

Symposium

📅 Thu. Sep 25, 2025 4:25 PM - 5:55 PM JST | Thu. Sep 25, 2025 7:25 AM - 8:55 AM UTC 🏛️ Session Room 2 (Main Hall B)

[Symposium 15] Disorders Due to Substance Use and Addictive Behaviors and Measures against Related Harm in Asia and around the Globe

Moderator: Susumu Higuchi (National Hospital Organization Kurihama Medical and Addiction Center), Sawitri Assanangkornchai (Prince of Songkla University)

[SY-15]

Disorders Due to Substance Use and Addictive Behaviors and Measures against Related Harm in Asia and around the Globe

Susumu Higuchi¹, Sawitri Assanangkornchai², Takashi Sunami⁴, Sachio Matsushita¹, Kristiana Siste³ (1.National Hospital Organization Kurihama Medical and Addiction Center(Japan), 2.Prince of Songkla University(Thailand), 3.University of Indonesia(Indonesia), 4.Saga-ken Medical Centre Koseikan(Japan))

[SY-15-01]

Substance Use Disorders in Asia: Epidemiological Trends, Cultural Contexts, and Emerging Policy Challenges

*Sawitri Assanangkornchai (Prince of Songkla University(Thailand))

[SY-15-02]

Global and Japanese Advances in the Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorders: Toward Achieving SDG Target 3.5

*TAKASHI SUNAMI (SAGA-KEN MEDICAL CENTRE KOSEIKAN(Japan))

[SY-15-03]

Prevalence of problem gambling and a clinical follow-up study of gambling disorders in Japan

*Sachio Matsushita (Kurihama Medical and Addiction Center(Japan))

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Keywords : Addiction、 Substance use、 Addictive behavior、 Related harm、 Measures

Recently, the concept of addiction has expanded, mainly due to the inclusion of gambling and gaming disorder as behavioral addictions in DSM-5 and ICD-11. Furthermore, the magnitude of issues related to disorders due to substance use and addictive behaviors is thought to have spread globally. In this context, the purpose of the symposium is to describe the current state of substance use and addictive behaviors, related disorders, and countermeasures including treatment, in Asia and around the globe. To illuminate this issue, we are delighted to welcome four world renowned investigators in this field. Prof. Assanangkornchai will present on the current status of substance use disorders and their impact on health and social life, both in Asia and globally. She will also discuss potential future directions for research, prevention, and interventions, and will emphasize the need for comprehensive policy responses. Next, Dr. Sunami will describe the recent development of measures against alcohol-related harm in Japan, before turning to the treatment of alcohol use disorders and implementation of policies to reduce harmful use of alcohol in various countries, and then discussing effective ways to achieve SDG health target 3.5. Following this, Dr. Matsushita will present on the actual state of gambling and the results of a survey on the prevalence of gambling disorder in Japan. He will also report on the data of a clinical one-year follow-up study of patients with gambling disorder, post-diagnosis. Our final speaker, Dr. Kristiana, will provide data on the prevalence of gaming disorder globally, especially in Asia and more specifically in Indonesia. She will also mention the risk factors of gaming disorder from biological, psychological and social aspects, and outline evidence-based treatment modalities that are effective for gaming disorder. Lastly, attendees will have the opportunity to discuss the content of each presentation.

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[SY-15-01] Substance Use Disorders in Asia: Epidemiological Trends, Cultural Contexts, and Emerging Policy Challenges

*Sawitri Assanangkornchai (Prince of Songkla University(Thailand))

Keywords : Substance use disorders、Asia、Methamphetamine、Drug policy

Substance use disorders (SUDs) are a significant global public health concern, contributing to approximately 0.6 million deaths in 2019, primarily due to infectious diseases and drug overdoses, especially among opioid users. In 2021, an estimated 296 million individuals aged 15–64 engaged in psychoactive drug use, leading to a loss of 36.7 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) in 2019. This burden disproportionately affects the working-age population, impeding sustainable development and economic productivity. Focusing on Asia, this presentation examines the region's unique cultural, socioeconomic, and policy landscapes influencing SUD prevalence and treatment. Factors such as collectivist values, religious beliefs, traditional medicine practices, stigma, and gender roles significantly shape substance use patterns and help-seeking behaviours. Rapid urbanisation, economic disparities, and varying substance availability complicate the issue. A critical area of concern is the escalating methamphetamine problem in East and Southeast Asia, home to the world's largest population of amphetamine-type stimulant users. The evolving drug policy landscape, exemplified by Thailand's recent cannabis legalisation, presents both opportunities and challenges. While legalisation has spurred economic growth in sectors like tourism and agriculture, it has also raised public health concerns, including increased accessibility to youth and potential rises in addiction rates. Additionally, the use of plant-based substances like kratom, prevalent in Southeast Asia, warrants attention due to its complex pharmacological profile. Traditionally used for pain relief and to combat fatigue, kratom has potential therapeutic applications but also poses risks of misuse and addiction. This presentation will explore emerging trends in substance use, the influence of commercial determinants, and potential future directions for research, prevention, and intervention efforts in both global and Asian contexts. Emphasis will be placed on the necessity for comprehensive, culturally sensitive policy responses to mitigate the adverse impacts of psychoactive substance use on health and development.

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Moderator: Susumu Higuchi (National Hospital Organization Kurihama Medical and Addiction Center), Sawitri Assanangkornchai (Prince of Songkla University)

[SY-15-02] Global and Japanese Advances in the Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorders: Toward Achieving SDG Target 3.5

*TAKASHI SUNAMI (SAGA-KEN MEDICAL CENTRE KOSEIKAN(Japan))

Keywords : alcohol dependence、reduced drinking、WHO、SAFER、SDGs 3.5

Alcohol-related problems remain a major global public health concern. In 2010, the World Health Organization adopted the Global Strategy to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol, outlining ten policy areas to guide national responses. In line with this, Japan enacted the Basic Act on Measures Against Alcohol-related Harm in 2013. This legislation established fundamental principles and responsibilities for national and local governments, and set forth ten core policy actions, including public awareness initiatives.

Historically, treatment in Japan focused exclusively on alcohol dependence, with abstinence as the only goal. However, in recent years, international guidelines recommend starting treatment in non-specialist healthcare settings and adopting a reduced-drinking goal for patients with mild to moderate alcohol dependence. To reflect this shift, Japanese academic societies developed the Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Alcohol and Drug Use Disorders in 2018, formally recognizing reduced drinking as a viable treatment target.

In addition to treating alcohol dependence, Japan is expanding its efforts to address heavy drinking, underage drinking, and alcohol use during pregnancy, guided by the Basic Act.

Globally, the WHO launched the SAFER initiative in 2018, a five-part policy package aimed at reducing harmful alcohol use through evidence-based strategies, including regulating availability, enforcing drink-driving laws, providing treatment access, restricting advertising, and increasing alcohol taxes.

Furthermore, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 include Target 3.5, which calls for strengthening the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, including harmful alcohol use.

This presentation will review the evolving approaches to alcohol-related treatment in Japan and abroad, and explore realistic and evidence-based strategies that mental health professionals can implement to contribute to achieving SDG Target 3.5.

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[SY-15-03] Prevalence of problem gambling and a clinical follow-up study of gambling disorders in Japan

*Sachio Matsushita (Kurihama Medical and Addiction Center(Japan))

Keywords : Gambling、Addiction、Actual situation

Japan reportedly has the third-largest gambling market after China and the United States. Compared to the rest of the world, Japan is in a unique situation in terms of gambling. Gambling is generally illegal in Japan although permissible by law for horse, bicycle, speedboat, and motorcycle racing events. The largest markets in the gambling industry are pachinko and pachislot. Unique gaming venues, such as pachinko parlors, are ubiquitous in Japan. This contrasts sharply with many Asian countries, where a small number of large casinos are heavily promoted and typically concentrated in a few major cities. Furthermore, the widespread accessibility of pachinko has created a unique gambling environment in Japan. Moreover, passed in 2018, the Integrated Resort Bill has attracted considerable attention owing to its attempt to institutionalize casinos. Although gambling is harmless to most individuals, it can be addictive and problematic, with severe negative consequences for some. Therefore, the expansion of legalized gambling is an important public health concern. Concerns about gambling have encouraged research into its epidemiology, as such studies can provide information about the incidence of gambling disorders (GD) and the potential effectiveness of policies implemented to prevent harm due to gambling. Although many such studies have been conducted worldwide in Asian countries are relatively sparse. This presentation reports data on the actual state of gambling and the results of a 2023 resident survey on the prevalence of GD in Japan. The results indicated that 44.9% of men and 26.5% of women have gambled in the past year and 2.8% and 0.5% were suspected of having GD, respectively. In addition to epidemiological studies, we report a clinical one-year follow-up study of patients with GD after diagnosis.