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## **Alcohol Use in Greece and the Role of a Specialized Alcohol Unit in a General Hospital**

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In Greece, a European country with a total of population 11,110,000, wine drinking is the most common type of alcohol consumption followed by beer (28%) and spirits (24%). The national policy includes an action plan, a monitoring system, support for community action, excise tax on beer and spirits but not wine. There is no legally binding regulation advertising or sponsorship/sales promotion.

Monitoring the mortality and morbidity of alcoholism, liver cirrhosis is the first cause of death, followed by car accidents. The prevalence of alcohol use disorders in Greece is 7, 9% and the prevalence of alcohol dependence is 4, 2% in male and 2, 5% in female individuals.

In order to offer a specialized psychiatric assistance in a big general hospital of Athens, a specialist alcohol unit in 'ATTIKON" University General Hospital was established in 2009. Psychiatric needs, family patterns and other social factors are taken into account in order to fully assess alcohol users. A holistic therapeutic approach is attempted. Treatment is multidimensional, personalized and some times administrated as an emergency. Treatment is offered via an inpatient and an outpatient service. Systemic follow up is offered and adherence to appointments is an important indicator of motivation and abstinence maintenance. A total of 720 outpatient appointments took place in a 3 year period, with 120 new alcoholic patients registering. Our results indicate that collaboration with other medical specialties in the general hospital is the key of a successful approach.