

# Prescription Medication Misuse Among Adolescents with Severe Mental Health Problems in Ontario, Canada

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The purpose of this study was to examine the prevalence of prescription medication misuse among adolescents with severe mental health problems in Ontario, Canada, and to explore some of the factors that influence the misuse of prescription medication. Data were obtained from the Resident Assessment Instrument for Mental Health. A total of 2,677 adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18 years who were admitted into adult mental health beds were analyzed. Logistic regression was used in estimating the likelihood of misusing prescription medication. Overall, 17% of adolescent inpatients misused prescription medication. In the multivariate model, the following were found to be associated with misuse: being female, having multiple psychiatric admissions, education, threat or danger to self, problem with addiction, history of emotional abuse, use of alcohol, past year use of opiates and cannabis, as well as symptoms of depression. Misuse of prescription medication was less likely to occur among adolescents with a diagnosis of schizophrenia and adolescents who were admitted as a result of posing a threat or danger to others. Implications of the findings are discussed with suggestions for future research.