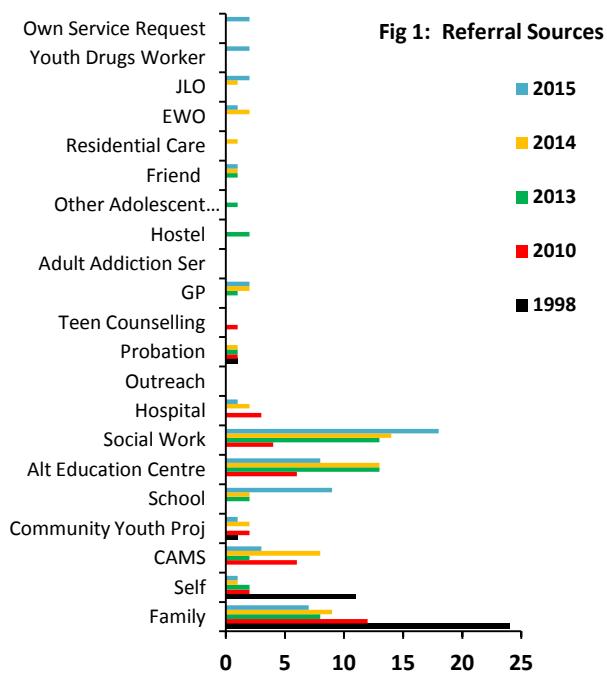


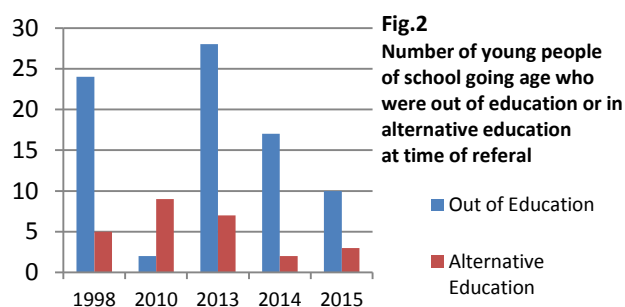
# Adolescent Addiction Service Report 2016

In 2015 the Adolescent Addiction Service worked with 58 young people and their families with a mean age of 15.5 years (range 14–18 years), comprising new referrals, re-referrals and continuances. The majority (76%) were male representing an increase on previous year by 7%. Referrals were received from a broad range of services See Fig. 1 for a comparison with previous years. In addition to direct work with young people and families the service engaged in consultations with other professionals and services about young people for whom there were concerns in relation to substance misuse, including consultations relating to young people who live outside of catchment area.



The numbers of young people attending the service of school going age and who were out of education/training at time of referral decreased to 18%. See Fig 2 for comparison with other years. Also the number of young people who had previous/current contact with CAMHS was significantly less than other years at 60%, representing a drop of 15%. Yet the overall profile of attendees is consistent with research highlighting that young people with pre-existing mental health or behavioural difficulties are at greater risk of engaging in substance misuse and other risk behaviours. All attendees were known to a number of agencies and on average the service worked with two other agencies on behalf of young people (range=1-5) in addition to other concerned persons. The extent to

which substance misuse featured within families continues to drop at 36% compared to 45% in 2014 and 68% in 2013. Additionally the number of young people who had parent/sibling linked to Adult Addiction services also decreased at 19% compared to 24% in 2014. The incidence of parental separation remains high at 66% but also indicates a drop of 9% on the previous year. In terms of referral areas, the greatest numbers of referrals were from Clondalkin (35%), Ballyfermot (32%), Lucan (21%), Palmerstown (7%) and Inchicore (5%). See Fig 3 for comparison with previous years.



Cannabis/weed continues to be the primary substance of use (93%). Other substances used included Alcohol (86%); Cocaine (40%); Benzodiazepines (36%); Amphetamines (33%); and LSD (2%). The biggest shift concerning secondary drug use related to increased Cocaine and Benzodiazepine usage. In contrast Solvents and Head Shop type products did not feature among young people's reported substance usage in 2015, but 46% had issues relating to indebtedness. Other issues related to early onset sexual activity (29%); absconding (26%); care placement (12%); child protection (11%) child to parent violence (5%); self-harm (14%); suicide ideation (2%) and attempted suicide (2%). Additionally, young people's capacity to purchase alcohol or to have alcohol purchased for them continues to be an issue.

The majority of young people 78% were seen by Family Therapist only while 22% (N=13) had Psychiatric Assessment with 4% (N=2) receiving medication as part of outpatient Benzodiazepine detoxification. As in previous years most young people had established patterns of substance for over two years prior to referral (range 1mth to 4 years) and as a consequence many struggle to maintain drug free status but most achieve stability and several remain abstinent.

