

Systematic biases in the delivery of SBI by GPs in England

Eileen Kaner, Tim Rapley & Carl May

Funded by: Alcohol Education and Research Council



Seeing through a glass darkly?

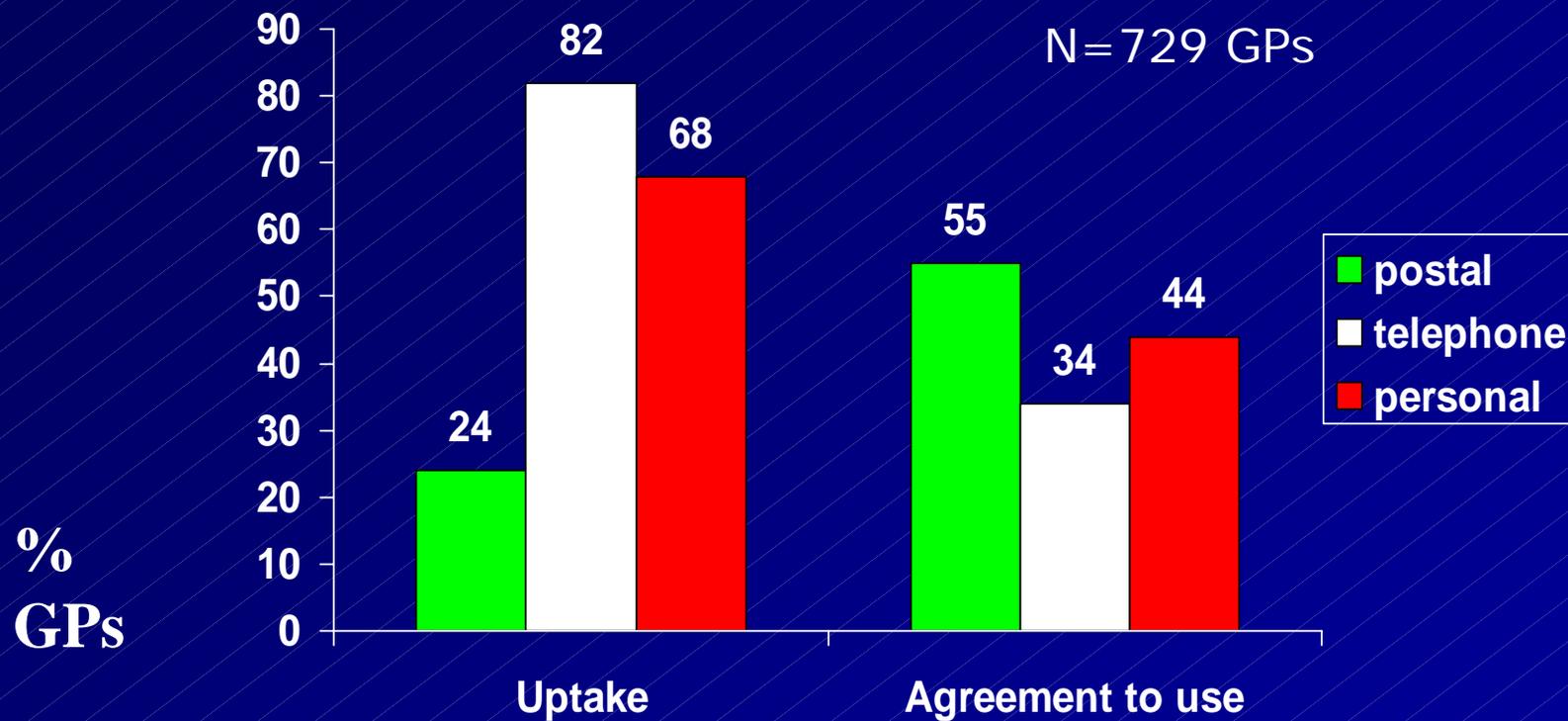


Kaner et al. A qualitative exploration of GPs' drinking and their alcohol intervention practices. *Family Practice* 2006; 23: 481-7.

Context – WHO Phase 3, strand 3

- Development Screening tools; BI protocols
- Evaluation Trials of effect (cost/effect)
- Dissemination Information to target group
- Implementation Changing practice
- Quality Assurance Accurate delivery
- Refinement Practice fit, sub-groups
- Roll-out Systemic use

Dissemination Trial



Lock et al. 1999 BJGP; Lock & Kaner 2000 J Eval Clin Prac

Implementation Trial

GPs n=128

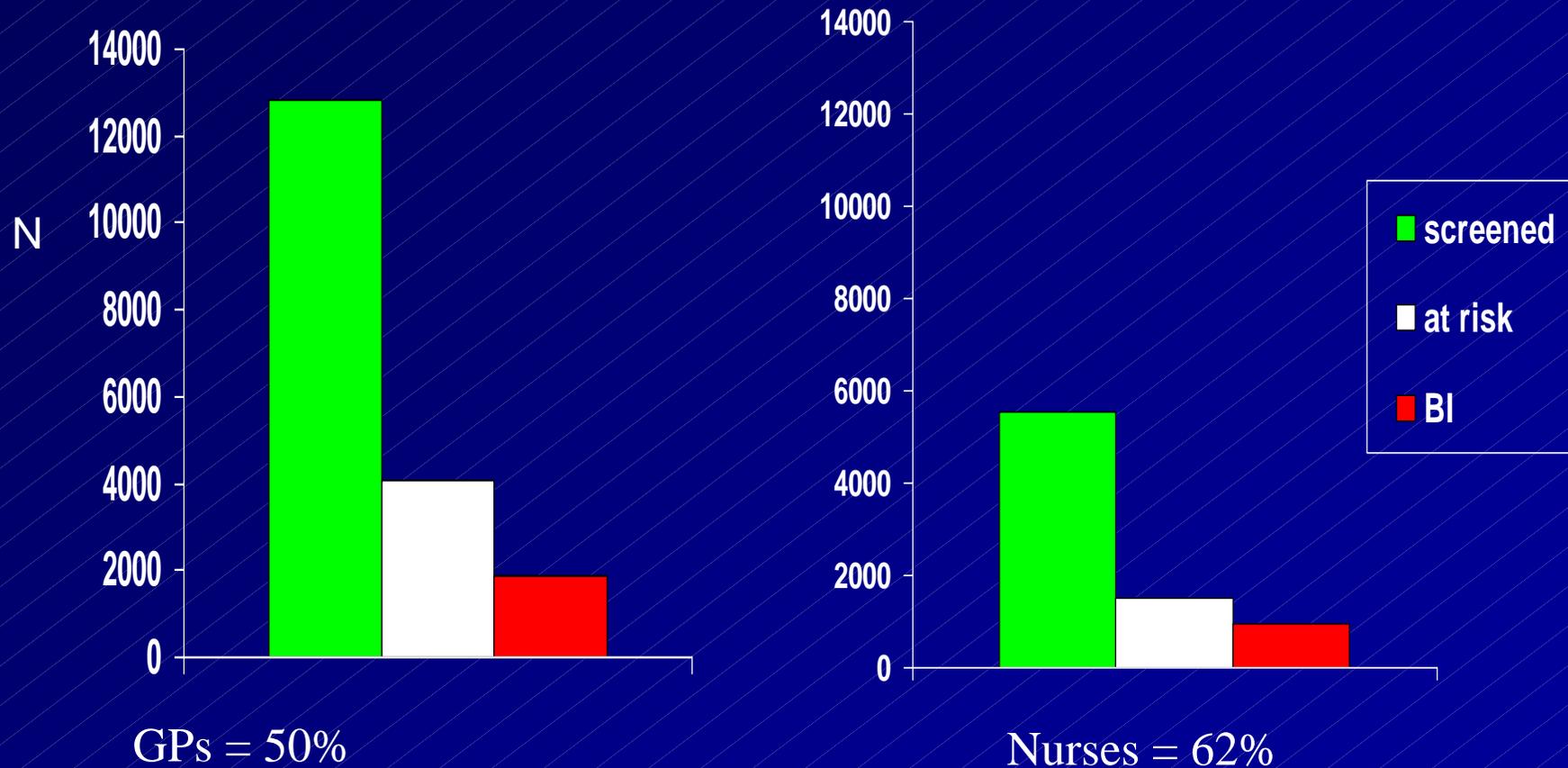


Nurses n=212



Kaner et al. 1999 BJGP; 2003 Patient Education & Counselling

SBI delivery



Kaner et al. 2001 BJGP; Kaner et al. 2003 Family Practice

Variation in BI

- GPs - Risk drinkers least likely to get BI are professionals, females, students & university educated patients (Kaner et al. 2001 BJGP)
- Nurses - Risk drinkers least likely to get BI are females (Lock & Kaner 2004 Fam Prac)



Study & aim

- Exploration of the relationship between clinical evidence and practical experience in shaping alcohol-related practice
- To explore the possible influence of GPs' drinking on their engagement with alcohol-related work

Method

- Qualitative interview study
- Maximum variation sample of 29 GPs
 - age, sex, practice type/location, experience
- GP drinking was emergent, explored further in later interviews
- Initial findings taken to 3 GP task groups
 - further discussion, challenge refinement

GPs' drinking – a spectrum

'I don't drink myself and I've never been drunk in my life erm so I can actually say I, apart from being anaesthetised in an operation, I can remember every minute of my life.. I've seen the effects that alcohol has had on people ... I've been there, so it's personal experience as well' (GP 29M)

'I don't drink a lot because erm it makes me feel ill. I get, I feel I get drunk really quickly it makes me feel really ill and I get total hangovers, but I do like drinking and I'm quite happy to have a couple of glasses of wine, but I think by virtue of getting drink quite easily I don't exceed the limits, probably did do when I was a student but I don't now' (GP3F)

‘I have probably 2 units of alcohol per day in the form of a glass of whisky at the end of a night, and my biggest neuroticism is that that glass of whisky becomes bigger every night..’ (GP2M)

‘You do get a shock and y’know you and me, I’m in the business and we know what we’re doing, we think,..I mean the wife drank a bottle of wine, white wine last night erm between us and that was only two glasses each er but they were big glasses and you think alright I only had two glasses of wine last night, I probably had five, six units easy..’
(GP15M)

'binge drinking is very interesting because er y'know I, I suppose I'm a more of a binge drinker .. so I don't drink during the week and I have six pints on Friday and Saturday and four on a Sunday well that's probably bad for you' (GP5M)

Sharing can promote insight

'You know, it's quite easy to drink a lot isn't it and, you know, you don't realise quite 'cause it is easy to identify with er, drinking too much. Em, 'cause it would be quite easy to do (laughs) and personally I have actually, after I discovered there were eight units in a bottle of wine I've drunk less 'cause I decided I'd better. I hadn't realised, I think I was drinking more units than I thought I was..' (GP14F)

Provide a way in with some patients

'I mean with younger people y'know you can cheerfully say well yeah y'know "ok y'know I always have nights when I drank more than I should have and I've done things I shouldn't but y'know it's important to make sure that doesn't reflect on your health too much in the future" y'know and you can make it quite light hearted' (GP8F)

Social distancing

' for a long time em, I used to smoke and give people anti-smoking advice so I've completely distanced what I do and what I say... It doesn't make me address my own alcohol problems when I'm talking about them to other people, but I think I've learned to switch that off' (GP21F)

Personal bench-marking

my gold standard for myself is probably what I would consider as a gold standard for my patients.. and I think you do 'cause I sort of think well.. that's OK erm, but I'm aware that it is.. it's normal but it's the upper limit of normal .. comes down to this thing that's what socially acci within our circle that's.. you know socially acceptable and that there would be a risk of some who drinks more than that .. and then finding it difficult to intervene' (GP27F)

Normalisation

'we normalise by assuming that if someone drinks alcohol then they drink alcohol erm like we do.. and I suppose even if you drink too much as a GP you probably try and normalise a lot of the time and tell yourself that that's just a healthy intake erm .. there's a degree of separation between view of alcohol as a problem and ...the kind of nice thing to have on a night' (GP 9M)

Not looking too hard

'I'd like to think I vaguely stick to the limits possibly most of the time and that's I don't, I'm not looking at it any harder than that, erm and and for patients I would, I would probably be advising them the same way as I would be advising me, the ones in who it was safe for them to keep drinking' (GP22F)

Is a problem drinker someone who drinks more than their GP?

'I drink a reasonable amount so er I look at that and I do I do very consciously er identify with the idea that y'know if people drink more than me than they're probably drinking too much, I don't drink anything y'know horrendously it's probably drink to the upper limit of the accepted.' (GP 5M)

Discussion

- Alcohol is a difficult & complex business
- Window of opportunity: for some GPs sharing drinking can shed light on this behaviour or provide a 'way in' to discussion – **insightful care**
- Seeing through the glass darkly: other GPs selectively recognise risk in patients that drink more, or differently, to them – **inconsistent care**

Questions?



"Nine out of ten doctors think excessive drinking is bad for your health. Luckily mine is the tenth."

Email: e.f.s.kaner@newcastle.ac.uk