

ABSTRACT

Background: For several decades already, art therapeutic interventions have been part of complex therapeutic programs in institutional treatment of addictive disorders, both domestic and foreign. The concept of the art therapy oscillates between artistic symbolic expression, the art of therapy and clinical practice, where new approaches are being developed on the basis of target groups or therapeutic starting points.

Aims: To map the implementation and concept of the art therapeutic component of the program in institutional treatment of addictions. Other sub-objectives are also addressed.

Methods: In this qualitative study, preparation and process evaluations focused on therapeutic activity are applied. The sample was selected by self-selection and purposive sampling and contains nine workers from five institutions focused on treatment of addictions. Available documents related to the practice of art therapy and semi-structured interviews with art therapists and their collaborators were used to obtain the data. Text data from documents and transcripts of interviews was processed using the content analysis method with emphasis on ethical aspects especially in the field of data anonymization.

Results: The art therapy program usually takes place once a week obligatorily, art therapists are mainly focused on direct clinical practice in their work, minimally on the written anchoring of this practice. Some strictly adhere to one art therapy direction, others create their own mosaic-like eclectic approach. Art therapists perceive differences in artwork / the creative process of people with alcohol addictions versus other drug addictions. Cooperation with colleagues works well, because art therapists are valued for their point of view. They are disappointed by the development of medical legislation regulating the art therapist profession. The project documentation for implementation of the studied art therapy programs was not available, meaning that the programs' implementation was probably improvised.

Conclusion: Domestic clinical practice of art therapy does not follow foreign trends of creating art therapy guidelines. Art therapists use creation and therapeutic relationship as their most powerful tools, elements of diagnostics are applied within the team. Art therapy needs to strengthen its academic position and research activities, art therapists would also benefit from being legislatively classified as health-care workers again.

Key words: art therapy - evaluation - institutional treatment - addictive disorders