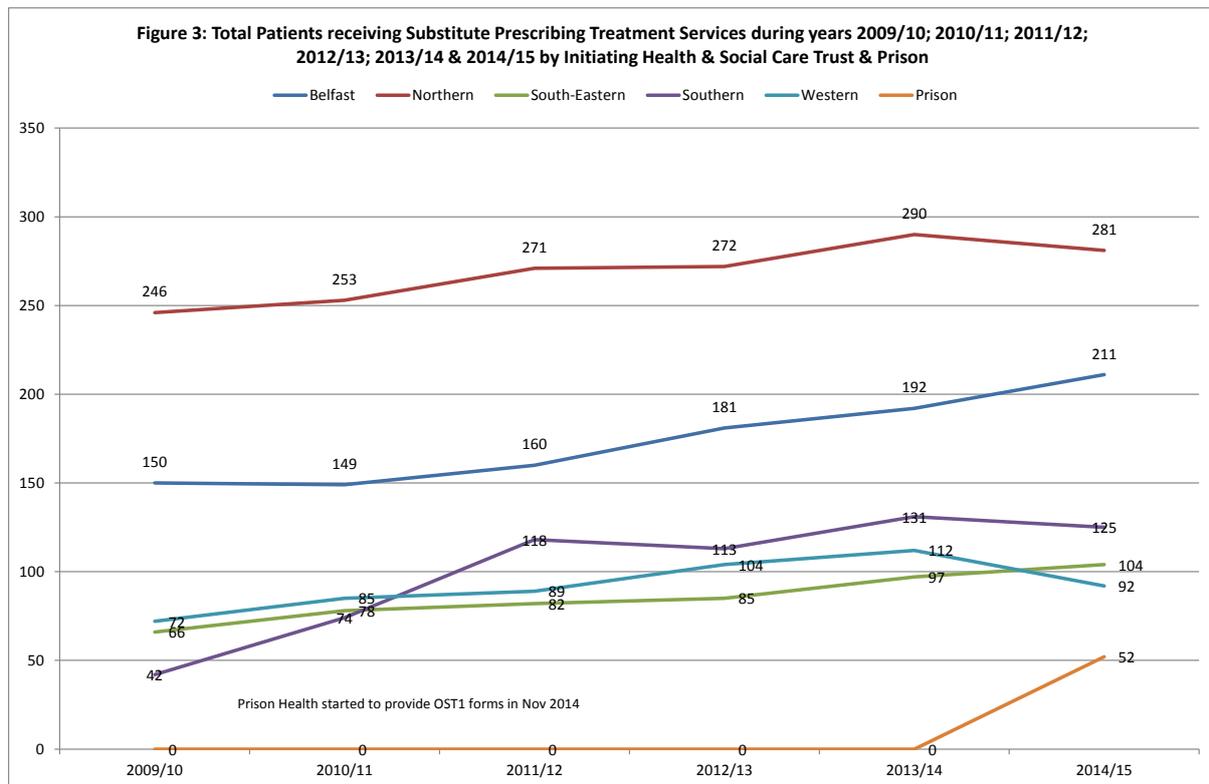


Figure 3 illustrates the number of patients that received Substitute Prescribing Treatment during each year from 2009/10 to 2014/15



All activity during 2014/15:

A total of 865 individuals were in contact with Substitute Prescribing treatment services. There were 181 Initiations during the time period.

109 patients discontinued from the scheme. “Managed discontinuation of SP” accounted for 38 patients leaving the scheme, with “failing to present for SP” and “unmanaged discontinuation of SP” accounting for a further 23 and 17 patients respectively.

52 patients transferred between NI trusts and Prison in 2014/15 and 8 continued their treatment outside NI.

8 patients were recorded as deceased during the reporting period.

Census as of 31 March 2015:

On the 31st March 2015 a total of 738 individuals were receiving substitute medication. 641 (87%) of those patients were reported as stabilised. 296 (40%) of patients were in treatment for 5 or more years.

46% of patients were in receipt of methadone and 46% buprenorphine, the remainder classed as “other” or “unknown”. There is considerable variation between Trusts with 66% of patients receiving methadone in BHSC area compared to 13% in WHSC area.

Table 1 shows that during the year between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015 the five Health & Social Care Trusts and Prison treated 865 patients in Substitute Prescribing Treatment Services.

Table 1: Total patients who received Substitute Prescribing Treatment by Trust between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015

Health & Social Care Trust Area	Total	Percentage	Trust Population	Patients per 100,000 population
Belfast	211	24%	351,554	60
Northern	281	32%	469,051	60
South-Eastern	104	12%	352,301	30
Southern	125	15%	369,391	34
Western	92	11%	298,201	31
Prison	52	6%	n/a	n/a
Total	865	100%	1,840,498	47

Population Source: (NISRA, Mid-2015 Population).

The figures are based on where people presented for treatment not their place of residence and are calculated as the incidence of treatment per 100,000 HSCT Trust area population. The figures range from 60 patients per 100,000 population in the Belfast and Northern Trusts to 30 patients per 100,000 population in the South Eastern Trust. The overall figure for Northern Ireland has risen from 45 to 47 per 100,000 population.

Table 2 shows the number of patients who commenced Substitute Prescribing treatment between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015 and also the number who discontinued during the year. It also shows the number of patients receiving Substitute Prescribing Treatment as at 31st March 2015.

Table 2: Number of Initiations and Discontinuations between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015.

Patients	Belfast	Northern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Prison	Total
Initiations	64	34	26	19	23	15	181
Discontinued Treatment During Year	39	28	14	12	11	5	109
In treatment as at 31/3/2015	164	250	87	113	80	44	738

The initiations can be categorised as follows:

- New patient (new to the Service, never previously treated in NI);
- Recommended (patients had stopped receiving treatment, then restarted within 3 months);
- Returned (patients had received treatment in the past and had returned to the Service, this is considered a break in treatment rather than recommencing current treatment episode)

Table 3 shows the initiation type of the 181 patients who started Substitute Prescribing Treatment between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015.

Table 3: Initiations by Type of Initiation between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015

Patients	Belfast	Northern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Prison	Total
New Patients	30	15	17	15	10	6	93
Recommended (<3 months)	6	2	4	1	1	4	18
Returned (>3 months)	28	17	5	3	12	5	70
Total	64	34	26	19	23	15	181

Figure 4 illustrates by Health & Social Care Trust the patients who returned to the Substitute Prescribing Service during 2014/15 after earlier treatment. The total figure of 70 patients includes 11 patients who returned and/or recommenced more than once.

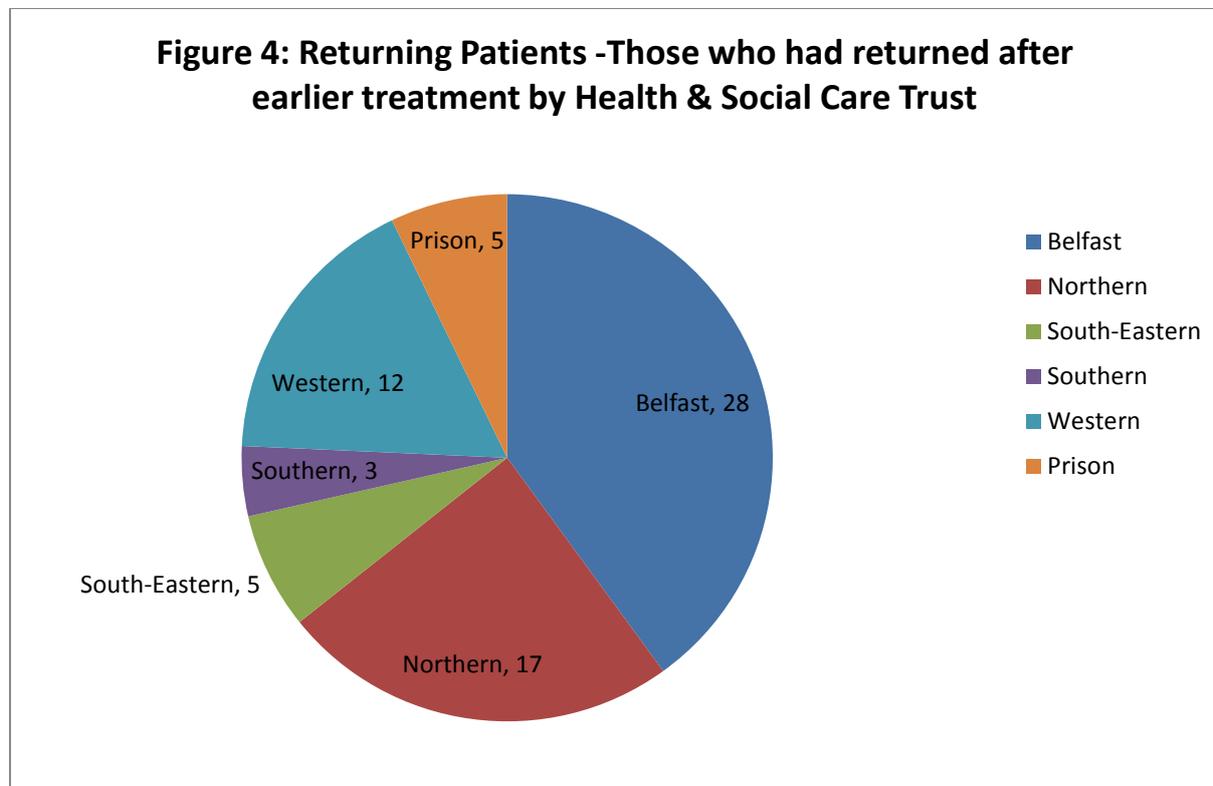
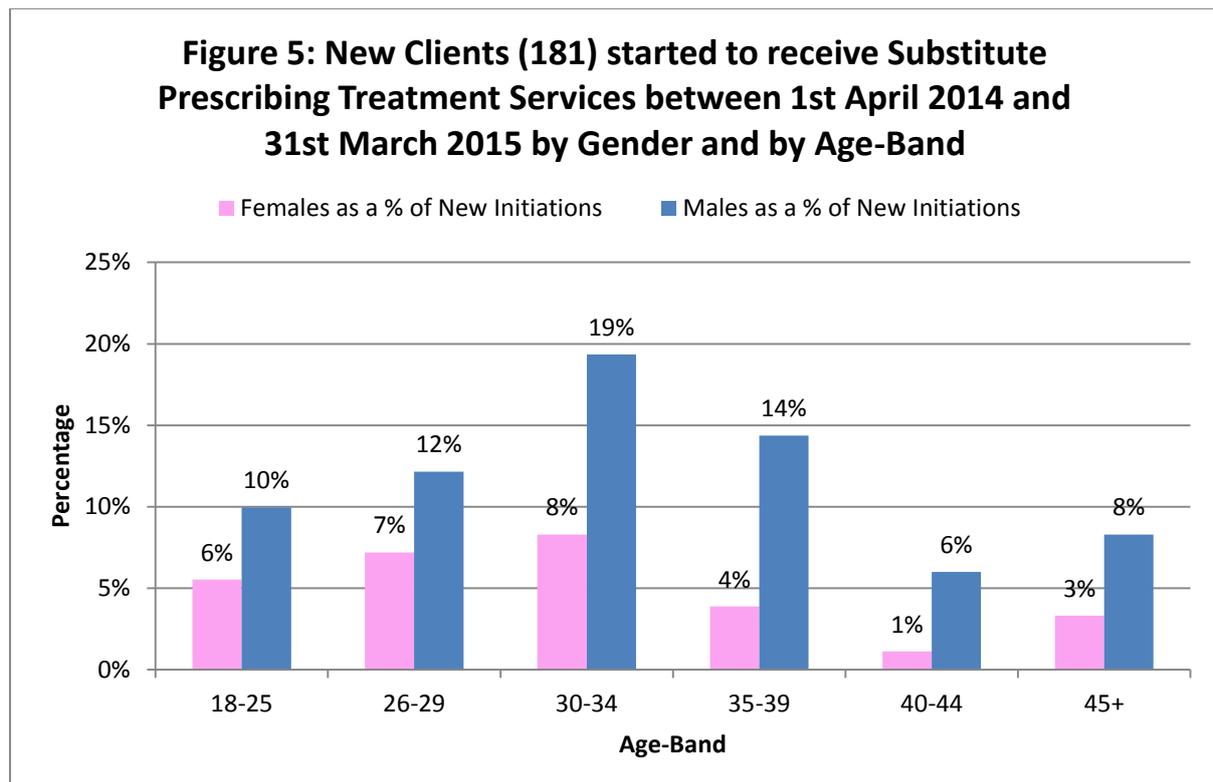


Figure 5 shows the breakdown by gender and age-band, the 181 new patients who started to receive Substitute Prescribing Treatment Services between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015. Although the highest number of new patients (27%) was in the 30-34 age-band this is a small decrease (2%) since 2013/14. The 18-25 years category had a significant increase of 6% while the 26-29 age-band remained similar to 2013/14. In the 35-39 age-band there was a 7% increase since 2013/14. The 40-44 age-band saw a decrease of 3% whereas the 45+ category saw a 4% rise in new patients.



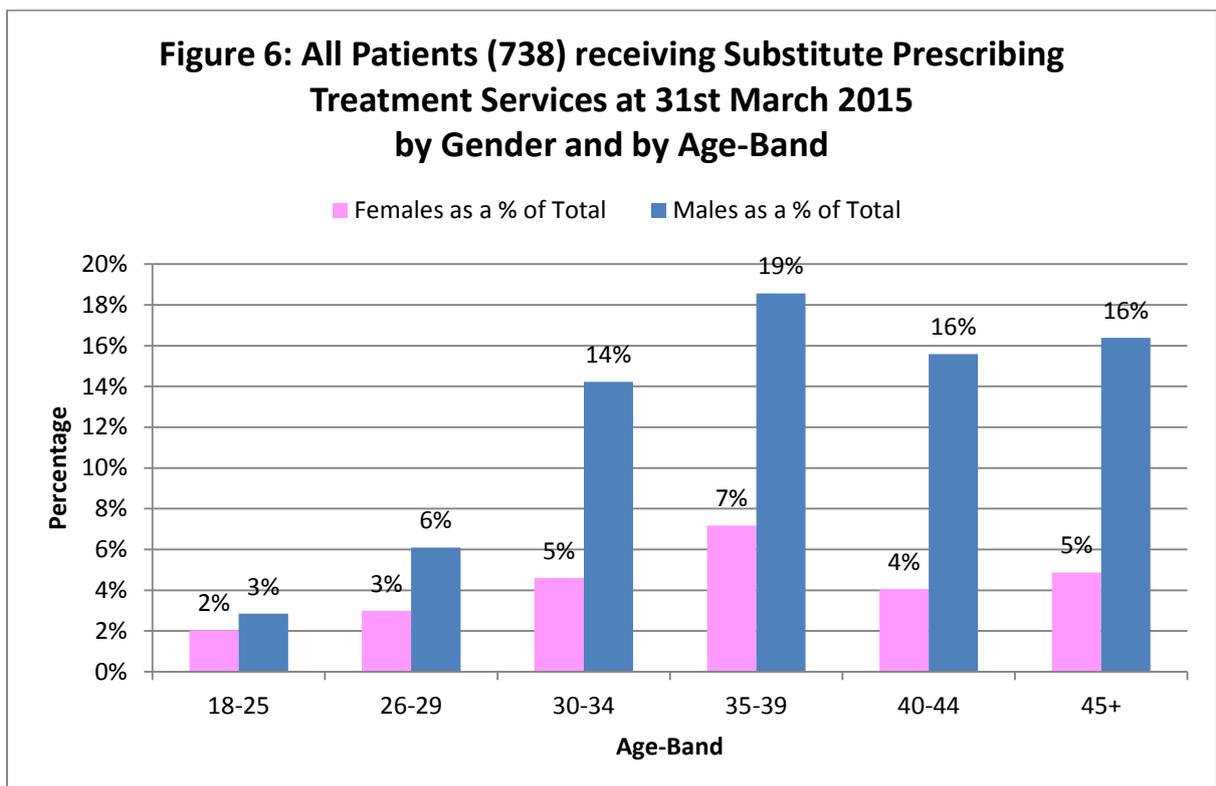
Since May 2013 data has been collected from the Prison Addictions Team. Previously, data in reports would have appeared to show that treatment discontinued on entering prison and was initiated again on release; this will now correctly show continuing treatment and any initiations in prison. New initiations in prison are shown from November 2014.

Table 4 shows the split by gender and location of treatment. As of 31st March 2015, 738 people were receiving Substitute Prescribing treatment services. The proportion of females and males is shown with the highest percentage being males (74%). Within Trusts the highest percentage of males is within Southern Trust (78%) and the highest percentage of females accessing the service is in the South Eastern Trust (36%).

Table 4: All Patients receiving Substitute Prescribing Treatment Services at 31st March 2014 by Gender

Gender	Belfast	Northern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Prison	Total
Female	44(27%)	65 (26%)	31 (36%)	25 (22%)	26 (33%)	3 (7%)	194 (26%)
Male	120 (73%)	185 (74%)	56 (64%)	88 (78%)	54 (68%)	41 (93%)	544 (74%)
Total	164 (100%)	250 (100%)	87 (100%)	113 (100%)	80 (100%)	44 (100%)	738 (100%)

Figure 6 below shows the 738 patients by age-band. The majority of patients both male and female receiving the service are in the 35-39 age-band (26%). The lowest percentage of patients (5%) was in the youngest age-band, 18-25. The youngest person accessing the service at 31st March 2015 was 20 and the oldest was 68.



Time in Treatment

Table 5 and Figure 7 illustrate the length of time patients were in treatment at 31st March 2015. The table shows that 40% of patients have been receiving treatment for 5 years or more. Of the number of patients within each Trust, the Northern Trust has the highest percentage of patients receiving treatment for more than 5 years (53%) while the Southern Trust has the lowest percentage (22%). At 31st March 2015 Prison Addiction Services were treating 3 prisoners who had been receiving treatment for more than 5 years with Northern and Belfast Community Addiction Teams.

Table 5: All Patients receiving Substitute Prescribing Treatment services at 31st March 2015 by Length of Time in Treatment by Service

Time in Treatment	Belfast	Northern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Prison	Total
<1 yr	42 (26%)	26 (10%)	21 (24%)	17 (15%)	22 (28%)	17 (39%)	145 (20%)
1 year	18 (11%)	33 (13%)	5 (6%)	18 (16%)	11 (14%)	20 (45%)	105 (14%)
2 years	18 (11%)	21 (8%)	9 (10%)	12 (11%)	11 (14%)	3 (7%)	74 (10%)
3 years	10 (6%)	24 (10%)	8 (9%)	19 (17%)	4 (5%)	1 (2%)	66 (9%)
4 years	5 (3%)	13 (5%)	8 (9%)	22 (19%)	4 (5%)	0 (0%)	52 (7%)
5 years or more	71 (43%)	133 (53%)	36 (41%)	25 (22%)	28 (35%)	3 (7%)	296 (40%)
All patients	164 (100%)	250 (100%)	87 (100%)	113 (100%)	80 (100%)	44 (100%)	738 (100%)

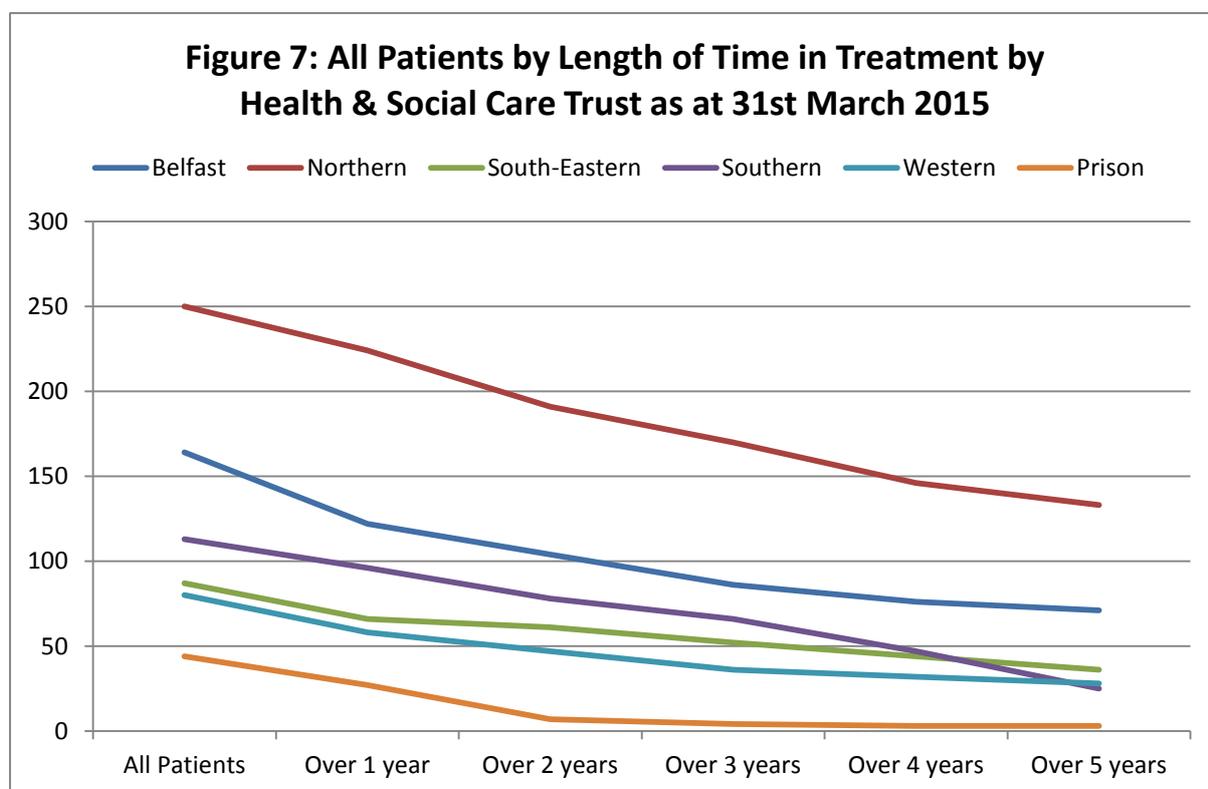
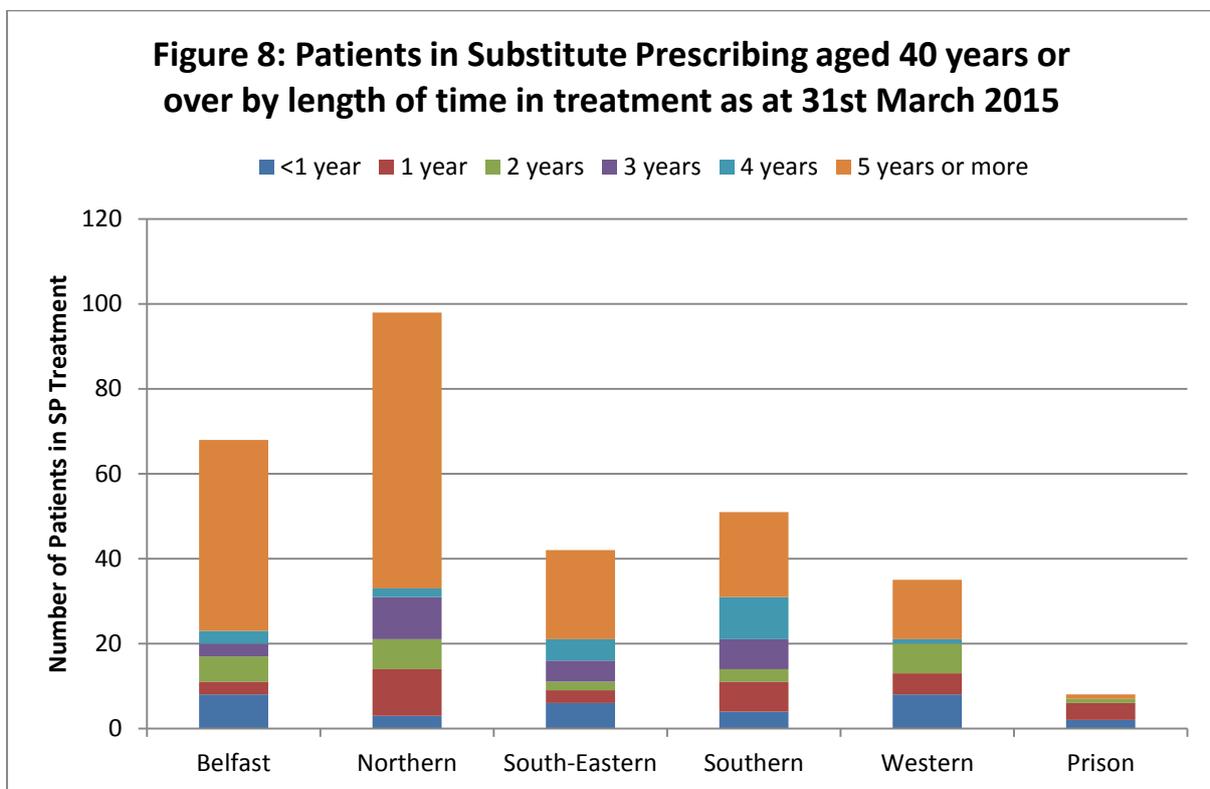


Table 6: Number of patients aged 40 years and over by Trust and by their length of time in treatment

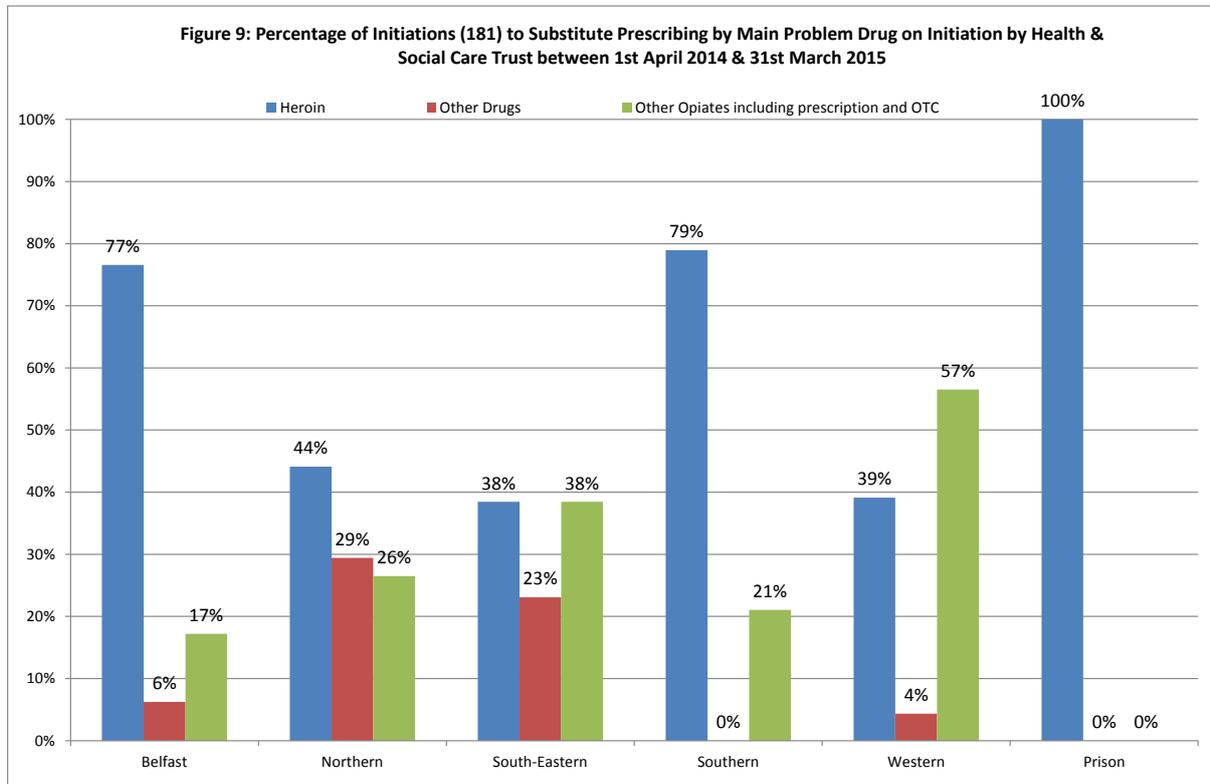
Length of Time in Treatment	Belfast	Northern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Prison	Total
<1 year	8	3	6	4	8	2	31
1 year	3	11	3	7	5	4	33
2 years	6	7	2	3	7	1	26
3 years	3	10	5	7	0	0	25
4 years	3	2	5	10	1	0	21
5 years or more	45	65	21	20	14	1	166
Grand Total	68	98	42	51	35	8	302

Figure 8: Patients who were over 40 years of age at 31st March 2015 and who had been in treatment for 5 years or more



Main Problem Drug

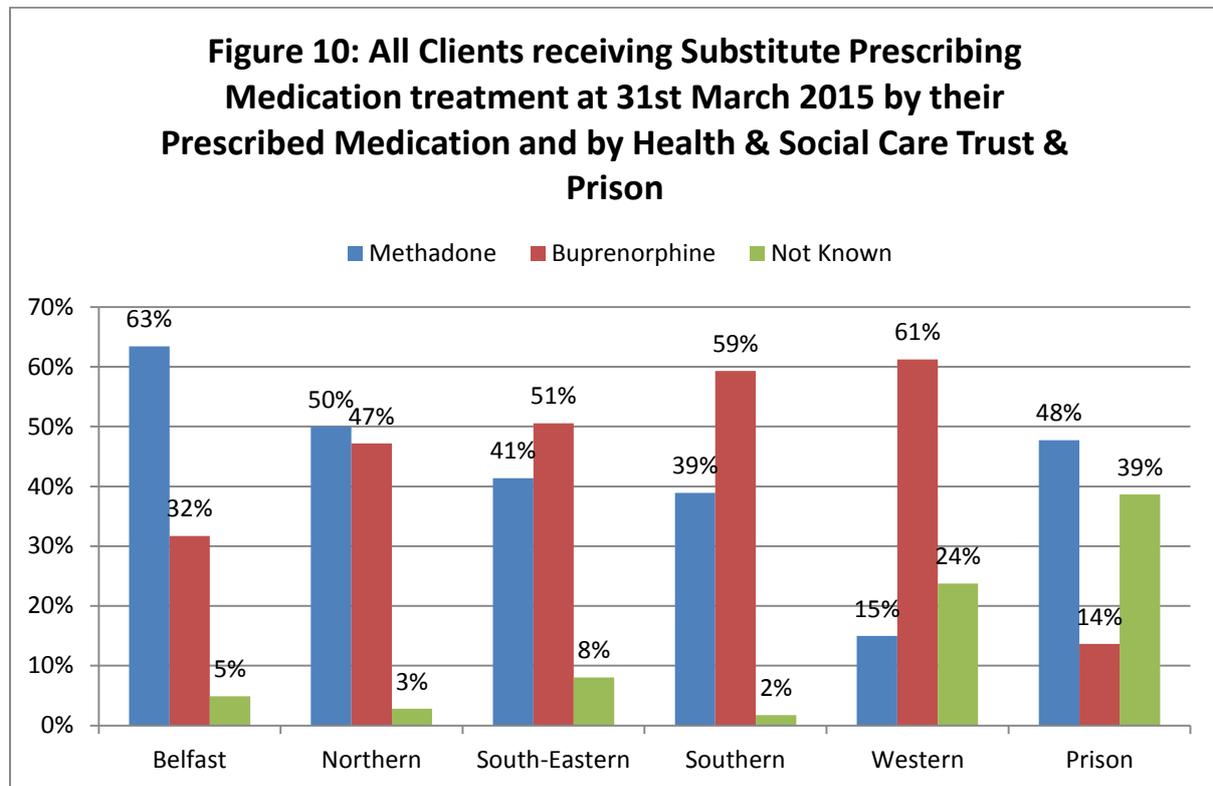
The database records information on the main problem drug for the patient and up to four other drugs that the patient may be using; these drugs do not have to be opiates. Figure 9 shows the main problem drug used by new patients to the service between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015. The chart shows that the main problem drug continues to be Heroin.



“Other Drugs” include (in decreasing order of popularity): cannabis, other drugs, amphetamines, diazepam, mephedrone and benzodiazepine.

Substitute Medication

Figure 10 shows the Substitute Medication prescribed to the 738 patients who were in receipt of treatment (whether they had stabilised or not) as at 31st March 2015. The chart includes Substitute Medication prescribed to patients in Prison at 31st March 2015.

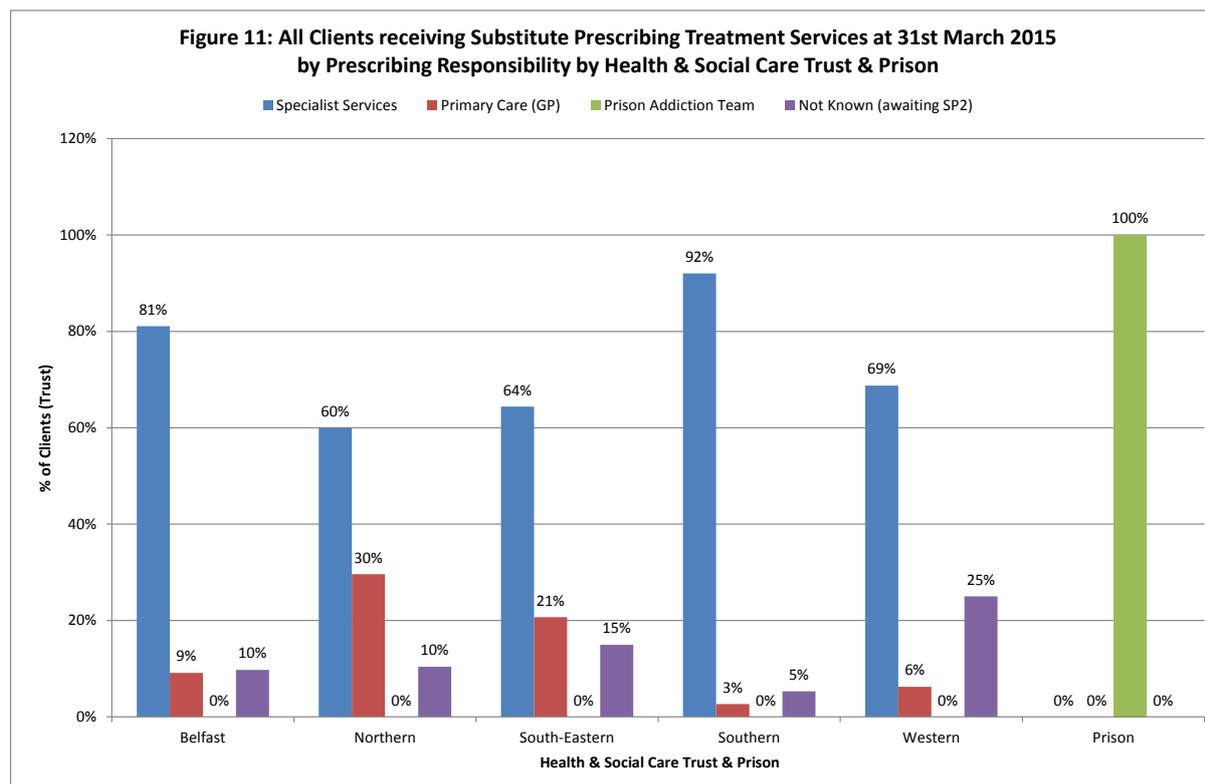


Overall, data shows that 46% of patients received buprenorphine, 46% received methadone and 8% is not known. This information relies on the submission of OST2 forms and in this instance 8% of OST2 forms were not submitted in time for the report.

Prescribing Responsibility

Figure 11 illustrates that the majority of prescribing responsibility remains with Specialist Services. Northern Trust has the highest percentage of patients whose prescribing responsibility is with/shared with Primary Care (GP) (30%). For those patients in prison, prescribing responsibility remains with the Prison Addictions Team.

Even for patients where the prescribing responsibility is with the GP, the vast majority of such patients remain in a Shared Care arrangement, with specialist services and roles continuing to be provided by the Trust, for example Key Worker.



Patient Improvement

Stabilisation

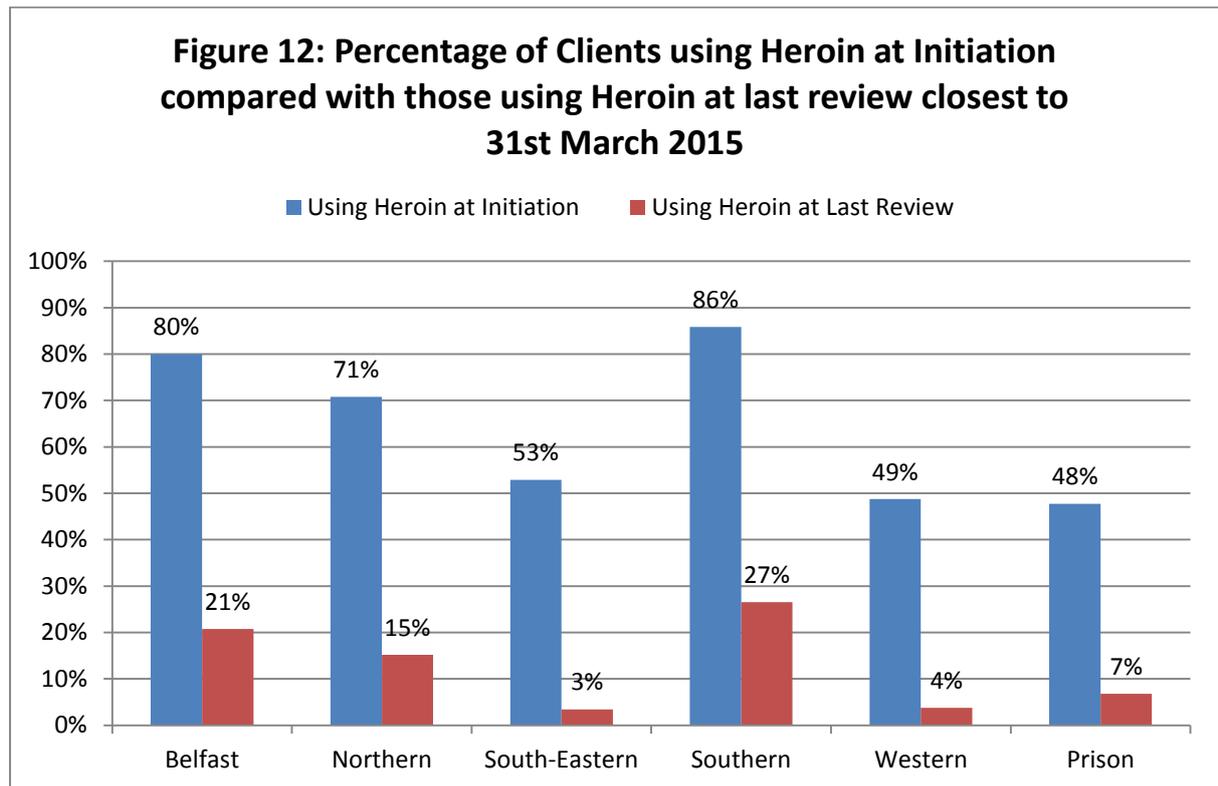
Table 7 shows that of the 738 patients receiving substitute medication, 82% were reported as being stabilised. This data is only available on the OST2 form; there may be a degree of subjectivity with this data.

Table 7: Patients stabilised receiving Substitute Prescribing Medication at 31st March 2015 by Health & Social Care Trust & Prison

Stabilisation	Belfast	Northern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Prison	Total
Yes	149 (91%)	233 (93%)	80 (92%)	99 (88%)	56 (70%)	24 (55%)	641 (87%)
No	5 (3%)	6 (2%)	0 (0%)	12 (11%)	2 (2%)	3 (6%)	28 (4%)
Not Known	10 (6%)	11 (5%)	7 (8%)	2 (1%)	22 (28%)	17 (39%)	69 (9%)
Total	164 (100%)	250 (100%)	87 (100%)	113 (100%)	80 (100%)	44 (100%)	738 (100%)

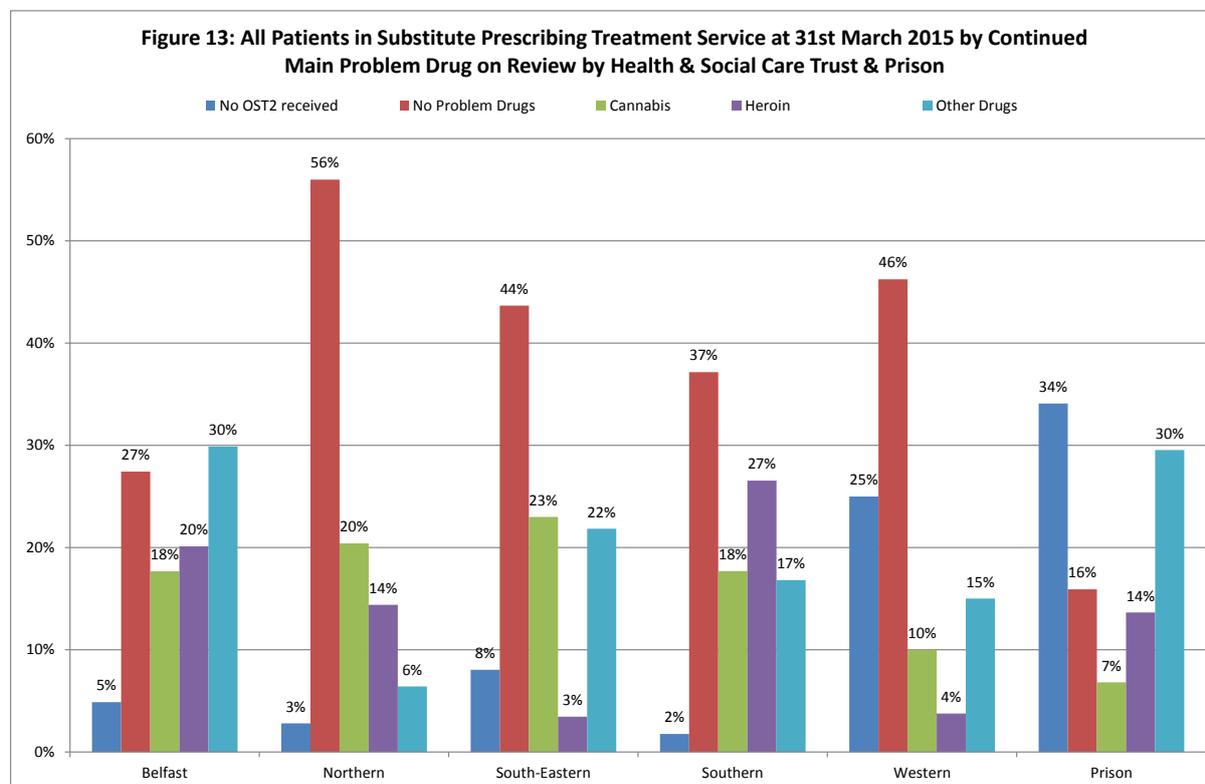
Heroin usage at Initiation of Treatment and at Review closest to 31st March 2015

Figure 12 shows the comparison of the use of Heroin as a main problem drug at the start of treatment and at latest review closest to 31st March 2015. Overall 69% of patients used heroin at the start of treatment and at last review closest to 31st March 2015, only 15% were using heroin.



Continuing Drug Usage

Figure 13 gives a more detailed breakdown of the continued drug use by patients. 42% had no continued problem drug recorded which is a 9% increase from 2013/14 is (33%). 18% had recorded Cannabis as their main continued problem drug, 17% had a variety of “Other Drugs*” recorded while 15% recorded heroin as their continued main problem drug.

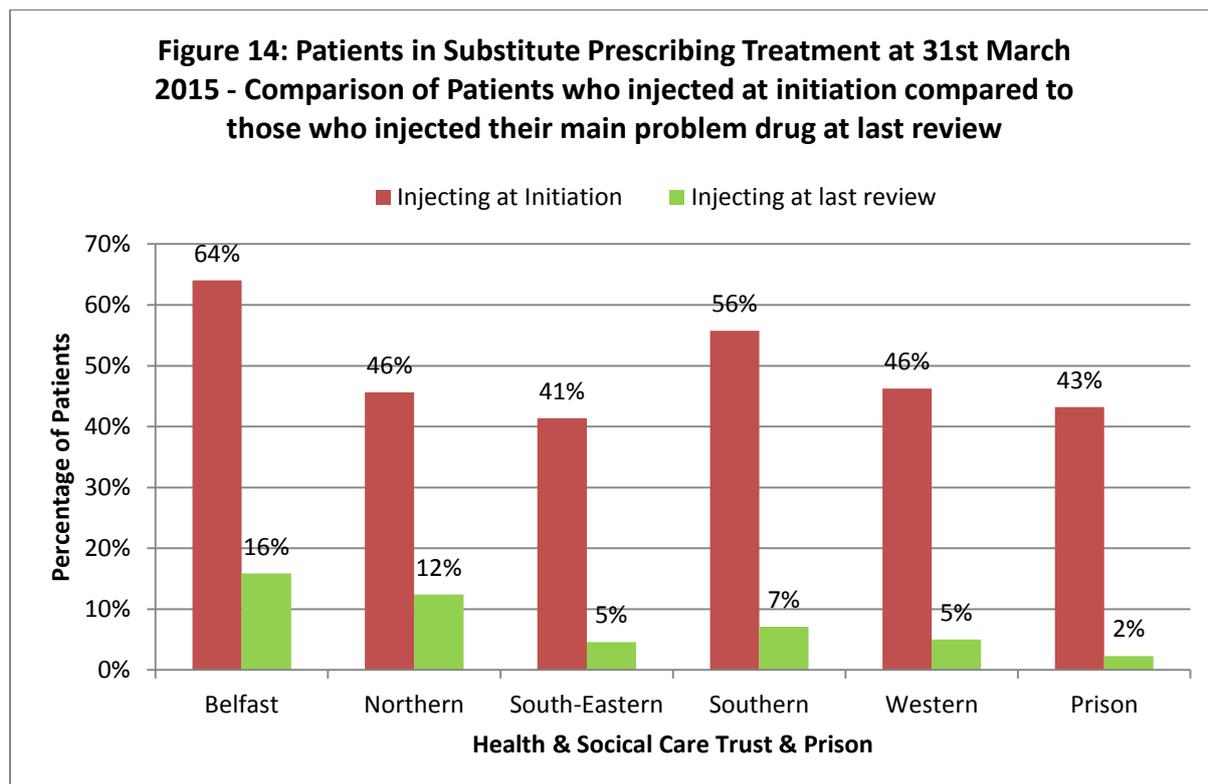


*Other Drugs covers other Class A/B/C drugs, ‘New Psychoactive Substances’ (NPS), prescription drugs and OTC drugs.

In decreasing order of popularity the other drugs most commonly referenced are * benzodiazepines (of which diazepam is most named), cocaine, tramadol, codeine, dihydrocodeine, mephedrone, morphine, co-codamol, amphetamines, stimulants and steroids.

Injecting Behaviour at Initiation of Latest Treatment and at Review closest to 31st March 2015

A measure of patient improvement is comparing the injecting behaviour of patients at initiation of treatment and at their latest review closest to 31st March 2015. Overall, 51% of patients injected at initiation of treatment compared to 10% at last review. Figure 14 compares this with their injecting behaviour at last review closest to 31st March 2015. Overall there was an 80% reduction in the number who were injecting at start of treatment with Substitute Prescribing Services.



Missed Appointments

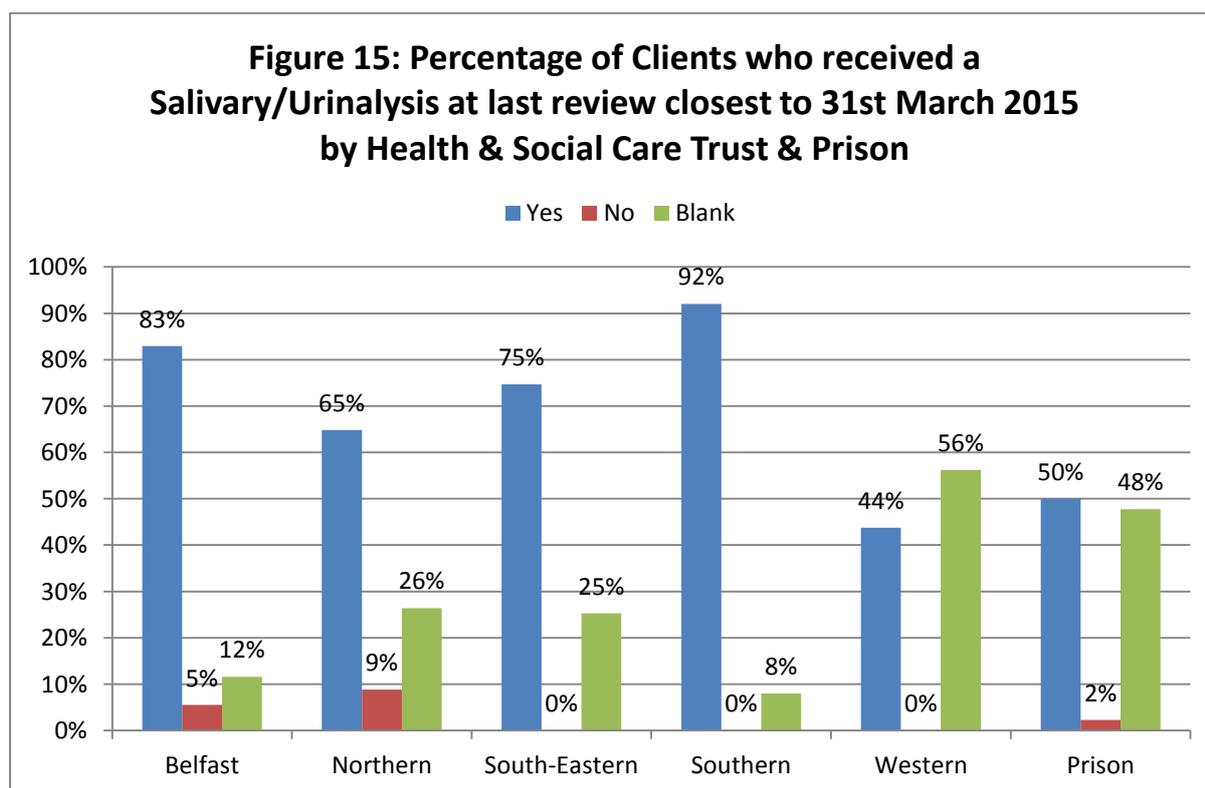
Of the 738 patients receiving Substitute Prescribing Treatment at 31st March 2015 it was recorded on their last review that 6% of them missed appointments. Table 8 illustrates this by Health & Social Care Trust & Prison.

Table 8: Number & Percentage of Patients who missed appointments, as recorded on their last Review closest to the 31st March 2015

Missed Appointments	Belfast	Northern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Prison	Total
Total Patients	164	250	87	113	80	44	738
No. of Missed Appointments	16 (10%)	8 (3%)	5 (6%)	11 (10%)	2 (3%)	2 (5%)	44 (6%)

Salivary/Urinalysis Testing by Health & Social Care Trust

Figure 15 shows the percentage of patients tested at the review most recent to 31st March 2015. Southern Trust had the highest percentage of tested patients (92%).

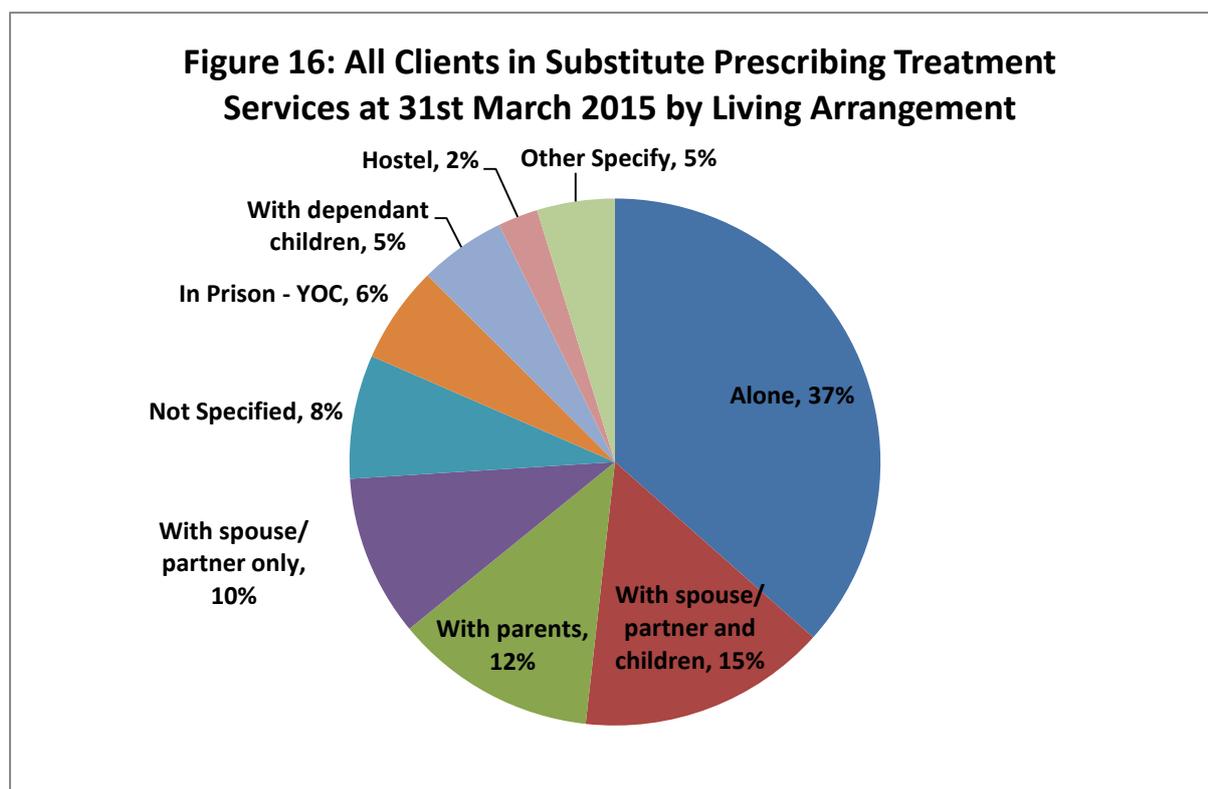


Personal Living Arrangements

With data taken from their last review Figure 16 shows that 37% of patients reported that they were living alone, 15% lived with their spouse, partner and children and 12% lived with their parents, 10% lived with their spouse/partner only, 8% of forms did not specify the living circumstances of the patients.

The "Living With" status of patients is recorded on initiation of treatment and at each review. Of the patients receiving treatment at 31st March 2015, at initiation of Substitute Prescribing Treatment 1% of them was recorded as homeless. Continuing to look at those patients, at their last review no patients were homeless.

Where the "Other Specify" option was included it showed that the patients lived with: brother; daughter; son, sister, parents, nursing home; grandparents; family member and aunt.



Discontinuation from Substitute Prescribing Services

109 patients discontinued from Substitute Prescribing Treatment Services during 2014/15. Figure 17 shows their reason for leaving with the main reasons being “Managed Discontinuation of SP” (35%); Failed to present for Substitute Prescribing” (21%) and “Unmanaged Discontinuation of SP” (17%).

