# THE EXPRESSION OF SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS WORKING WITH PEOPLE IN A SITUATION OF ALCOHOL ADDICTION

## Michael Ememerenwa, Arūnas Acus

## Abstract

The article reveals the phenomenon of alcohol dependence and assesses the situation of people in a situation of dependence who seek support. In this context, the authors assess the impact of social work interventions on recovering health and the improvement of the quality of life at mental care centres. The study reveals that social workers face many challenges in their work, including professional burnout, emotional exhaustion, and strategies for maintaining motivation in addicts in the context of social stigma towards these people. The emotional burden of working with individuals who often suffer from repeated relapses is presented as a critical problem that needs to be addressed by better support measures for specialists. The article reveals the difficulties of interdisciplinary team cooperation due to resource limitations and professional differences. In order to improve the effectiveness of social work interventions, it is emphasised that the support and participation of relatives, friends, colleagues and neighbours in the process of recovery and integration into society allow social workers to seek innovative intervention methods in solving the problem of alcohol dependence in society.
KEY WORDS: social work intervention, alcohol addiction, healthcare centre, recovery, addiction treatment.

## Anotacija

Straipsnyje atskleidžiamas alkoholio priklausomybės reiškinys ir įvertinama priklausomybės situacijoje esančių asmenų, ieškančių pagalbos, situacija. Šiame kontekste autoriai vertina socialinio darbo intervencijų poveikį klientų sveikimui ir gyvenimo kokybės gerinimui sveikatos priežiūros centruose. Tyrimas atskleidžia, kad socialiniams darbuotojams darbe kyla daugybė iššūkių, įskaitant profesinį perdegimą, emocinį išsekimą ir priklausomų asmenų motyvacijos palaikymą, atsižvelgiant į socialinę stigmą šių asmenų atžvilgiu. Emocinė našta, dirbant su asmenimis, kurie dažnai kenčia nuo pakartotinių atkryčių, pateikiama kaip problema, spręstina specialistų profesinio perdegimo prevencijos būdais. Straipsnyje atskleidžiami tarpdisciplinės komandos bendradarbiavimo sunkumai dėl išteklių ribotumo ir profesinio pasirengimo skirtumų. Siekiant pagerinti socialinio darbo intervencijų veiksmingumą, akcentuojama, kad giminaičių, draugų, kolegų, kaimynų parama ir dalyvavimas sveikatos atstatymo ir integracijos į visuomenę procese įgalina socialinius darbuotojus taikyti inovatyvius intervencijos metodus sprendžiant visuomenėje aktualią alkoholio priklausomybės problemą.

Arūnas Acus – dr., professor, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Klaipėda University. H. Manto g. 84, LT-92294 Klaipėda. E-mail: arunasacus@gmail.com
Michael Ememerenwa – graduate of the Social Sciences programme, Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Science, Klaipėda University. H. Manto g. 84, LT-92294 Klaipėda. E-mail: mememerenwa@gmail.com

Michael Ememerenwa, Arūnas Acus

## Introduction

Relevance of the problem. This article analyses current problems of society and the individual in the situation of alcohol addiction. Firstly, the research is crucial due to the growing prevalence of alcohol addiction and the complexities surrounding effective social work interventions. Alcohol addiction remains a widespread issue across the globe, and individuals battling this condition often face barriers in accessing care and rehabilitation (Meges et al., 2022). The intersection of alcohol addiction and the lack of adequate social support systems necessitates the development of comprehensive intervention strategies (Hwang et al., 2020). Understanding the experience of social workers in healthcare settings is essential in tailoring effective interventions and services for those struggling with alcohol addiction (Palepu et al., 2019). Secondly, the study is highly relevant within the context of public health. Alcohol addiction not only exacerbates the personal and social struggles of individuals, but also contributes to severe health risks, including liver disease, cardiovascular conditions, and mental health disorders (Henwood et al., 2017). Those suffering from alcohol addiction often face stigmatisation, which makes seeking help even more difficult (Gao, 2014; Platt et al., 2021). This research sheds a light on the interventions carried out by social workers in healthcare settings, providing valuable insights into how public health strategies can be improved, to offer better support and care for this vulnerable population.

The relevance of the study extends beyond social work and public health to all of society. Alcohol addiction impacts not just individuals but their families and communities as well, creating economic and social burdens (Meges et al., 2022). By addressing the specific challenges posed by alcohol addiction, this research can contribute to the development of more targeted and effective interventions, ultimately helping to alleviate the broader societal impacts of addiction. Finally, the study has practical implications for policymakers and organisations involved in social services and addiction treatment. By examining the experiences of social workers in healthcare centres, the research provides insights into the resources, training and support needed to enhance the effectiveness of interventions. Evidence-based findings from this study can inform policies that improve addiction treatment services and social work interventions for individuals struggling with alcohol addiction (Kerr et al., 2019). Moreover, the research is important for the field of social work itself. Social workers play a critical role in advocating for

vulnerable populations, including individuals struggling with alcohol addiction (Pauly et al., 2021).

Alcohol addiction poses a significant societal challenge globally, affecting individuals and communities worldwide (Palepu et al., 2019; WHO, 2018). This research study addresses this critical issue by exploring effective social work strategies for addressing alcohol addiction in healthcare settings. The scientific relevance of the study lies in its potential to contribute to global knowledge on interdisciplinary collaboration, trauma-informed care, and person-centred approaches (Henwood et al., 2017). Social workers play a vital role in addressing alcohol addiction, taking a comprehensive approach to tackling medical and psychosocial aspects (Narayan et al., 2018). By examining the experience of social workers in healthcare centres, the study aims to enhance social services, identify best practices, and support professional development (Hwang et al., 2020). The findings will also inform social work education, providing real-world insights to better equip social workers in addressing addiction-related health disparities and mental health challenges (Meges et al., 2022). By sharing its findings internationally, the research can contribute to a global dialogue on addressing the complex challenges of alcohol addiction through effective social work interventions.

The aim of the research: to disclose the problem of social work intervention for people in a situation of alcohol addiction in the context of experience at healthcare centres.

Tasks of the article:

1. To explore the impact of social work interventions on the recovery and well-being of individuals suffering from alcohol addiction within a healthcare setting.

2. To disclose the challenges faced by social workers in delivering effective interventions for alcohol addiction at the 'N' Healthcare Centre, and identify areas for improvement in their practice.

## 1. General characteristics of the phenomenon of alcohol addiction

Alcohol addiction has profound and far-reaching effects on individuals, impacting their physical, mental and emotional well-being. On a physical level, chronic alcohol abuse can lead to serious health conditions, such as liver disease, cardiovascular problems and neurological damage (Chapman et al., 2013). Excessive drinking weakens the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to infection and illness, while also increasing the risk of accidents and injuries. Over time, the body develops a tolerance to alcohol, leading to increased consumption and dependence, which further deteriorates the overall health. Mental health is also significantly affected by alcohol addiction, with individuals often experiencing

depression, anxiety and cognitive impairment as a result of prolonged substance abuse. These mental health issues can exacerbate the addiction, creating a vicious cycle that is difficult to break (Ornelas et al., 2015). On an emotional and social level, alcohol addiction often damages personal relationships and disrupts family dynamics. Erratic behaviour, mood swings and the prioritisation of alcohol over other responsibilities can lead to conflict, isolation and emotional distress for both the individual and their loved ones (Freisthler et al., 2015). Families of individuals with alcohol addiction may experience financial strain due to job loss, medical expenses or legal issues resulting from the addiction. Additionally, children in families affected by alcohol addiction may suffer from neglect, emotional trauma and behavioural problems, which can have lasting effects on their development and future well-being (Allen and Friston, 2018). In many cases, alcohol addiction not only affects the individual but creates a ripple effect, impacting the emotional health and stability of entire families and social networks.

## 1.1. Factors contributing to and effects of addiction

Understanding the multifaceted causes and effects of addiction is essential for grasping the complex issue of alcohol dependence among homeless populations. This section delves into the various factors that contribute to addiction and the extensive repercussions it has on both individuals and society.

Causes of addiction:
1. Biological determinants (Holter et al., 2020).
2. Psychological drivers.
3. Environmental and social influences (Holter et al., 2020).
4. Socio-economic conditions (Zhong, Liu, 2017; Paquette, Pannella, 2016).
5. Cultural and peer pressure (Paquette, Pannella, 2016).
6. Barriers to access to treatment (Paquette, Pannella, 2016).

Consequences of addiction:
1. Health consequences: (Hwang, Burns, 2019).
2. Psychological toll.
3. Social isolation and strain on relationships (Holter et al., 2020).
4. Economic and legal challenges (Holter et al., 2020).
5. Broader societal impact (Coltman et al., 2015).
6. Housing insecurity (Paquette, Pannella, 2016).
7. Legal consequences (Holter et al., 2020).

Factors influencing addiction in situations of alcoholism are multifaceted and interconnected. Biological factors, such as genetic predisposition, brain chemistry and physical health, play a significant role (Platt et al., 2021). Psychological factors, including mental health disorders (e.g. depression and anxiety), trauma, stress and coping mechanisms, also contribute. Social and environmental factors, such as family dynamics, peer influence, socio-economic status, cultural norms and the accessibility of alcohol, further exacerbate the risk. Additionally, behavioural factors, like drinking patterns, substance use and lifestyle choices, can perpetuate addiction. Lastly, spiritual and existential factors, including purpose, meaning and connection, can influence an individual's vulnerability to addiction (Pauly et al., 2021).

Cultural and societal factors play a significant role in shaping alcohol addiction treatment, as they influence individuals' attitudes toward alcohol use, the stigma associated with addiction, and the types of treatment options available (LaMort, 2019). Different cultures have varying norms and values surrounding alcohol consumption, which can affect how individuals view their own drinking habits and whether they seek help. In some cultures, drinking is deeply embedded in social rituals and accepted as a normal part of life, making it harder for individuals to recognise when their alcohol use becomes problematic. Conversely, in cultures where alcohol use is stigmatised or forbidden, individuals struggling with addiction may feel ashamed or reluctant to seek treatment due to the fear of judgment or ostracism by their community (WHO, 2020).

Societal factors, such as socio-economic status, also influence access to alcohol addiction treatment. Individuals from marginalised or low-income communities often face barriers to accessing high-quality treatment programmes, such as limited healthcare resources, a lack of affordable services, or geographical constraints in rural areas. Furthermore, the social stigma attached to addiction can discourage individuals from seeking treatment, as they may worry about being labelled or discriminated against. These societal pressures can perpetuate a cycle of addiction, especially when individuals lack the social and financial support needed to recover. Addressing these factors is crucial for developing more inclusive and accessible treatment programmes that cater to diverse populations (Allen, Friston, 2018). Effective alcohol addiction treatment must consider cultural and societal factors by integrating culturally sensitive approaches that respect the individual's background and values. Treatment programmes that are tailored to the specific cultural needs of a community can help break down barriers to care and improve engagement. For example, involving family or community leaders in the treatment process may be more effective in certain cultures where collective decision-making is valued (Joubert et al., 2023).

## 1.2. Challenges in intervention for alcohol addiction

Intervention for alcohol addiction poses significant challenges due to the complex nature of the condition and the various factors influencing it. One of the primary challenges is the *high relapse rate*, as addiction is a chronic condition that often requires long-term management. Even after completing treatment programmes, individuals may struggle with ongoing cravings and triggers, making it difficult to maintain sobriety. Environmental factors, such as social circles that encourage drinking, stressors like unemployment or family conflict, and ease of access to alcohol, can further complicate recovery efforts (Best et al., 2017). Another challenge in addressing alcohol addiction is the *stigma associated with seeking treatment*. Many individuals with alcohol use disorders face social stigma, shame and guilt, which can deter them from reaching out for help. This stigma is often compounded by a lack of understanding or negative attitudes towards addiction as a medical condition. As a result, individuals may hide their addiction or delay treatment, worsening the physical, emotional and social consequences (WHO, 2020).

Finally, *access to appropriate treatment services* remains a significant barrier for many people struggling with alcohol addiction. Socio-economic factors, such as poverty, homelessness and a lack of insurance, can limit access to treatment programmes, especially more intensive or long-term interventions like in-patient rehabilitation. Additionally, the availability of services varies greatly depending on geographical location, with rural areas often lacking sufficient addiction treatment facilities. Even when services are available, logistical barriers, such as transport, waiting lists or the cost of treatment, can make it difficult for individuals to access the care they need (Bainbridge, Lunt, 2021). These challenges highlight the importance of addressing systemic barriers to treatment and ensuring that interventions are accessible, affordable and responsive to the diverse needs of individuals facing alcohol addiction.

Interventions for alcohol addiction face several challenges due to the complexity of the condition. High relapse rates and ongoing triggers, such as social environments and stressors, make maintaining sobriety difficult, necessitating long-term and adaptable treatment plans. Additionally, barriers to accessing treatment, such as poverty, lack of insurance and geographic limitations, further complicate efforts to provide effective care, highlighting the need for more accessible and inclusive services.

Existing approaches and models in social work give the possibility to understand the phenomenon of alcoholism. According to Ornelas (2015), *Recognizing and Understanding Need* serves as a key principle in social work, guiding professionals in assessing and exploring the service user's circumstances. In some cases, needs may be urgent, such as in child or adult protection scenarios, where imme-

diate intervention is required. In other instances, needs may surface gradually and relate to long-term support and improvement in the quality of life, like efforts to reduce social isolation through befriending. Understanding needs, therefore, involves not only identifying the challenges individuals experience, but also determining the most appropriate responses to meet those challenges within the scope of available resources (Bainbridge, Lunt, 2021). Another foundational approach is the *Person-in-Environment (PIE) framework*, which emphasises understanding individuals within the context of their social, physical and cultural environments. This model acknowledges that problems are not isolated to the individual, but are often shaped by external factors, such as family dynamics, community resources and societal structures. Social workers using this approach assess how these environmental influences impact a client's well-being and develop interventions that address both personal and systemic factors. PIE has become a cornerstone of social work practice, encouraging a holistic view that integrates micro (individual), mezzo (community) and macro (policy) levels of intervention (Caiels et al., 2021). The prominent model is *Strengths-Based Practice*, which shifts the focus from deficits or problems to the inherent strengths and resources of individuals, families and communities. This model encourages social workers to collaborate with clients, helping them to identify their abilities, skills and resilience as tools for overcoming challenges. By empowering clients to build on their existing strengths, this approach fosters self-efficacy and promotes sustainable change. Strengths-Based Practice is particularly useful in settings such as community development, mental health and child welfare, where building confidence and resilience is crucial for long-term success (Ahuja et al., 2022). Another important widely used model in social work is the *Ecological Systems Theory*, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1997). It explores how different environmental systems, ranging from immediate family to larger societal structures, interact and influence an individual's development and behaviour. Social workers applying this model consider how various systems, such as education, healthcare and the justice system, intersect to affect a client's experiences and opportunities. The Ecological Systems approach is valuable in interventions that require addressing multiple levels of influence, such as in cases of child welfare, where the family, school and legal systems all play critical roles. This model also supports the social worker's role as an advocate, aiming to create changes at both the individual and systemic levels to improve outcomes for clients (Caiels et al., 2021; Ahuja et al., 2022). Existing approaches and models in social work emphasise understanding and addressing the multifaceted needs of individuals.

## 2. Possibilities for social work interventions working with people in a situation of alcohol addiction in healthcare centres

From a social work perspective, conceptualising alcohol addiction involves understanding it not only as an individual health issue but as a multifaceted problem influenced by social, psychological and environmental factors (Hwang et al., 2020). Social workers view addiction through a holistic lens, recognising the fact that factors such as poverty, trauma, family dynamics and social isolation often contribute to and perpetuate alcohol dependence. In practice, social workers consider the impact of addiction on various aspects of an individual's life, including mental health, relationships and overall well-being (Henwood et al., 2017). Individuals struggling with psychoactive substance addiction often face severe social exclusion, exacerbating their vulnerability. This exclusion is perpetuated by negative public attitudes, compounded by issues such as homelessness, unemployment, financial insecurity and community disintegration (Boat et al., 2017). Addiction erodes familial bonds and social connections, while factors like a lack of education, limited job opportunities and inadequate social support, increase the likelihood of relapse. To combat these challenges, comprehensive rehabilitation and reintegration strategies are crucial. Effective social work interventions must extend beyond psychological and educational support to encompass social services, skills training, employment assistance, and housing solutions. By providing holistic care, social workers can empower individuals to regain functional capacity and reintegrate into society. This integrated approach acknowledges the complex interplay between addiction, social exclusion and overall well-being, ultimately fostering resilient and supportive communities (Boat et al., 2016).

Historically, health was narrowly defined as the absence of disease or disability. However, this perspective has expanded significantly over time. The once dominant biomedical approach has given way to a more comprehensive understanding of well-being. Social determinants, such as socio-economic status, relationships and environmental conditions, play a critical role in shaping overall well-being. Effective social work interventions in healthcare settings should therefore address these diverse dimensions, fostering holistic care that promotes resilience, empowerment and optimal health (Fraser et al., 2018). By embracing this integrative approach, social workers can help bridge the gap between medical treatment and broader wellness needs. This collaborative mindset enables healthcare professionals to deliver person-centred care, recognising the intricate relationships between physical, mental and social health. As a result, individuals receive comprehensive support, empowering them to achieve their full potential (Kepley, Streeter, 2018).

Health encompasses complete physical, mental and social well-being, extending beyond the absence of disease or infirmity. This holistic approach recognises the intricate interplay between physical, mental and spiritual dimensions, necessitating a person-centred focus that transcends biomedical perspectives. Individuals are viewed as dynamic, interacting systems, encompassing psychological, biological and social aspects. Effective social work interventions in healthcare settings should acknowledge the complexity of individual needs (Zerden et al., 2018). However, existing services often face numerous challenges, including inefficient service delivery, the over-centralisation of social programmes, insufficient social service supply, inadequate inter-institutional collaboration, limited social worker expertise and innovation, and legislative framework shortcomings. These gaps hinder the provision of comprehensive care, underscoring the need for a more integrated approach. A comprehensive methodology is proposed to address these challenges, emphasising empowerment for individuals with bio-psychosocial disorders (Boat et al., 2017). This holistic framework focuses on labour market integration support, value system development, social skills enhancement, psychological assistance, and social status elevation for those struggling with dependence. To achieve a lasting impact, social work interventions should prioritise interdisciplinary collaboration, continuous professional development, policy reforms, and community engagement. By adopting this integrated approach, social workers can facilitate resilient, supportive environments that foster overall well-being, promote health, well-being and social inclusion, and address the complex needs of individuals (Fraser et al., 2018).

Social workers play a vital role in healthcare settings, focusing on assessing and mitigating the social risks associated with addiction and other health disorders. The complexity of healthcare demands teamwork, as no single professional can provide all-encompassing care. An interdisciplinary approach unites specialists to examine patients collaboratively, set shared intervention goals, enhance patient quality of life, and optimise treatment outcomes (Sim et al., 2019). Within these teams, social workers offer diverse services, including needs assessment, social condition examination, social services provision, access facilitation, socio-economic improvement, empowerment, and ongoing support. Effective social work integration into healthcare teams fosters holistic care, addressing patients' biopsychosocial needs. Professional guidelines emphasise two primary social work approaches: individualised interventions, and group work (Platt et al., 2021). To maximise the impact, social workers must engage in continuous interdisciplinary collaboration, keep updated on best practice and research, advocate for policy reforms supporting integrated care, and foster strong community partnerships. By working together, social workers can provide comprehensive support, addressing
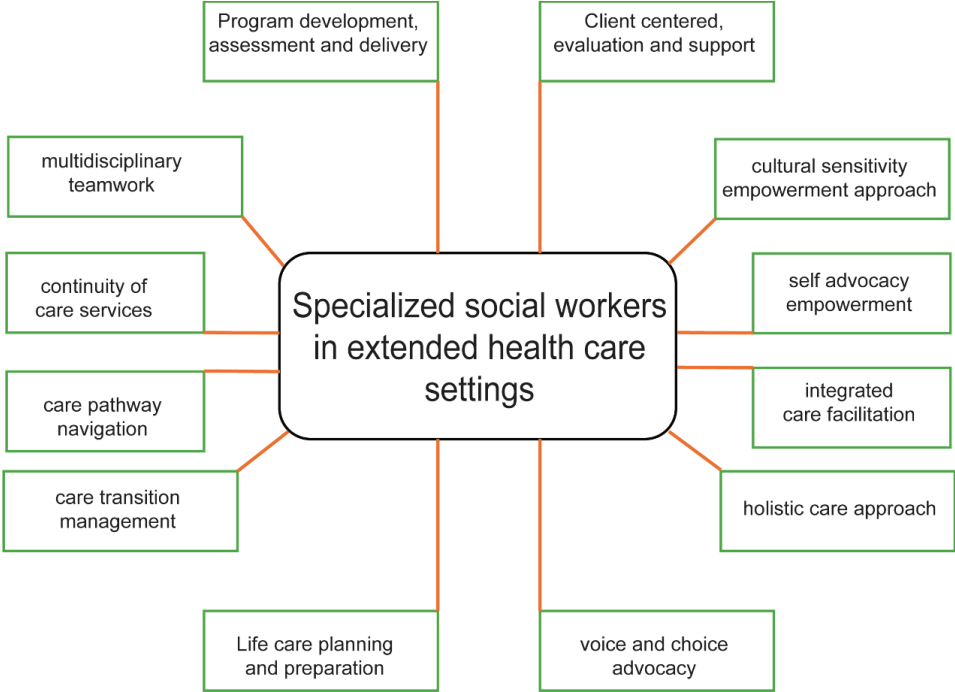
*Figure 1*. Key roles of specialised social workers in extended healthcare settings
*Source*: Munder et al., 2022.

the complex needs of individuals and promoting optimal health outcomes. Healthcare's complexity demands teamwork, since no single professional can provide all-encompassing care. An interdisciplinary approach unites specialists to examine patients collaboratively, set shared intervention goals, enhance patient quality of life, and optimise treatment outcomes. Within these teams, social workers offer diverse services, including needs assessment, social condition examination, social services provision, access facilitation, socio-economic improvement, empowerment, and ongoing support (Meges et al., 2022). Fig. 1 illustrates the diverse roles of specialised social workers in extended healthcare settings, highlighting key areas such as care pathway navigation, multidisciplinary teamwork, and continuity of care services.

Effective social work integration into healthcare teams fosters holistic care, addressing patients' bio-psychosocial needs. Professional guidelines (Hwang, Burns, 2019) emphasise individualised interventions and group work as two primary social work approaches. This collaborative approach enhances patient outcomes, promoting well-being and resilience. By working together, social workers

provide comprehensive support, addressing complex individual needs and promoting optimal health outcomes.

Effective social work interventions in healthcare settings require flexibility, creativity, and a commitment to person-centred care. To maximise the impact, social workers must continuously assess and adapt interventions, foster strong community partnerships, leverage interdisciplinary collaboration, and advocate for policy reforms supporting holistic care (Hwang et al., 2020).

A social worker's activity in a team of medical specialists in a situation of addiction is very important. Collaborating closely with doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, social health workers ensure a holistic approach to care. This integration fosters comprehensive treatment plans addressing patients' physical, emotional and social needs (Hwang et al., 2020; Gao, 2014). Within medical teams, social health workers often facilitate communication between healthcare providers, patients and families. They advocate for patients' rights and interests, addressing cultural and linguistic diversity. Social workers also coordinate discharge planning, connecting patients with post-hospital services and resources. Effective collaboration between social workers and medical specialists ultimately enriches the healthcare experience (Caiels et al., 2021). Social workers play a vital role within multidisciplinary medical teams, contributing their expertise to address the complex psychosocial needs of patients (Cameron, Keenan, 2010).

As integral members of medical teams, social workers employ a range of interventions, from individual counselling to community organisation and policy advocacy (Sim et al., 2019). They work closely with medical specialists to address mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and family crises. Social health workers also coordinate discharge planning, connecting patients with post-hospital services and resources. Their expertise in navigating complex healthcare systems enables seamless transitions. Moreover, social workers participate in quality improvement initiatives, providing valuable insights on care delivery. Contemporary social work practice in medical teams emphasises culturally competent care, addressing diverse needs and emerging issues (Cameron, Keenan, 2010; Barrett et al., 2022).

Social workers bring a unique understanding of the psychosocial dynamics and environmental influences that contribute to addiction, while medical specialists provide essential diagnosis and treatment. Together, they develop comprehensive care plans that promote holistic recovery, address systemic inequalities, and advocate for patient-centred care. This interdisciplinary partnership fosters seamless transitions, improves health outcomes, and enhances the overall well-being of individuals and families affected by addiction.

## 3. Results

Methodology and organisation of the research

Research methodology: diseases model of addiction theory, cognitive-behavioural theory, social learning theory, the self-medication hypothesis, the bio-psychosocial model. Theoretical approaches and models in social work give the possibility to understand the phenomenon of alcoholism and were a precondition of evaluation and analyses of research data (diseases model of addiction, theory; cognitive-behavioural theory, social learning theory, the self-medication hypothesis; recognising and understanding need; person-in-environment (PIE) framework; strengths-based practice; ecological systems theory).

Research methods: a qualitative research (semi-structured interview) approach was employed to examine the professional experience and perspectives of specialists.

The interview consisted of 14 questions divided into three units, of which the results are analysed in the tables below (unit 1, demographic data; unit 2, assessment of the impact of social work interventions on the recovery and well-being of individuals suffering from alcohol addiction; unit 3, investigation of the challenges faced by social workers in delivering effective interventions for alcohol addiction).

Ethics: This study adhered to rigorous ethical standards, ensuring that participants' rights were respected throughout. Informed consent was obtained, outlining the research objectives and data collection methods. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. Respondents were assured that their names would be anonymous and that the results would be used for scientific purposes only.

Place of research: 'N' Centre for Addiction Diseases

Analysis of data that meets the main aim of this article

Unit 1: demographic analysis

The demographic data shows an interesting gender distribution at the 'N' Centre for Addiction Diseases, with a vast majority of female participants (100%). This may indicate that women may be more engaged in looking for or providing aid for alcohol addiction treatment, either as clients or as specialists working in the discipline. This gender imbalance may also mirror broader social or cultural factors influencing the involvement of females in addiction healing programmes, either via higher engagement in care-giving roles, or due to gendered styles in substance abuse behaviour searching for treatment. In terms of age distribution,

the majority of members fall within the 60 to 65-year age range (60%), while a smaller element is within the 40 to 45-year age organisation (40%). This suggests that the group of workers at the 'N' Centre for Addiction Diseases may be older, doubtlessly reflecting the level and stability of older professionals in the area. Regarding educational level, the distribution shows an excessive percentage of individuals with Bachelor's (40%) or Master's stages (40%), indicating a knowledgeable staff able to deliver complicated social interventions. On an experience level, 40% of respondents have seven to 14 years of experience, and another 40% have 15 to 20 years, suggesting a distinctly experienced group of workers, with a mixture of mid-career and pro experts. Although the centre employs only older specialists, it can be said that their experience has a positive impact on people in a situation of alcohol addiction, and in the area of cooperation with relatives.

Unit 2. Assessment of the impact of social work interventions on the recovery and well-being of individuals suffering from alcohol addiction

*Table 1*. Interventions in the addiction centre in the context of social work

| Category | Sub-category | Statements by respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Justification of the content of interventions | 5. The main functions of a social worker in the addiction centre | '[…] Social workers address social issues, connect patients to resources, and guide behaviour change […]' (R1) '[…] Social workers motivate patients, develop skills, and address related social issues […]' (R2) '[…] Collaboration with medical and social institutions is crucial for comprehensive care […]' (R3) '[…] Social workers identify issues, create plans, and provide individual and group support […]' (R4) '[…] Social workers coordinate treatment, group activities, and support for patients […]' (R5) |
| | 6. The expression of social workers' cooperation with specialists in other fields | '[…] Collaboration between social workers and other professionals is vital for effective addiction support […]' (R1) '[…] Collaboration with specialists like psychiatrists and psychologists is essential for patient care […]' (R2) '[…] Challenges in teamwork stem from resource limitations, qualification gaps […]' (R3) '[…] Social workers collaborate with social services, law enforcement […]' (R4) '[…] Collaboration with other specialists is crucial for effective addiction treatment […]' (R5) |

| Category | Sub-category | Statements by respondents |
|---|---|---|
| | 7. Problems in teamwork in the addiction centre | '[…] Teamwork issues arise from poor leadership, financial challenges […]' (R1) |
| | | '[…] Teamwork challenges include resource shortages, insufficient qualifications […]' (R2) |
| | | '[…] Methods like motivational interviews, relapse prevention, and the "12 steps" programme aid patient recovery […]' (R3) |
| | | '[…] Resource shortages, role overlap, and professional differences create team conflicts […]' (R4) |
| | | '[…] Teamwork challenges in addiction centres stem from diverse expert opinions […]' (R5) |
| | 8. Methods applied in the treatment process of alcohol addiction | '[…] Motivational interviewing, education, and counselling are key methods in alcohol addiction treatment […]' (R1) |
| | | '[…] Motivational interviewing and art therapy help patients manage addiction as a disease […]' (R2) |
| | | '[…] Key obstacles include team dynamics, patient resistance, and external motivation challenges […]' (R3) |
| | | '[…] Motivational interviewing and logotherapy strengthen motivation and encourage healthier choices […]' (R4) |
| | | '[…] Motivational interviewing and group methods are key in alcohol addiction treatment […]' (R5) |

Table 1 highlights the principal function of social workers in addiction facilities, emphasising their features in addressing social issues, motivating sufferers, and coordinating remedial efforts. Social work employees are instrumental in connecting sufferers to resources, developing recuperation plans, and providing both character and organisation guidance. Social workers play a vital role in addressing alcohol addiction, taking a comprehensive approach to tackling medical and psychosocial aspects (Narayan et al., 2018). Powerful collaboration with medical and social experts, along with psychiatrists and psychologists, and regulation enforcement, is vital to ensuring complete care, but teamwork-demanding situations persist, mostly because of resource barriers, inadequate qualifications and position overlaps, which may cause conflicts and prevent treatment effectiveness. However, in these demanding situations, social employees utilise key therapeutic techniques, along with motivational interviewing, relapse prevention strategies and art remedy, to guide the recuperation of affected persons. The strategies concentrate on strengthening motivation, coping with addiction as a sickness, and inspiring healthier behaviour. Basically, the information shows the importance of a multidisciplinary technique in remedying dependency, at the same time as acknowledging

the hurdles faced by social employees in a useful resource-restricted environment. According to Ornelas (2015), *Recognizing and Understanding Need* serves as a key principle in social work, guiding professionals in assessing and exploring the service user's circumstances. This methodological approach allows for the modelling of social worker intervention strategies.

## Unit 3. Investigating the challenges faced by social workers in delivering effective interventions for alcohol addiction

*Table 2.* Interventions and challenges in the addiction centre in the context of social work

| Category | Sub-category | Statements by respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Evaluation of experience in applying interventions | 9. The main obstacles in social work with alcohol-dependent individuals | '[…] Patient motivation and societal stigma hinder progress in addiction recovery efforts […]' (R1) <br> '[…] Social workers face burnout, a lack of recognition, and emotional toll from complex work […]' (R2) <br> '[…] Burnout risk is high, mitigated by self-care strategies […]' (R3) <br> '[…] Challenges include patient denial, low motivation, unmet agreements, and inadequate facilities […]' (R4) <br> '[…] The main challenge is the denial of the addiction by individuals and families […]' (R5) |
| | 10. Possibility of the risk of burnout when working with individuals in an addiction situation | '[…] Burnout risks are high for workers, leading to emotional exhaustion and strained relationships […]' (R1) <br> '[…] Burnout risk is high, requiring a strong sense of vocation to endure […]' (R2) <br> '[…] Success stories involve patients overcoming resistance to complete recovery programmes […]' (R3) <br> '[…] Social workers face burnout from emotionally taxing tasks and recurring relapses […]' (R4) <br> '[…] Working with addicts carries a high risk of burnout for social workers […]' (R5) |
| | 11. Presentation of good examples (patient history can be provided) | '[…] Success stories show that persistent treatment and support can lead to long-term recovery and life improvement […]' (R1) <br> '[…] Success stories are rare but show long-term recovery, especially from narcotics […]' (R2) <br> '[…] Ethical principles such as respect for dignity and privacy build trust and foster effective support […]' (R3) <br> '[…] Practices respect dignity and privacy, reduce stigma, and offer unbiased care […]' (R4) <br> '[…] Successful recovery stories show the potential for change and sobriety […]' (R5) |

| Category | Sub-category | Statements by respondents |
|---|---|---|
| | 12. Application of ethical principles in work (respect a person's dignity, privacy and independence; respect different cultures and values) | '[…] Ethics guide social workers, ensuring respect for patient dignity, privacy, and cultural differences […]' (R1)<br>'[…] Ethical principles guide care, respecting dignity, privacy and cultural differences […]' (R2)<br>'[…] Family and close contacts play a vital role in the recovery process through active involvement […]' (R3)<br>'[…] Educating and supporting families disrupts dysfunction and encourages healthy relationships […]' (R4)<br>'[…] Ethical principles ensure respect, privacy and dignity for all patients […]' (R5) |
| | 13. Opportunities for participation of the patient's close circle (family, friends and colleagues) | '[…] Family involvement in treatment is possible, but relatives often resist personal change […]' (R1)<br>'[…] Family involvement is key to recovery, encouraging active participation in the process […]' (R2)<br>'[…] Former patients contribute by sharing recovery experiences, inspiring those still in treatment […]' (R3)<br>'[…] Alumni meetings and social media groups help patients share recovery experience […]' (R4)<br>'[…] Families can participate in consultations, although group sessions are absent […]' (R5) |
| | 14. Feedback from former alcohol-dependent patients (testimonials) | '[…] Former patients provide valuable feedback, motivating others […]' (R1)<br>'[…] Testimonials from recovered patients inspire others […]' (R2)<br>'[…] healed patients always encourage others […]' (R3)<br>'[…] The centre offers treatment without shame or blame, focusing on respect […]' (R4)<br>'[…] Former patients often provide motivating feedback, encouraging others in recovery […]' |

Table 2 shows the massive challenges faced by social workers in addiction remedies, especially with alcohol-dependent people. One of the fundamental obstacles diagnosed is affected person motivation, as well as societal stigma, each of which impedes the development of recovery. Social workers also enjoy excessive tiers of burnout because of the emotional toll in their work, with many reporting feelings of exhaustion and a lack of recognition. The denial of addiction, both by patients and their households, is another essential barrier that complicates efforts to get people to accept treatment. Despite these challenges, memories of success, even though rare, spotlight the capacity for long-term healing via continual reme-

dies and guidance. These memories emphasise the importance of ethical standards, which includes respect for dignity and privacy, which assist acceptance and foster extra-effective care. As usual, the statistics exhibit the emotional and professional strain confronted by social worker employees in dependency settings, at the same time as additionally showing that, despite excessive burnout risks, good results are possible with sustained attempt and ethical practices. Those suffering from alcohol addiction often face stigmatisation, which makes seeking help even more difficult (Gao, 2014; Platt et al., 2021). Examples of good practice motivate social workers and serve as a prerequisite for the prevention of professional burnout.

Table 2 highlights the significance of ethical ideas, the involvement of the circle of relatives, and remarks by former patients in the remedying and reintegration of people convalescing from alcohol addiction. Families and close contacts play a crucial role in the recovery method, with social worker employees encouraging energetic participation, to foster healthy relationships and break dysfunctional patterns. But while family involvement is encouraged, a few families may resist, posing an obstacle to the remedy process. Additionally, former sufferers contribute significantly by sharing their recovery experience, motivating those still under-going treatment. Alcohol addiction impacts not just individuals but also their fami-lies and communities, creating economic and social burdens (Meges et al., 2022). However, the support of relatives, friends, colleagues and neighbours makes it possible to ease that burden and seek innovative intervention methods to address the problem of alcohol addiction.

## Conclusion

The findings revealed that alcohol addiction is a significant and growing issue in Lithuania, with both societal stigma and patient denial acting as substantial bar-riers to recovery. A major portion of individuals seeking help at the 'N' Addiction Centre do so due to external pressures from family, employers or legal obligations, often after experiencing serious personal losses. The patients' ages ranged widely, with those in the 40 to 65 age group being the best represented. Social workers at the centre were primarily engaged in guiding patients through behaviour change, connecting them with resources and providing both individual and group support. However, challenges in patient motivation and relapse rates, especially in the first year of recovery, remain high, requiring consistent and effective intervention stra-tegies to foster long-term recovery. The impact of social work interventions on the recovery of alcohol-dependent individuals was considered vital. Social workers were noted as playing a central role in providing holistic care, by collaborating with specialists from various fields, such as psychiatrists and psychologists, to en-

sure comprehensive treatment. Techniques like motivational interviewing, relapse prevention and logotherapy were among the most widely used treatment methods. However, respondents indicated that high relapse rates were common due to unresolved emotional and behavioural issues, with relapse being viewed as a normal part of the recovery process. Despite these setbacks, success stories demonstrated that long-term recovery is achievable with persistent treatment, clear support, and the involvement of the patients' families. The support and participation of relatives, friends, colleagues and neighbours in the recovery process allows for social workers to seek innovative intervention methods in solving the problem of alcohol dependence.

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