



# The Changing Profile of Affected Family Members in Ireland: Who is Living With Whom?

Monica Whyte.

Image courtesy of Hans Schwarzkopf

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How visible are multigenerational families within substance abuse services

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# 01 Hidden Population

‘ Home is the place, where when you have to go there,

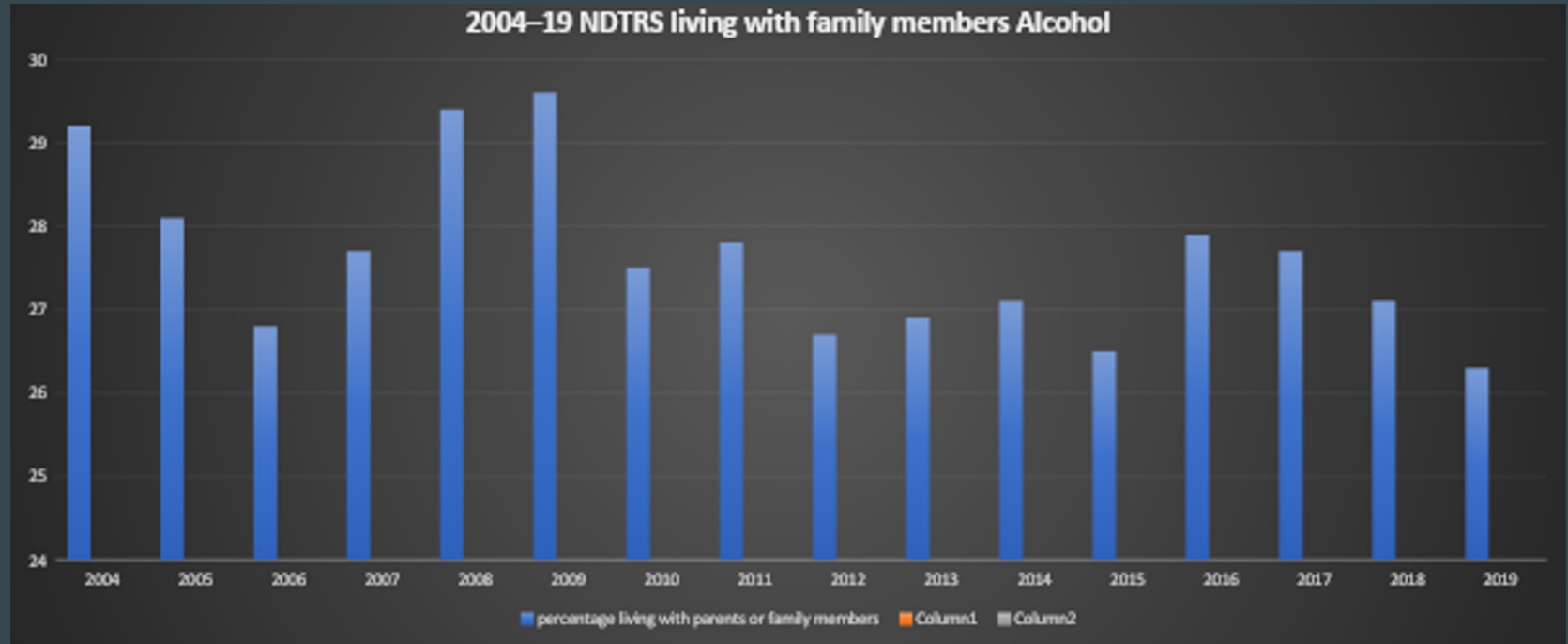
they have to take you in.’

( The Death of the Hired Man. R . Frost, 1914)

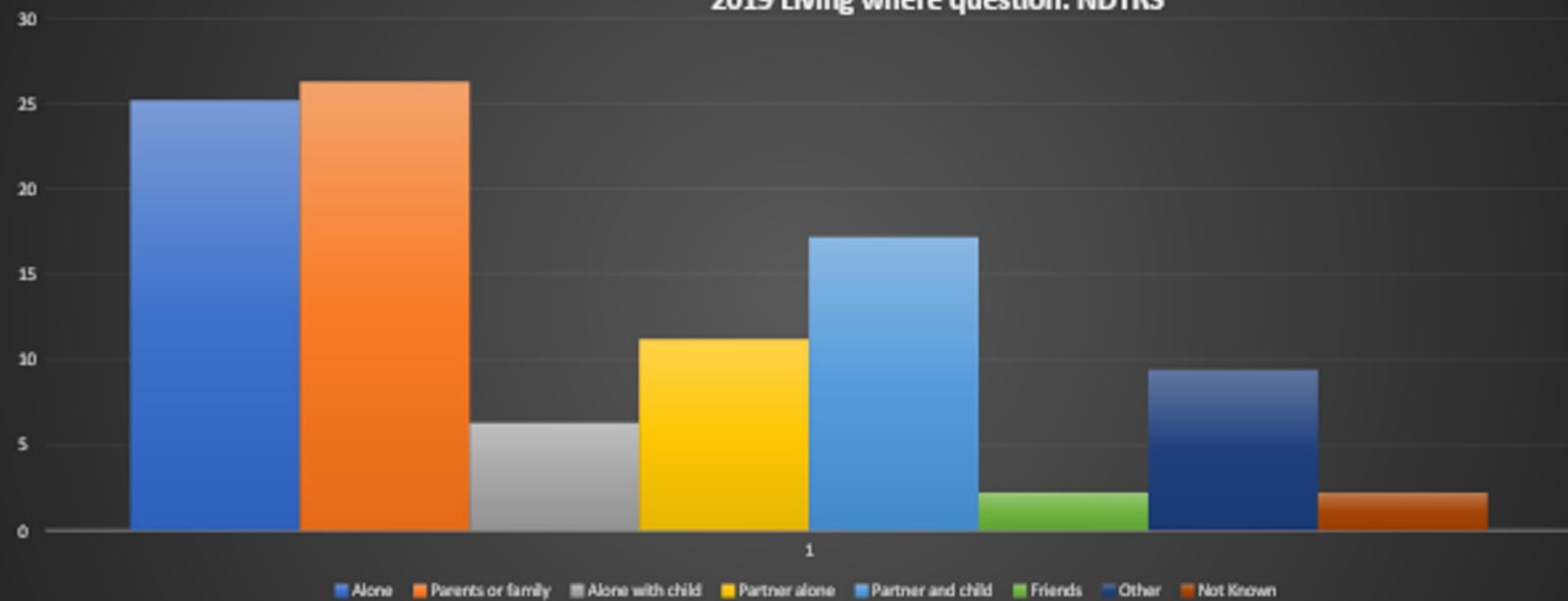
# Finding a hidden population : Where to Look?

- EMCDDA ➤ European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
- HRB ➤ Health Research Board
- NDTRS ➤ National Drug Treatment Reporting System
- EN ➤ NDTMS,
- SC + NI ➤ Daisy,
- Wales ➤ WNDSM
- TDI ➤ Treatment Demand Indicators

# Irish NDTRS Statistics



2019 Living where question: NDTRS



# Profile

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From this analysis of the data, we can see that the profile will be male clients in the age range age of 36–44+, who will be drinking daily and classed as alcohol-dependent.



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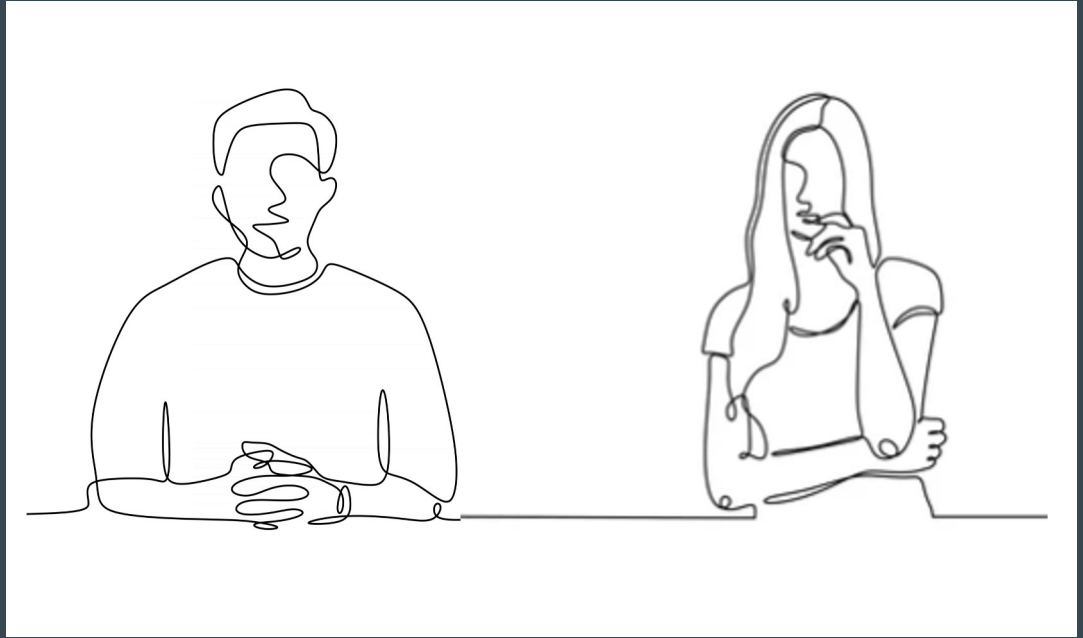
# Profile

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From this analysis of the data, we can see that the profile of affected family members will be parents in the age range:

Male = 63-71+

Female = 61-69+





# European Countries with Similar Patterns

- The pattern of high levels of clients living with parents or family members is evident with between 20 and 40 per cent of clients in this situation.
- Seen in Croatia, Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain.
- The median age of these clients is between 36 and 46. Mostly will be alcohol-dependent and drinking every day.



# 02 Lived Experience



# 03 Themes

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1. Silencing pressures.
2. Circles of fear: fear of, fear about, fear to.
3. High-pitched whine of anxiety.
4. Protecting and fixing: the roles and positions of protecting and fixing.
5. Getting the right support: listening for alcohol and seeing beyond the presenting issue.

# Silencing Pressure

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my problem was always that lack of targeted support and the silence in the family.

The silence and the masks, you know, they wouldn't let the mask slip and so I couldn't let the mask slip either.

I would say, 'No, I am not letting him in,' and it was the fear, and then I would let him in. The fear that anything could happen to him out there, and I would take him in.

4 am awake. I cannot describe what life has done to me

How is this going to unfold? I think of the knock on the door. Who will it be? Derek or someone else?  
Tears always there

# Fear Bound Systems

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# High-pitched whine of anxiety

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I am watching from the outside, yes, trying to talk to my mother, saying you know, are you sure this is what you want? And I might as well have been standing in front of a tsunami with my arms out. In the end, I just gave up and I tried to get on with my own life, but it had a terrible effect on me.

# Protecting and fixing: the roles and positions of protecting and fixing

Parent

Victim

Keeper

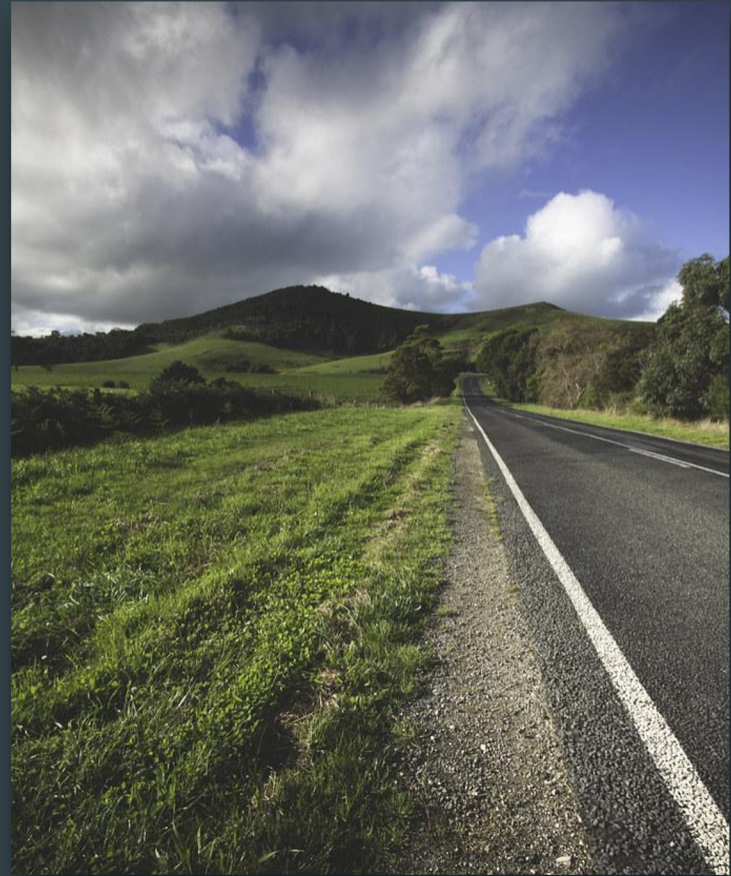
Parent

Victim

Keeper



Getting the right support: listening for alcohol and seeing beyond the presenting issue.





# 04 Barriers and Facilitators

# Structural and Organizational Barriers 1

- Front-line treatment level: The concept of client confidentiality is a difficult area for therapists when dealing with adult service-users who are living with vulnerable adults or family members.
- Organizational Levels: In the national TDI, each country has discretion over which demographic data they deem relevant. This, in effect, screened out those adults living with parents. Neither is data on Affected family members apart from children under 18 collected. The EMCDDA is similarly focused on individual treatment of the person in an addictive relationship with substances.
- Practice based evidence cannot feed up to systems above.

# Structural and Organizational Barriers 2

- Theoretical Levels :Individual Change Vs Systemic Change
- Conceptual levels: Stress Strain and Coping Support (SSCS)
- Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT),
- Non Violent Resistance (NVR)

# Thank You !



Questions?

[monica.whyte@hse.ie](mailto:monica.whyte@hse.ie)

# References

- Suggested Citation for this presentation
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