




Merchants Quay Ireland
Homeless & Drugs Services

International Overdose Awareness Day 2022



“Smoking heroin gave me a break from what I was thinking about, because a lot of stuff had happened to me from a young age that I didn’t have control over”.

“I’d say coping with childhood trauma is one of the biggest things that drives women into addiction.”



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What are the Facts?

- ▶ **Globally**, women are estimated to account for **1/3** of the 275 million people who use drugs and **1/5** of the estimate of people who inject drugs.
- ▶ **In Europe**, women make up approximately **24%** of all people with a serious drug problem and **20%** of all entrants to drug treatment.
- ▶ **In Ireland**, it was estimated that over **287,000** women suffered from alcohol or drug abuse in 2020. The number experiencing domestic violence was ranging from 6,169 to 11,058 (HRB 2021).
 - In 2014 - 2020, women were more likely to use crack cocaine entering treatment.
 - In 2021, women accounted for one in four cases (25.2%) of those who recorded cocaine as their main problem drug (HRB NDTRS, 2015-2021).

What are the barriers facing women?

MQI client Joanne*'s words, read by MQI staff member:



Joanne's Story

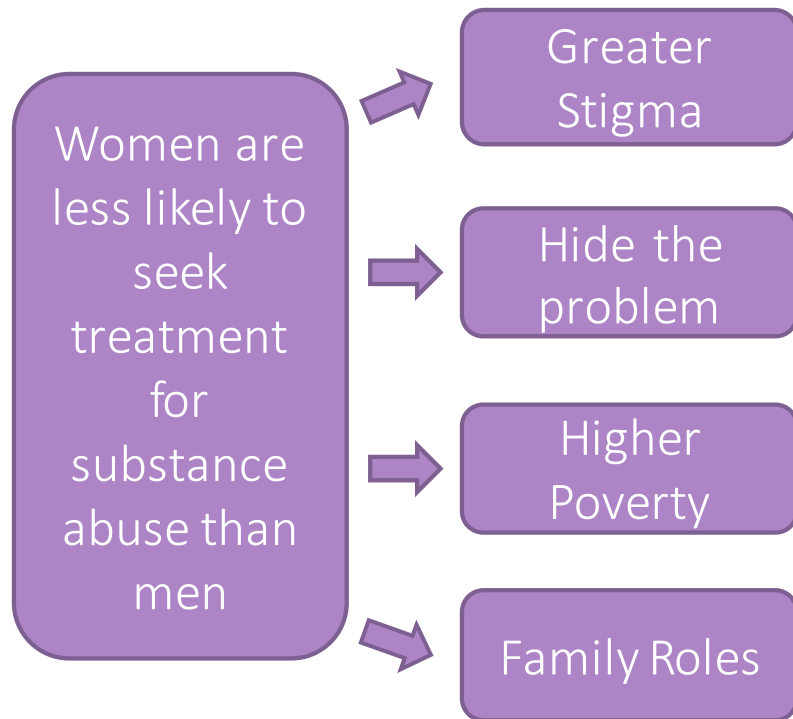
Former MQI client

Women in addiction suffer serious shame.



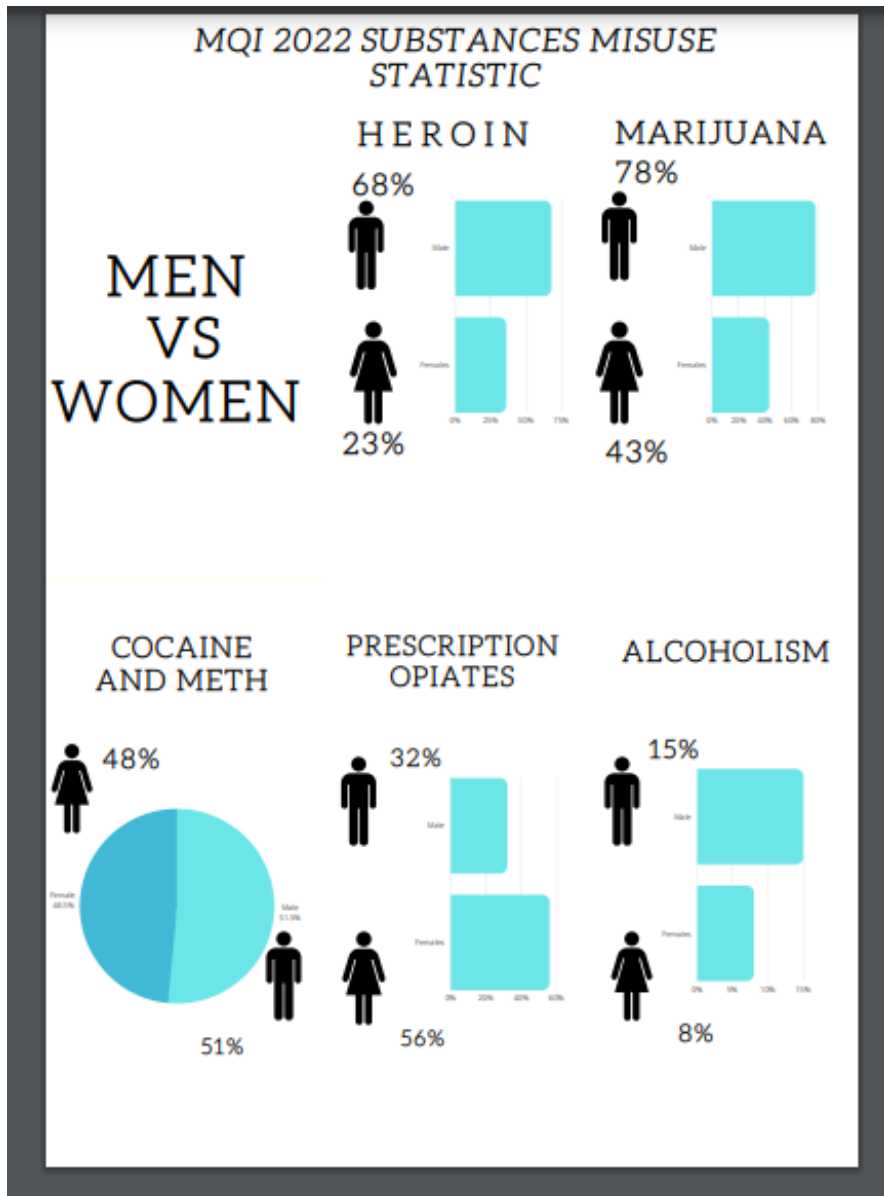
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What are the barriers facing women?



► Women who use drugs may have less social support than men because they are more likely to come from families with substance use problems and have a substance-using partner. (EMCDDA, 2020).

► Relationships with children are very important and may play a central role in women's drug use and recovery. Female treatment entrants are more likely than males to live with their children. 70% of women entering treatment would have children (EMCDDA, 2020).



MQI 2022 Substances Misuse Statistics

Co-occurring Issues

- ▶ Mental Health including Mood & Personality Disorders
- ▶ Poor Physical Health including Eating disorder
- ▶ Trauma - physical or sexual abuse
- ▶ Gender Specific Violence & Coercive Control

MQI Statistics

- ▶ Over the last 3 years, on average 20% of MQI clients were women.
- ▶ Only 23% of those accessing treatment in 2021 were women.
- ▶ Overall, in 2021 there was a 4% increase in the number of overdoses (men and women).
- ▶ 54 Women have engaged in Jane's Place since February 2022.



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Our Actions

- ▶ April 2021, First Gender Specific detox in St. Francis Farm
- ▶ September 2021 – Launch of ‘A Place of Her Own’
- ▶ February 2022 – the Launch of ‘Jane’s Place’ a gender specific service with specific health services currently being provided on a Monday in Riverbank
- ▶ March 2022 – 10 Week Health & Wellbeing Programme took place – 14 women enrolled in the programme
- ▶ March 2022 – First Meeting of the Research Advisory Group to launch the research study which will explore the lived experiences of women with substance use and intersectional aspects including their engagement with services; Define the unique gendered support needs and service pathways for women and inform future Irish drug policy and service pathways.
- ▶ June 2022 – MQI CAMDAS (Cavan/Monaghan) – 8 week pilot women’s health and wellbeing group - 6 women enrolled in the programme



MQI client Cathy*'s words, read by MQI staff member:



Cathy

MQI Client



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International Overdose Awareness Day

prevention and remembrance

TIME TO
REMEMBER. #END OVERDOSE
TIME TO ACT.



Thank you for listening.

For more information:

- ▶ Website: www.mqi.ie
- ▶ Twitter: @MerchantsQuayIR
- ▶ Facebook: MerchantsQuayIR
- ▶ Instagram: @MerchantsQuayIR
- ▶ Watch our short film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SskmxdtLyE>



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