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CONTROL COMMISSION
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Practical Challenges Affecting Treatment Providers-Caribbean



**PRACTICAL CHALLENGES
AFFECTING TREATMENT
PROVIDERS-CARIBBEAN**

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61ST REGULAR SESSION OF CICAD**

THE CARIBBEAN



OVERVIEW DRUG USE

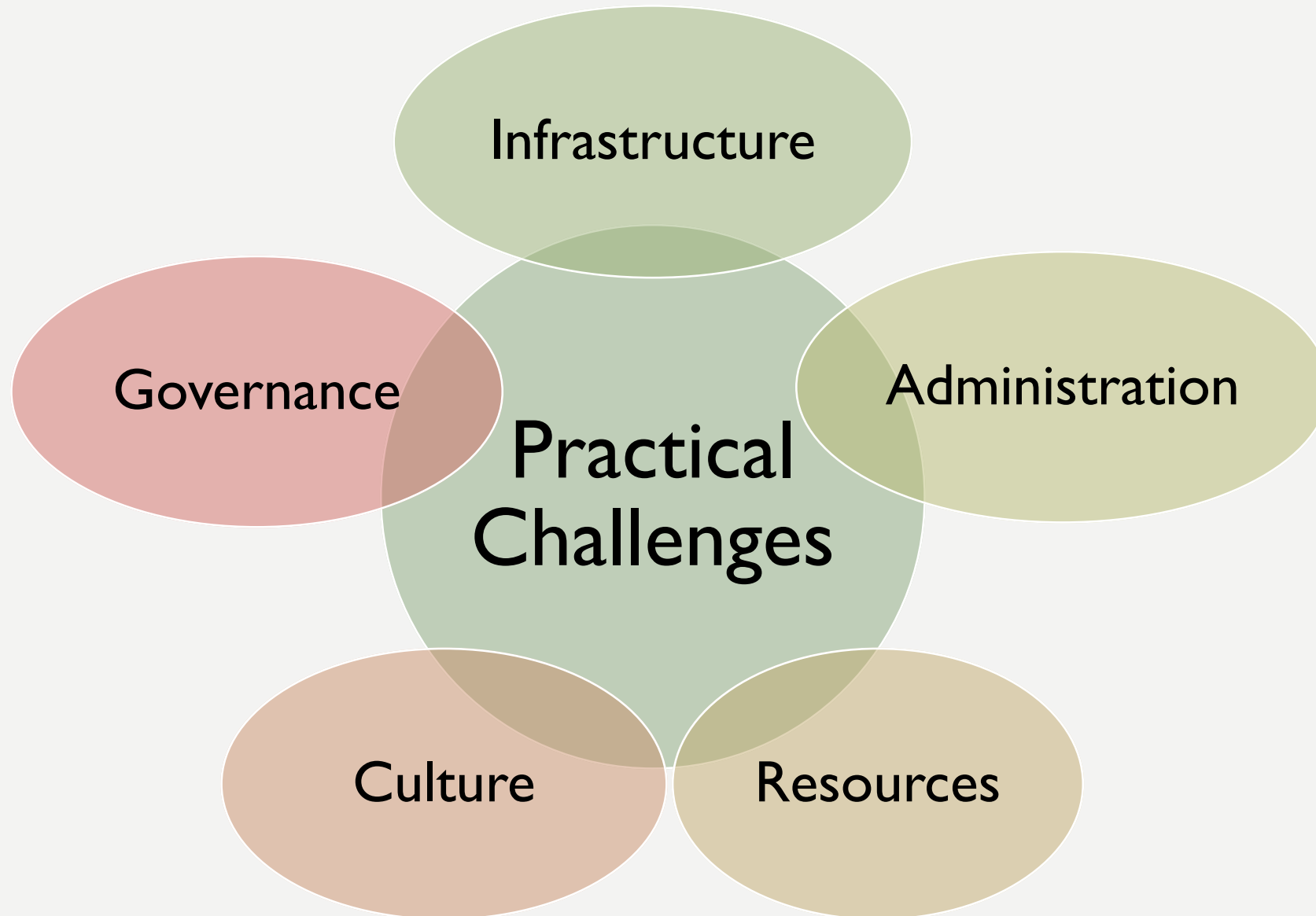
- The most widely used and misused substances in the region are alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, inhalants and crack/cocaine.
- Caribbean youth are the most vulnerable group
- Age of first use in region is between 10-14 years (CICAD, 2010)

OVERVIEW OF CHALLENGES

The information presented here reflects:

1. Findings from regional/country reports
2. Direct correspondence from treatment providers in nine (9) countries (Bahamas, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Jamaica, Grenada, St Kitts & Nevis, Dominica, St Vincent & The Grenadines & Belize)
3. Challenges tend to be similar across the region and fit into five (5) categories.

TREATMENT CHALLENGES



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Lack of dedicated drug treatment infrastructure (St. Kitts & Nevis and Dominica)

Inadequate infrastructure:

1. Lack of diversity of treatment options (in/out patient settings)
2. Lack of dedicated treatment infrastructure and programs for females/adolescents/dual diagnosis

INFRASTRUCTURE

3. Multi-island services (for example, In Bahamas)

4. Issues with the quality of infrastructure (access to amenities, condition of facilities)

ADMINISTRATION

- There is a close link between access to resources and treatment administration
- Inadequate staffing (poor compensation, low levels of trained professionals)
- Inadequate record keeping (Intake forms, treatment tracking etc.)

ADMINISTRATION

- Poor record use and sharing (processing of data, electronic databases, sharing across practitioners)
- Quality of programs (access to treatment materials & holistic activities)

RESOURCES

- Lack of/inadequate government subsidies & private sector support for operations

Poor access to resources affects:

- Ability to cover operational expenses
- The quality of programs & staffing
- Access to drug screening tools
- Cost of treatment to clients

CULTURE

- Stigma associated with substance misuse prevents access to treatment especially among women and professionals
- Positive cultural attitudes towards substances such as alcohol and marijuana affects access to services in some countries

GOVERNANCE

- Substance misuse not adequately recognized as major public health concern by policy makers. This affects the development of legislations, regulations & standards that govern treatment provision
- Lack of national drug policies and in some cases no drug council to monitor and guide process

GOVERNANCE

- Drug treatment not properly integrated into health care systems
- Lack of clear pathways to care for drug treatment
- Lack of minimum standards of care which leads to inconsistency in the quality of care provided across treatment providers

GOVERNANCE

- Lack of a structured way to collect and share drug treatment related information
- Lack of accreditation process for substance abuse professionals, which affects their legitimacy and access to benefits, this makes the field less attractive for professionals

GOVERNANCE

- Drug treatment isn't integrated in health insurance schemes
- Lack of re-integration initiatives for clients once treatment is completed

EMERGING ISSUES

- Several countries reported no new emerging trends but a few have the following observations:
- Increase in cases of marijuana use (Trinidad & Tobago and St Kitts & Nevis)
- Heroin use (Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados)
- Increase in cases of dual diagnoses (Jamaica)
- Ecstasy and over the counter drug mixtures (Barbados)

EMERGING ISSUES

- The decriminalization of marijuana in Jamaica

Emergence of above trends point to the need for treatment programs focusing on:

- Marijuana intervention especially for youth
- Heroin treatment
- Management of dual diagnoses