

Study shows gradual increase in antidepressant use among children and adolescents

10 March 2016



that the increase follows a significant decrease in the prescribing of antidepressants between 2002 and 2005 following the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) advice in 2003.

Dr Wijlaars said: "It is important to note that our study did not evaluate the indication for antidepressant use and therefore we cannot judge whether antidepressants are over or under prescribed in children and young people."

Dr Petersen said: "It is important that we see the recent increase in antidepressant prescribing in a wider context and remember that when we work with small numbers the relative changes may appear much bigger than the actual changes."

A new study from a group of international researchers including Dr Irene Petersen and Dr Linda Wijlaars (UCL Department of Primary Care and Population Health and Institute of Child Health) found that there has been a gradual increase in antidepressant use among children and adolescents in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States between 2005 and 2012.

The study shows that there has been an increase of antidepressant use in the UK in youth. In the UK it has risen from 0.7 in 2005 to 1.1% 2012, a 0.4% increase over 7 years. Similar trends were found in Denmark, while antidepressant prescribing was higher in US and lower in The Netherlands and Germany.

Dr Petersen and Dr Wijlaars have previously examined prescribing of antidepressants to children and young people in UK and explained

More information: Linda P. M. M. Wijlaars et al. Trends in Depression and Antidepressant Prescribing in Children and Adolescents: A Cohort Study in The Health Improvement Network (THIN), *PLoS ONE* (2012). DOI: [10.1371/journal.pone.0033181](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0033181)

Christian J. Bachmann et al. Trends and patterns of antidepressant use in children and adolescents from five western countries, 2005–2012, *European Neuropsychopharmacology* (2016). DOI: [10.1016/j.euroneuro.2016.02.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroneuro.2016.02.001)

Provided by University College London

APA citation: Study shows gradual increase in antidepressant use among children and adolescents (2016, March 10) retrieved 17 October 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-03-gradual-antidepressant-children-adolescents.html>

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