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Will the baby-boomer generation challenge the German addiction care system?

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Background:

The demographic change in the developed countries of the Western World leads to an increase of the relative portion of the aged population. Thus the proportion of aged people with substance related problems will rise. Especially the ageing of the baby-boom cohort will confront the treatment system with new challenges. The baby-boom cohort was more exposed to alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs in youth and prone to indulge in substance use (Wang & Andrade 2013). Against this background, the question arises if the baby-boomers with substance related disorders are a distinct cohort relating to sociodemographic, disorder related and treatment seeking behaviour. Hence, aim of the study is to compare the baby-boomer cohort with a former cohort (born after World War 2) in a treatment seeking sample.

Methods:

Case related admission data come from the Berlin addiction care monitoring system. The data are collected annually in Berlin addiction care facilities using a standardized core dataset. The baby-boomer cohort (born between 1954-1969) in 2015 (n=6184 cases) vs. the former cohort (born between 1945-1953) in 2005 (n=1378 cases) are examined. Comparisons comprise analyses of sociodemographic, disorder related and treatment seeking related variables between the both birth cohorts.

Results:

Preliminary results show that the baby-boomer cohort had a lower percentage of cases with the main diagnosis alcohol but a higher percentage of cases with the main diagnosis opioids in comparison to the former cohort. Differences of the two cohorts with regard to specific characteristics will be presented.

Discussion:

Based on the revealed characteristic attributes of the baby-boomer cohort, conclusions for the necessary further development and adaption of the treatment system in accordance to the needs of the baby-boomer shall be drawn.