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## Introduction

### Head shop drugs: they haven't gone away

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'Head shops' are retail outlets that sell legal recreational drugs, herbal mixtures and/or paraphernalia which can be used for the growth and consumption of certain plants. The past five years saw the phenomenon of head shops receive substantial attention in Ireland,<sup>1,2</sup> resulting in a significant regulatory response by government.<sup>3</sup> However, people continue to present to Irish hospitals with serious medical and psychiatric sequelae following the use of substances such as mephedrone.

This supplement to the *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine* is devoted to the clinical problems presented by the use of head shop drugs. O'Domhnaill<sup>4</sup> provides a clinical and biochemical 'heads up' on mephedrone and other head shop drugs. O'Reilly et al<sup>5</sup> present a unique account of users' experiences of cathinones sold in head shops and online. Uhoegbu et al<sup>6</sup> report on two psychiatric presentations linked with head shop products, while El-Higaya et al<sup>7</sup> present a case-series of whack-induced psychosis. Finally, Tully et al<sup>8</sup> present a case-report and literature review on benzylpiperazine-induced acute delirium in a patient with schizophrenia and an incidental temporal meningioma.

The diversity of these papers, and the clinical disorders they reflect, highlight the substantial public health problem presented by head shop drugs in Ireland. There may be fewer head shops on the streets, but head shop drugs have not gone away.

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