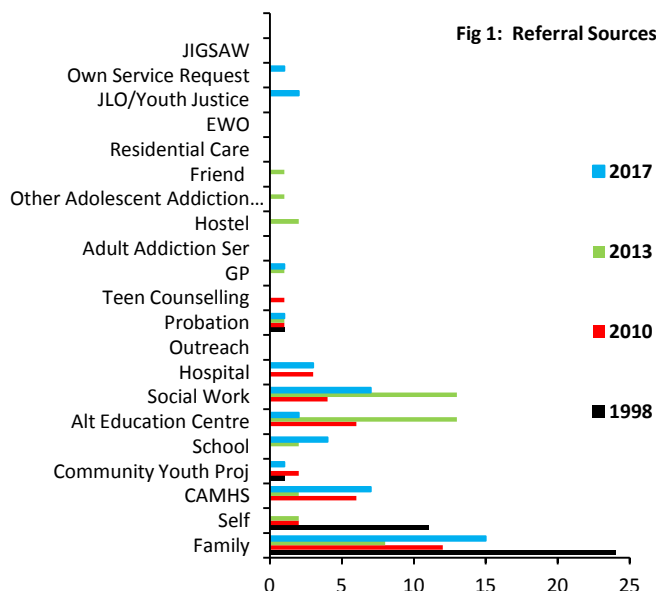
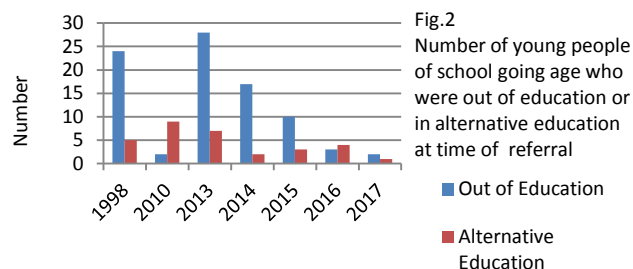


In 2017 the Adolescent Addiction Service worked with 44 young people and their families with a mean age of 15.5 years (range 14 - 18 years), comprising new referrals, re-referrals and continuances. The majority (84%) were male and 9% were Non-Irish Nationals. Referrals were received from a broad range of services and included some homeless families from within and outside of catchment area. See Fig.1 for a comparison with previous years. In addition to direct work with young people and families the service engaged in consultations with other professionals and services about young people for whom there were concerns in relation to substance misuse, including consultations relating to young people who live outside of catchment area.



The numbers of young people attending the service of school going age, who were out of education/training at time of referral, continues to decrease, see Fig.2 for comparison with other years. But poor school attendance at 9% and absconding at 34% are issue that require attention. The number of young people who had previous/current contact with CAMHS was lower than at any stage in previous twenty one years at 40%. This may be influenced by introduction of JIGSAW Service within catchment area and where some parents confirm receiving referral information. All attendees were known to a number of agencies and on average the service worked with three other agencies on behalf of young people (range=1-7) in addition to other concerned persons. The extent to which substance misuse featured within families was high compared to previous year at 57% and incidence of parental separation was also high at 63% compared to 56% in

2016. In terms of referral areas, the greatest numbers of referrals were from Clondalkin (48%) followed by Lucan (23%), Ballyfermot (20%), Palmerstown (2%) and Inchicore (7%). See Fig.3 for comparison with previous years.



Cannabis/weed continues to be the main substance of use at 97% while Alcohol use was at 95%. Other substances of use included Cocaine 48%, Benzodiazepines 46%, Amphetamines 39% LSD 7%, Ketamine 7% and Opiates 4% including Heroin and Solpadine. Solvents and Head Shop type products did not feature among young people's substance use in 2017. The biggest shift concerning secondary drug use related to increase in Alcohol use by 35%, Cocaine use by 19%, Benzodiazepines 13% and Amphetamines 8%. Other issues presented related to indebtedness 30%, absconding 40% resulting in two young people accessing Out of Hours Services. Additionally seven young people had Social Work involvement and four had residential care placements. Significantly nineteen (43%) had been assigned JLO at some stage. Also hospital admission was high at 14% and 14% had a history of self-harm. The service submitted four Child Protection Notifications and convened one Meitheal as well as participating in a further Meitheal. Of those who exited treatment 58% had planned discharge, 27% declined further treatment and 15% moved out of community or returned to community of origin. Of those who had planned discharges less than 5% had onward referral to residential treatment or long-term residential aftercare.

The majority of young people 82% were seen by Family Therapist only, with 18% having Psychiatric Assessment. One young person was prescribed medication. As in previous years most young people had established patterns of substance use prior to referral (range 1mth to 4 years) and as a consequence some struggle to maintain drug free status but most achieve stability and several remain abstinent. The challenge within community is for parents and non-parental adults to identify young people within risk groups at early stage and to elevate concern for them.

