

## **PERCEPTION OF DRUG ADDICTION AND THE STATE OF THE PROBLEM IN RUSSIA**

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**Introduction.** According to the statistics of 2019, more than 8,000 people in Russia die from the drug overdose each year. Therefore, fighting against the drug addiction it is necessary to understand why this situation has arisen and what it is related to.

**Objective.** Correlating the perception of drug addiction in Russian history and the prevalence of the substance use in Russia.

**Materials and methods.** Qualitative analysis of the literature on the subject.

**Results.** The first encounter with narcotic substances took place in the early Paleolithic [2,3]. In Russia, the usage of drugs was present in pagan Russia, this can be illustrated by the mythology (Baba-Yaga, the Magi) [1]. The first national studies of the drug addiction were conducted at the end of the 19th century. In the 1920s-1930s Russia assessed the drug addiction as a socially condemned disease. This was followed by an era of «elimination», which was expressed in an active belief that the problem did not need any research. Only by the end of the 1970s, the drug addiction had become a subject for research (67,000 drug users were registered then). With the development of the democracy, the scientific approach to the problem got more prevalent with the idea that a drug addict is a sick person. However, people and society continue to stigmatize the concept of drug addiction, whereas the statistics of drug abuse continue to grow (18 million users in 2020).

**Conclusion.** As it can be seen from the analysis of the scientific literature, psychoactive substances have accompanied society throughout all stages of mankind's development history. Attitude towards drug addicts has also changed historically, but the perception of them as sick people is the least common. Thus, the further work on preventive activities is needed to remove the stigma of addicts as marginal people and reduce the burden of the problem in our country.

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