

Consumption of psychotropic drugs during the 2020 confinements in Pays de la Loire

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Context

The COVID-19 pandemic imposed two confinement periods of eight and six weeks in France, with a negative impact on mental health, particularly in vulnerable sub-groups. The consumption of psychotropic drugs is a reliable indicator of French mental health, and can easily be implemented by mobilizing the National Health Data System.

Méthods

This historical cohort study investigated the short- and long-term evolution of the weekly trend in psychotropic drug users in 2020 by performing a time series analysis using seasonal trend decomposition on consumption data extracted from the regional ERASME database covering the period between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020. Methodological details are available in the article resulting from this work: Laurin A et al, Eur Neuropsychopharmacol. 2023 Apr 11;73:48-61. doi: 10.1016/j.euroneuro.2023.04.004. PMID: 37119562; PMCID: PMC10086109.

Résultats

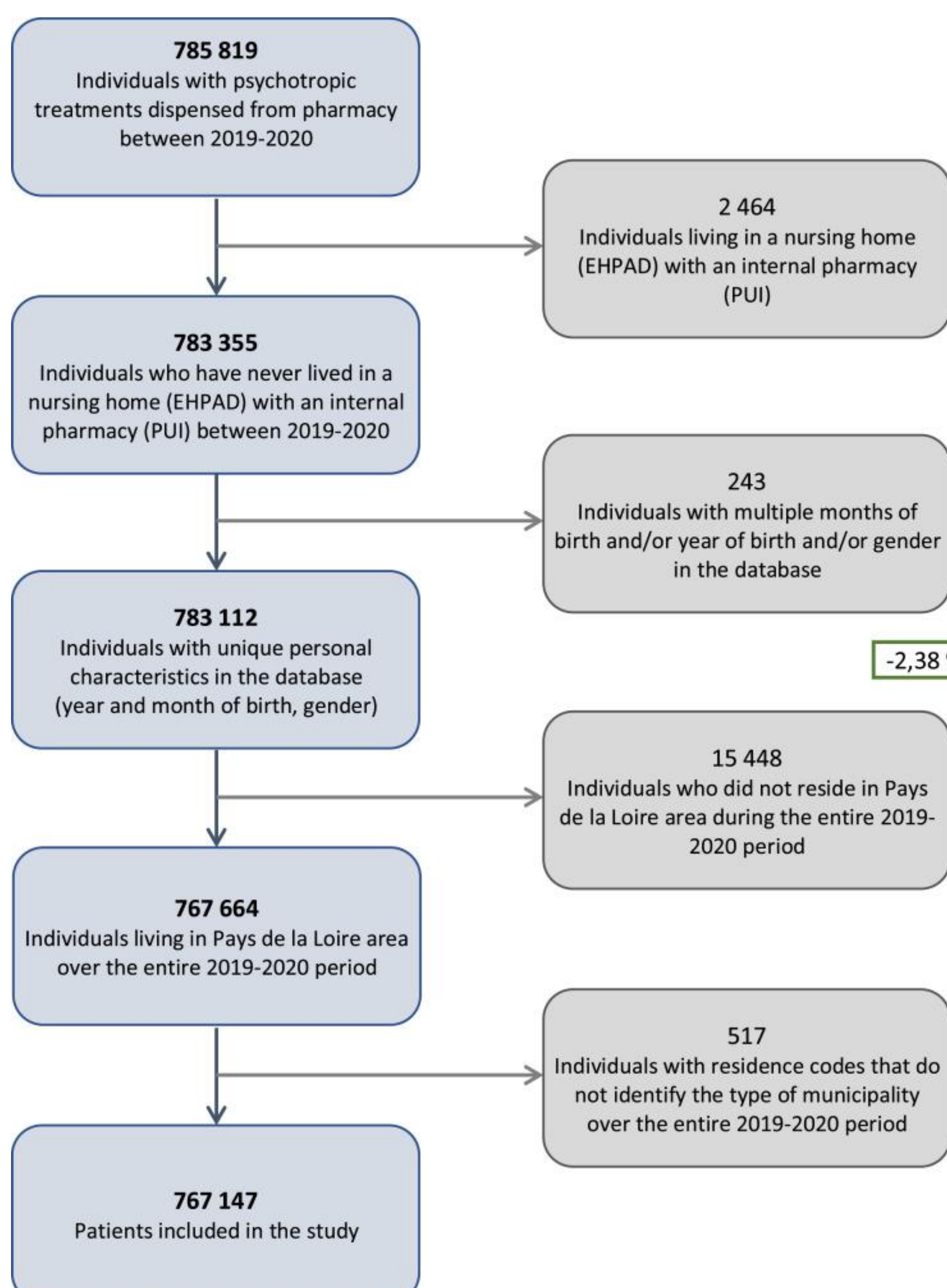


Figure 1: Flowchart representing the sample recruitment

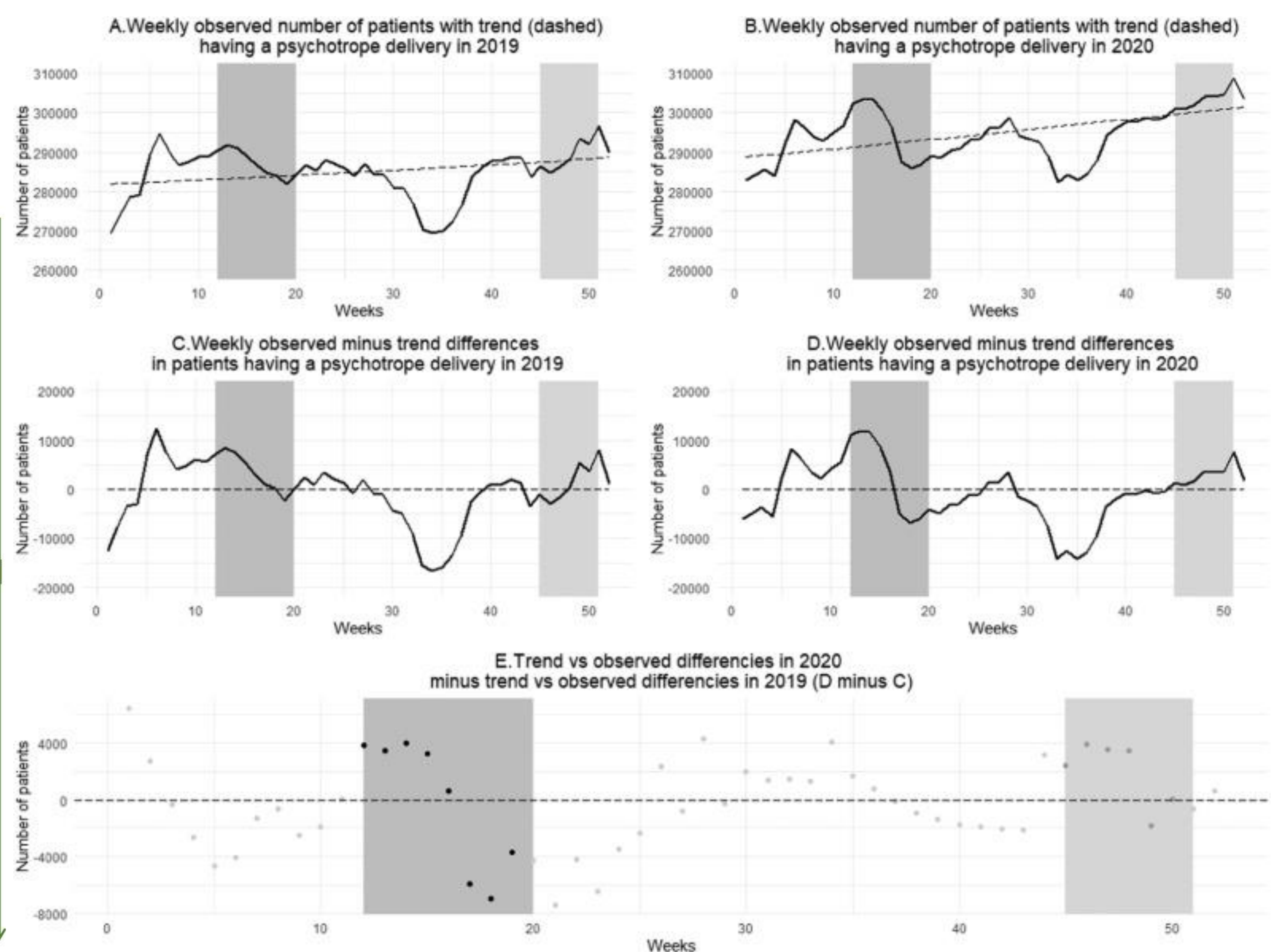


Figure 2: Evolution in trends and numbers of psychotropic consumers in 2019 and 2020. Dark gray areas highlight periods focusing on the first lockdown, light gray areas highlight periods focusing on the second lockdown.

Discussion

Lockdown periods were not associated with a significant change in psychotropic drug use during lockdown, suggesting a form of resilience in the French health care system to maintain its capacity to deliver psychotropic treatments. However, we observed a global increase in trends regarding weekly consumers, particularly in the youngest (<15 years). Our work suggests that the effects of lockdown, and more broadly of the pandemic, may be delayed and appear gradually over the long term as the younger generation ages. These elements, if confirmed, are in favor of a rapid reinforcement of the resources available in child psychiatry to prevent these consequences.