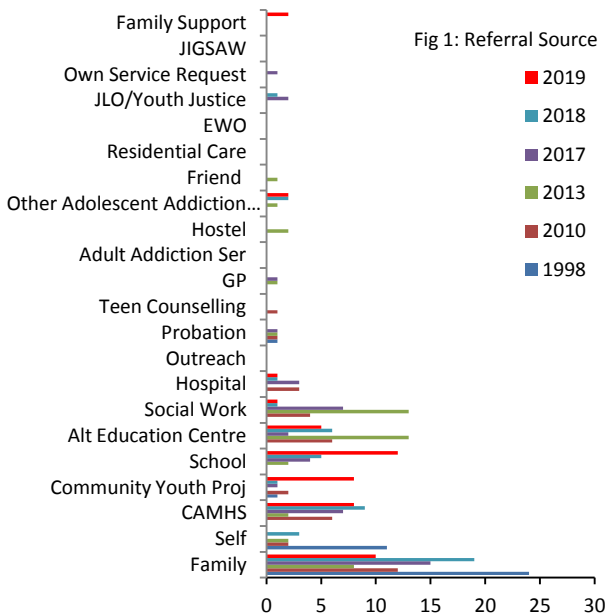
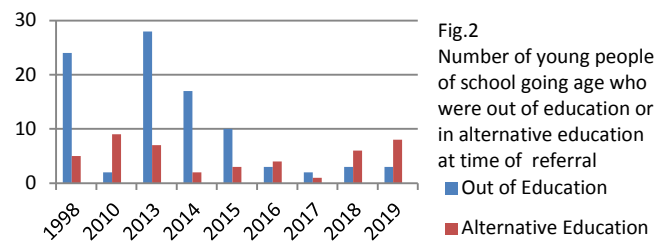


In 2019 the Adolescent Addiction Service worked with 49 young people and their families with a mean age of 15.3 years (range 13 - 18 years), comprising new referrals, re-referrals and continuances. The majority (90%) were male and 12% were Non-Irish Nationals. Referrals were received from a broad range of services, including some from outside of catchment area. See Fig.1 and Fig.3 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.



The numbers of young people attending the service of school going age, who were out of education/training at time of referral was similar to 2018, see Fig.2 for comparison with other years. But poor school attendance is an issue that requires attention. The number of young people who had previous/current contact with CAMHS was lower at 39% compared to 48% in 2018. 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=1-6) in addition to other concerned persons. The extent to which substance misuse featured within families was significantly lower at 37% compared to 52% in 2018 and 57% in 2017. The incidence of parental separation was also lower at 47% compared to 56% in 2018 and 63% in 2017 and 10% had one parent deceased. In terms of referral areas, the greatest numbers of referrals were from Clondalkin, followed by Lucan, Ballyfermot,

Palmerstown, and Inchicore, with two referrals from outside of catchment area. See Fig.3 for comparison with previous years.



Cannabis/Weed continues to be the primary substance of use at 96% with an overall use rate of 98% while Alcohol featured among 67% of attendees. Other substances of use included Cocaine 29%, Benzodiazepines 28%, Amphetamines 22%, Opiates 2% and deliverable eatables such as cookies and muffins containing unknown substances 8%. Solvents or and Head Shop type products did not feature among young people's substance use in 2019. The biggest shifts concerning secondary drug use related to increase in Benzodiazepine use by 16% as well as the introduction of eatables. There were decreases in Amphetamines use by 8% and Cocaine by 7%. Other issues presented related to absconding, indebtedness and holding distributing or dealing drugs. Some young people (6%) had Social Work involvement and eighteen (37%) had been assigned JLO at some stage. The service submitted Child Protection Notifications and worked towards convening a Meitheal and also held inter-agency meetings in relation to ten young people. Of those who exited treatment 62% had planned discharge, 33% declined further treatment and 5% moved out of community or returned to community of origin.

The majority of young people 94% were seen by Family Therapist only, with 6% having Psychiatric Assessment and 4% prescribed medication. As in previous years most young people had established patterns of substance use prior to referral and as a consequence some struggle to maintain drug free status but most achieve stability and several remain abstinent. As such 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.

