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Health
Research
Board

Family members seeking treatment in their own right:

Insights from Irish health data for 2010 to 2020

Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use

Cathy Kelleher

Research. Evidence. Action.

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Affected Family Members

Family members, friends, and colleagues affected by another person's problem drug use

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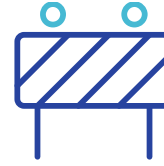
How are family members affected?



Stress and strain experienced by family members can negatively impact mental and physical health



Social support enhances coping and reduces negative impacts on health and functioning



Barriers exist for family members seeking help, such as stigma, fear and shame

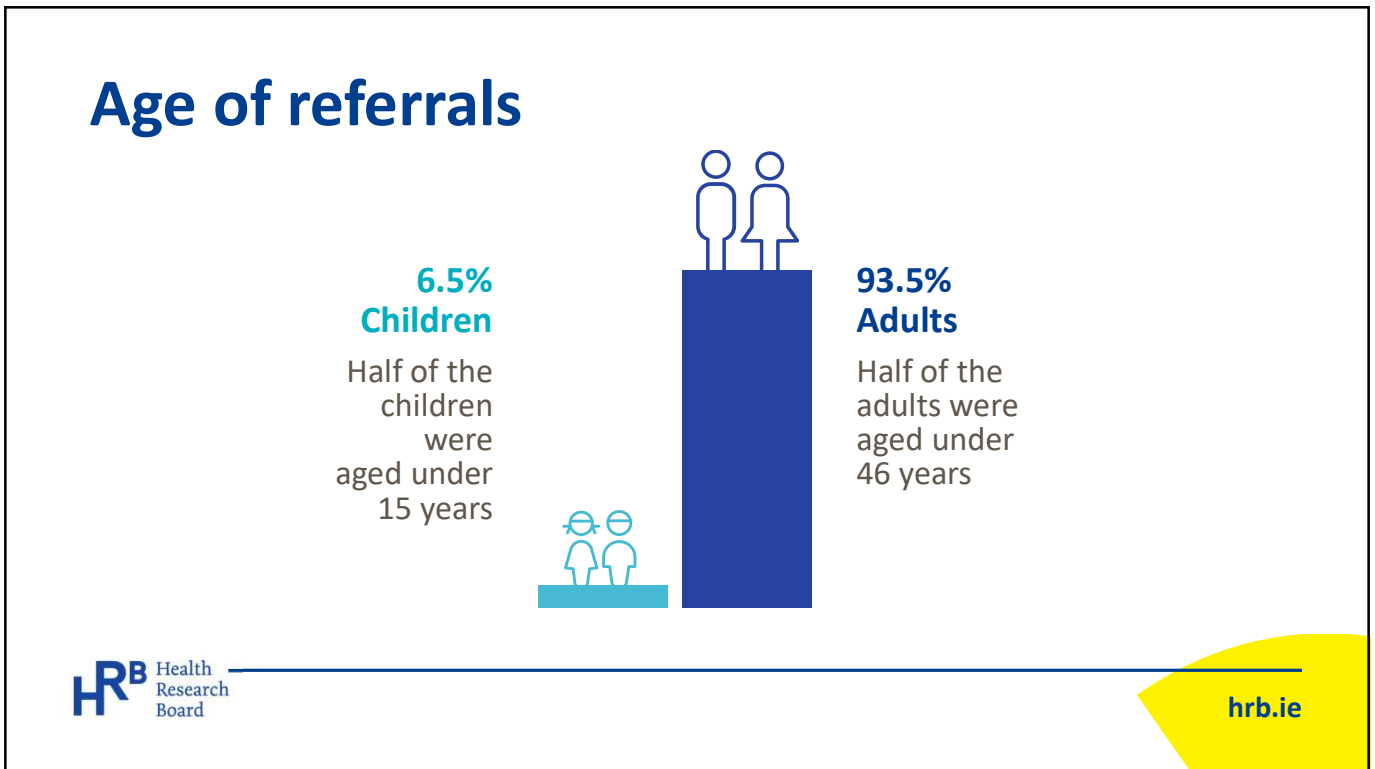
HRB data on affected family members 2010 to 2020



13,744
referrals
2010-2020

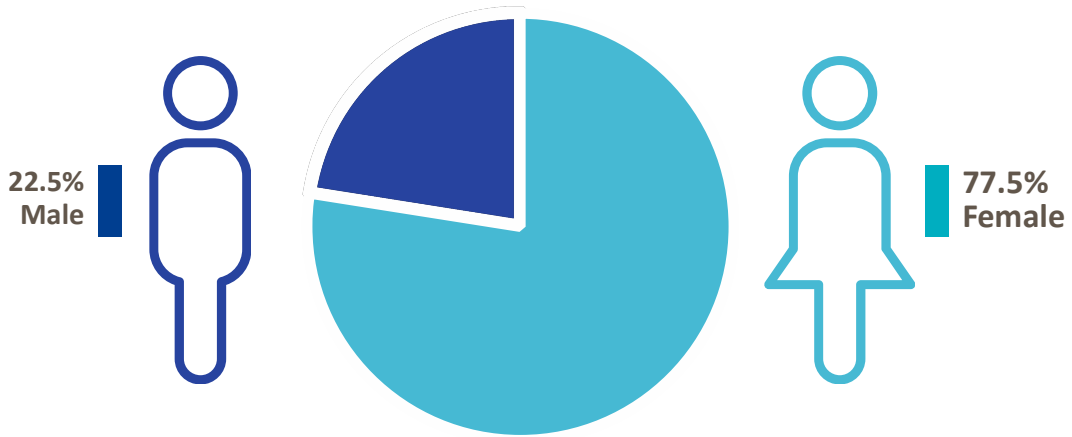


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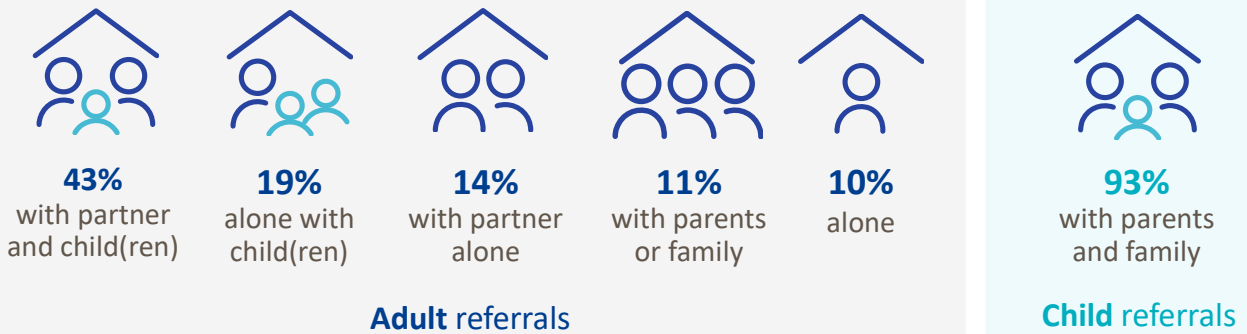
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Gender of referrals



7

Who were they living with?



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Employment status



51%
employed

Adult referrals



94%
in education

Child referrals

Who refers family members to services?



63%
self referral



13%
social /
community
services



11%
family and
friends

Adult referrals



41%
family and
friends



26%
social /
community
services



16%
school /
college

Child referrals

Type of treatment provided

Individual counselling

Brief intervention



Individual education awareness

Group education awareness

Group counselling

Family therapy

Summary

13,744

referrals for family members 2010-2020



Three-in-four were females,

mainly aged 35 to 54 years



One-in-twenty referrals were children,

half aged under 15 years



Most were living with others,

three-in-five with children

Conclusion

- It is difficult to assess the extent of hidden harm
- Need and demand for treatment is likely much greater
- Routine monitoring is a valuable source of evidence