Alprazolam use in Australia and policy approaches: watch this space

Barbara de Graaff, Amy Peacock, Raimondo Bruno
School of Psychology, University of Tasmania
Barbara.deGraaff@utas.edu.au

Introduction

- High rates of prescription use and notable instances of extra-medical use of alprazolam in Australia in recent years.
- Alprazolam use (including injecting) associated with vascular and tissue damage, overdose, disinhibition of behaviour with negative consequences, and anterograde amnesia.
- TGA will reschedule alprazolam from an S4 to S8 drug from January 1, 2014.

- In 2007, following increased reports of misuse and harms associated with alprazolam use, the Tasmanian PSB introduced a policy to reduce alprazolam prescriptions.

Introduction

- High rates of prescription use and notable instances of extra-medical use of alprazolam in Australia in recent years.
- Alprazolam use (including injecting) associated with vascular and tissue damage, overdose, disinhibition of behaviour with negative consequences, and anterograde amnesia.
- TGA will reschedule alprazolam from an S4 to S8 drug from January 1, 2014.

- In 2007, following increased reports of misuse and harms associated with alprazolam use, the Tasmanian PSB introduced a policy to reduce alprazolam prescriptions.

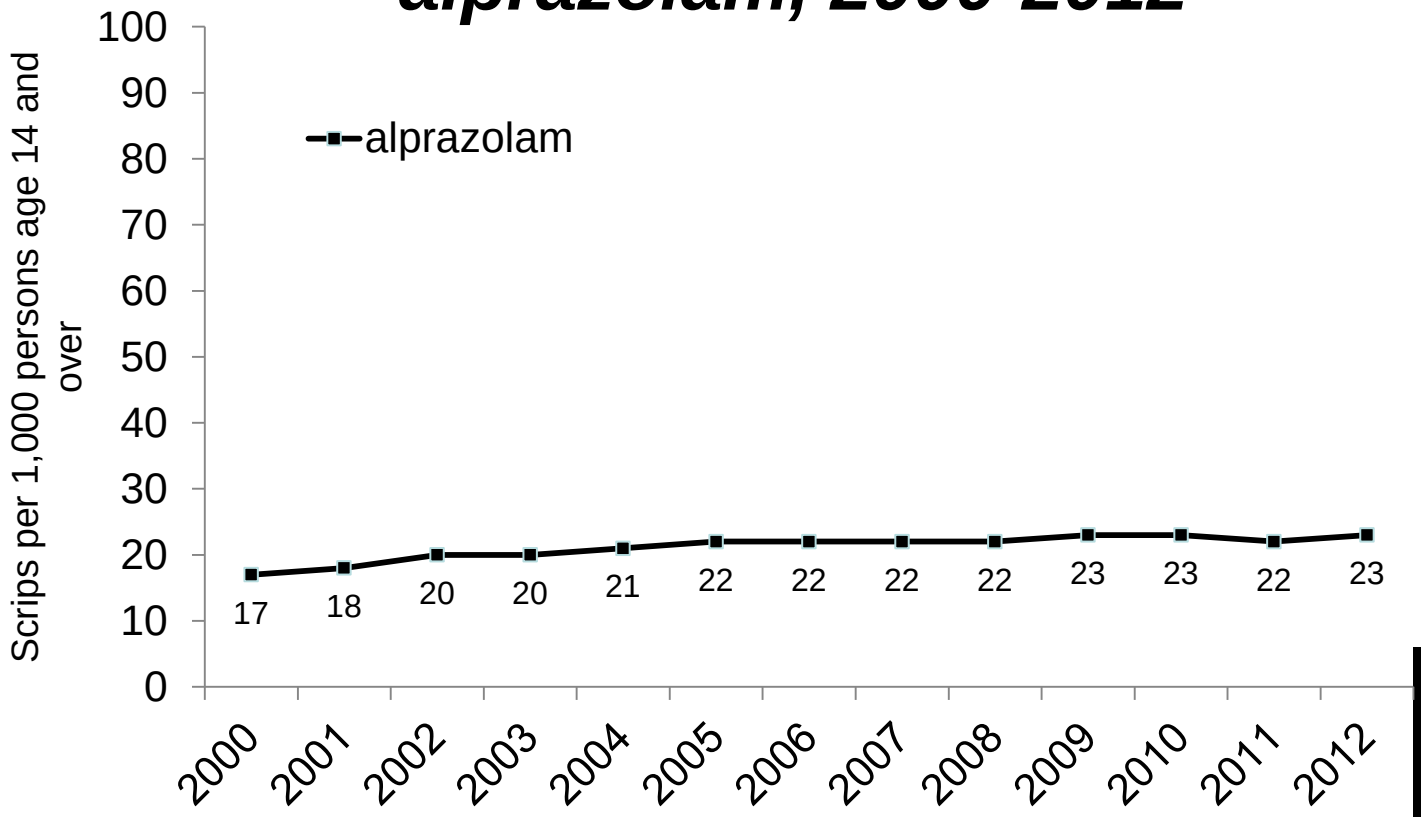
Aim

- Brief overview of national alprazolam consumption, with a specific focus on rates of use amongst IDRS participants.

- The Tasmania experience of restricting access to alprazolam will be examine using data from the Tasmanian IDRS study.

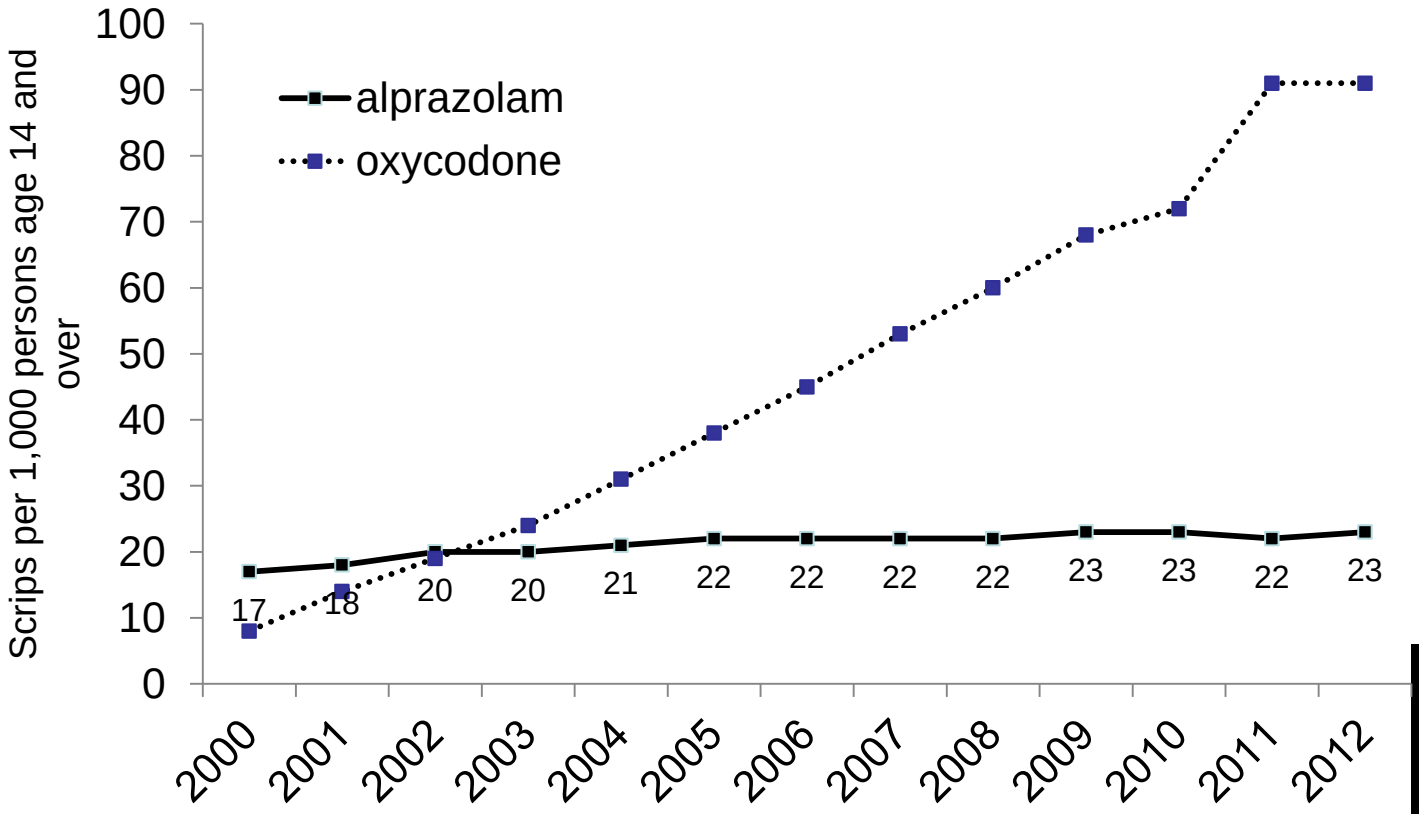
NDARC

National PBS and RPBS prescriptions for alprazolam, 2000-2012



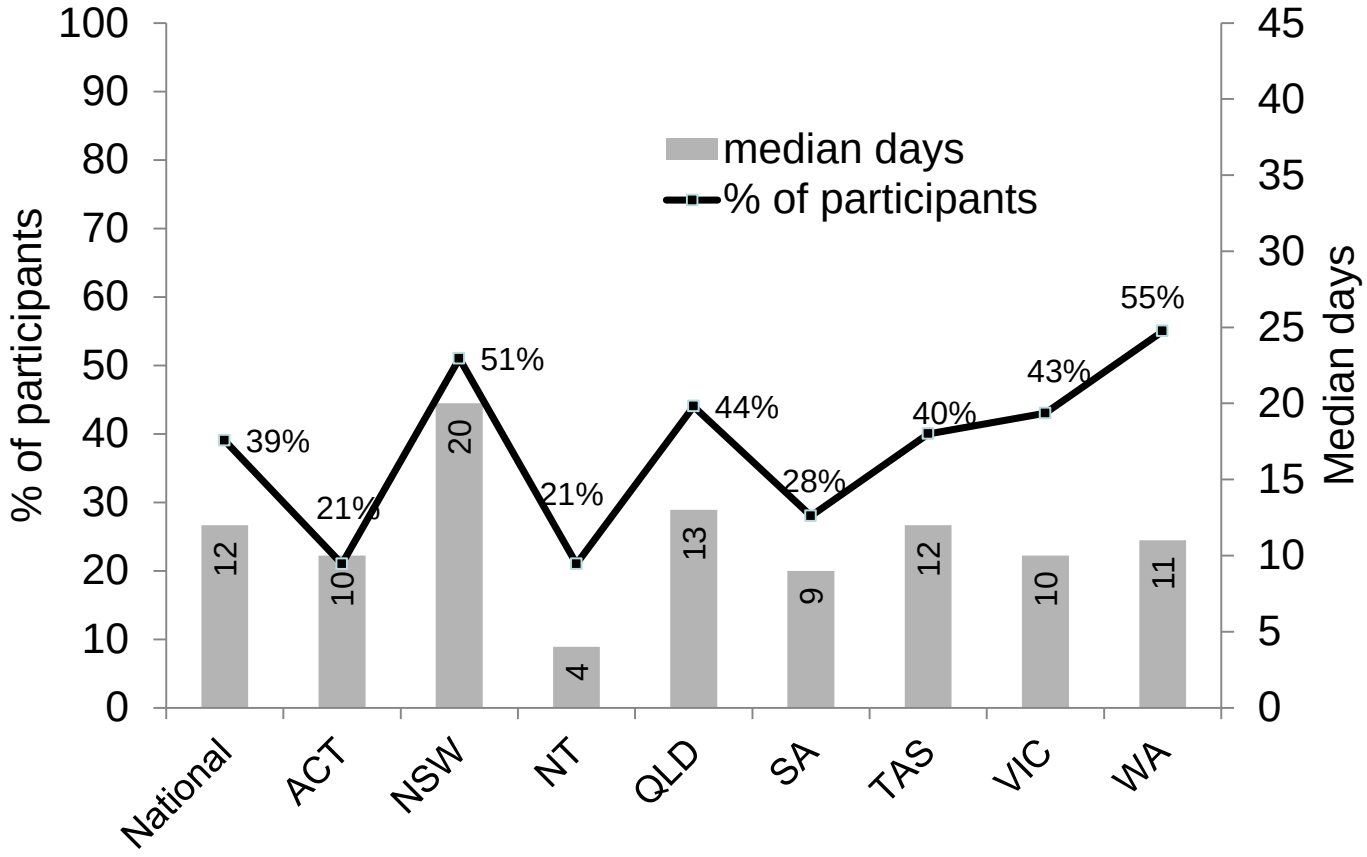
Source: Medicare/PBS website

National PBS and RPBS prescriptions for alprazolam (& oxycodone), 2000-2012



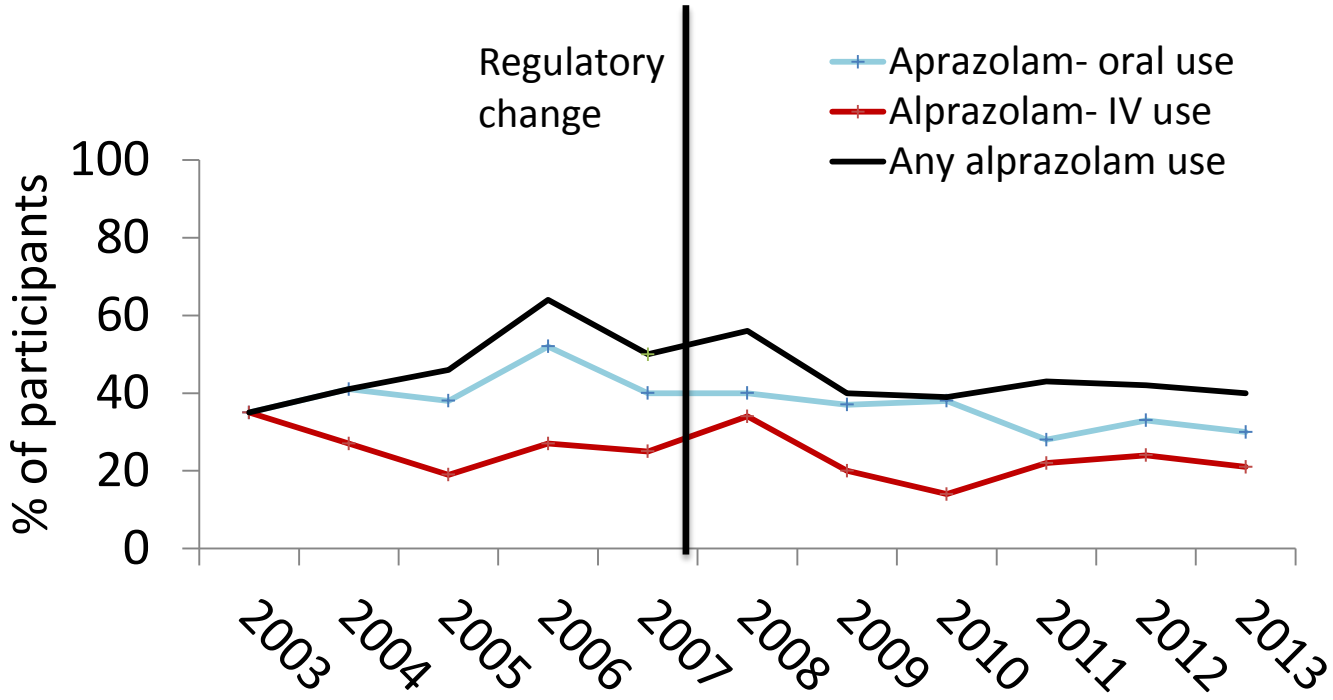
Source: Medicare/PBS website

Use of any alprazolam amongst IDRS participants in the preceding 6 months, 2013



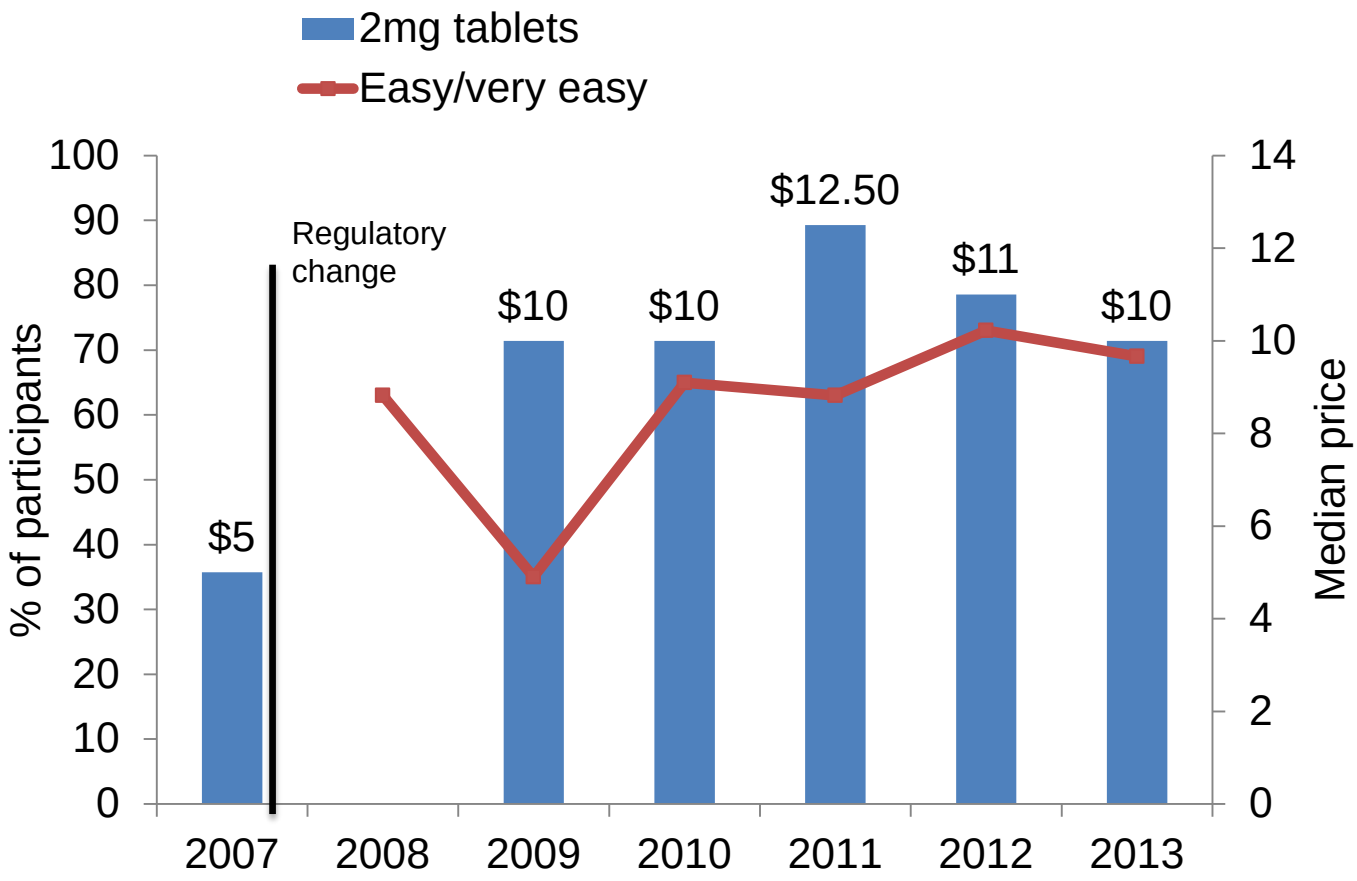
Source: IDRS PWID interviews

Use of any alprazolam and amongst TAS IDRS, 2003-2013



Source: IDRS PWID interviews

Price and availability of illicit alprazolam in TAS



Source: IDRS PWID interviews

The balloon-like properties of the drug market

