

# The DASIS Report

November 7, 2003

## Veterans in Substance Abuse Treatment: 1995-2000

This report looks at trends in veteran admissions reported to the Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) between 1995 and 2000. TEDS is an annual compilation of data on the demo-

graphic characteristics and substance abuse problems of those admitted for substance abuse treatment.

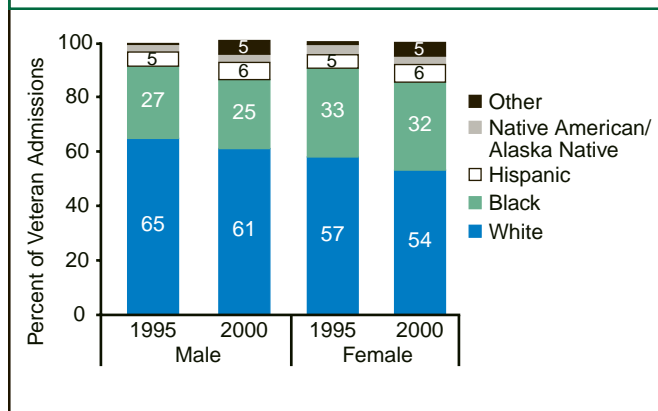
TEDS data are primarily from facilities that receive some public funding. However, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not participate in TEDS, and veterans treated for substance abuse in VA hospitals and clinics are not included in this report. TEDS records represent admissions rather than individuals, as a person may be admitted to treatment more than once.

TEDS includes a Minimum Data Set collected by all States and a Supplemental Data Set collected by some States. Veteran status, a Supplemental Data Set item indicating whether a client served in the uniformed services, was reported for at least 75 percent of all admissions in 26 States and jurisdictions in every year from 1995 to 2000.<sup>1</sup> These 26 States and jurisdictions represented about 48 percent of all TEDS admissions in those years. Between 1995 and 2000, admissions of veterans to

### In Brief

- The proportion of substance abuse treatment admissions represented by veterans declined from 10 percent in 1995 to 7 percent in 2000
- The proportion of veteran admissions that were female increased from 4 percent in 1995 to 6 percent in 2000
- In 2000, 41 percent of veteran admissions were aged 45 or older compared with 32 percent in 1995

**Figure 1. Veteran Treatment Admissions, by Sex and Race: 1995 and 2000**



Source: 2000 SAMHSA Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS).

substance abuse treatment facilities declined as a percentage of all substance abuse treatment admissions (from 10 percent of all TEDS admissions aged 18 or older in 1995 to 7 percent in 2000).

## Demographics

In 2000, the number of veterans admitted to substance abuse treatment exceeded 55,000 admissions. The number of female veteran admissions was about 3,000 in both 1995 and 2000, but the proportion of veteran admissions that were female increased from 4 to 6 percent. In comparison, the proportion of females among non-veteran substance abuse treatment admissions remained stable at 31 percent during that time period. In both years, about 1 percent of all female substance abuse treatment admissions were veterans.

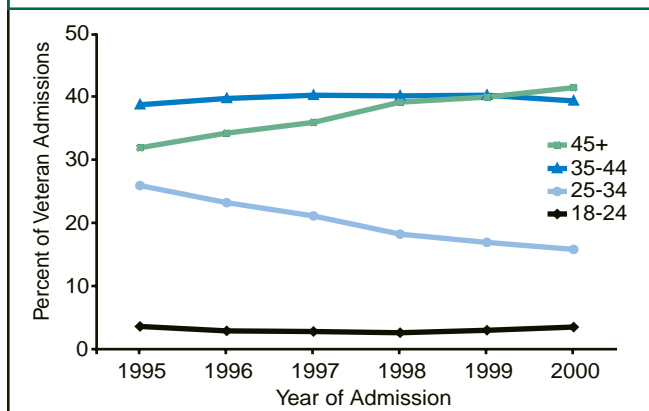
Among both male and female veteran admissions, the proportion of Whites declined between 1995 and 2000 (males from 65 to 61 percent; females from 58 to 53 percent) (Figure 1). In all years

between 1995 and 2000, female veteran admissions had higher proportions of Blacks than did male veteran admissions. In 2000, non-veteran substance abuse treatment admissions were 58 percent White, 24 percent Black, and 10 percent Hispanic.

The age distribution of veteran admissions changed between 1995 and 2000. In 2000, 41 percent of veteran admissions were aged 45 or older compared with 32 percent in 1995 (Figure 2). The proportion of veterans between the ages of 25 and 34 dropped from 26 percent in 1995 to 16 percent in 2000. The 18 to 24 and 35 to 44 age groups remained stable during that time.

The proportion of female veteran admissions younger than age 35 declined from 53 to 36 percent between 1995 and 2000, while the proportion of male veterans younger than age 35 declined from 29 to 19 percent.

**Figure 2. Veteran Treatment Admissions, by Age Group: 1995-2000**



## Primary Substance of Abuse

In 2000, the most common primary substance of abuse among veterans was alcohol (68 percent), followed by cocaine (15 percent) and opiates<sup>2</sup> (8 percent). Among non-veterans, the proportions of these three substances were alcohol (51 percent), cocaine (16 percent), and opiates (15 percent).

In 1995 and in 2000, female veteran admissions differed from male veteran admissions in primary substances of abuse (Figure 3). Female veteran admissions were less likely than male veteran admissions to report alcohol as their primary substance (56 vs. 69 percent in 2000) and more likely to report cocaine (21 vs. 14 percent in 2000).

Between 1995 and 2000, there were virtually no changes in the primary substances of abuse among male veteran admissions. The primary substances of abuse among female veteran admissions also changed little, the largest change being a

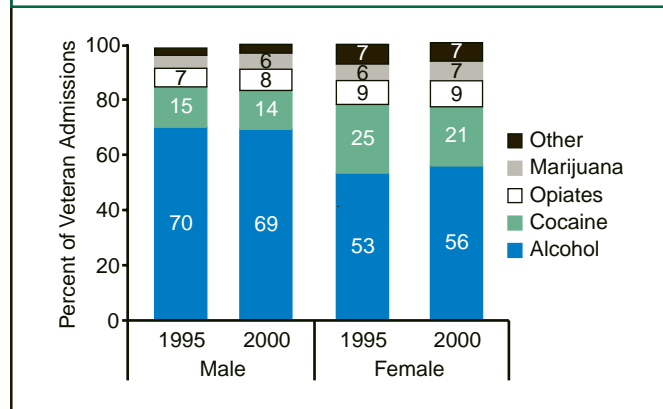
slight decline in primary cocaine abuse from 25 to 21 percent.

In 2000, over three-quarters of White veteran admissions entered treatment for primary alcohol abuse (78 percent), 6 percent each for cocaine and marijuana, and 5 percent for opiates. About half of Black veteran admissions entered treatment for primary alcohol abuse (47 percent), 34 percent for cocaine, 6 percent for marijuana, and 12 percent for opiates. Fifty-nine percent of Hispanic veteran admissions entered treatment for primary alcohol abuse, 11 percent for cocaine, 6 percent for marijuana, and 22 percent for opiates. These proportions changed only minimally from 1995. The largest change between 1995 and 2000 was the proportion of Black veteran admissions for cocaine, which declined from 38 to 34 percent.

## Prior Treatment

The proportion of veteran admissions who had at least one prior substance abuse treatment increased slightly from 65 percent in 1995 to 67 percent in 2000.

**Figure 3. Veteran Treatment Admissions, by Sex and Primary Substance: 1995 and 2000**



## Psychiatric Problems

The proportion of veteran admissions who had a psychiatric problem in addition to a substance abuse problem rose from 15 percent in 1995 to 17 percent in 2000.<sup>3</sup> The proportion of non-veterans in substance abuse treatment who also had a psychiatric problem increased from 16 percent in 1995 to 19 percent in 2000.

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup>States and jurisdictions included are: AK, CO, DC, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, MA, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, ND, NV, NY, OK, PA, SC, SD, TN, and WA.

<sup>2</sup>"Opiates" include heroin (90 percent of opiates admissions) and other opiates.

<sup>3</sup>"Psychiatric problem in addition to substance abuse problem" is a Supplemental Data Set item. The combination of veteran status and psychiatric problem was reported in 1995 through 2000 by 18 States, including CO, DC, GA, HI, IA, ID, KS, ME, MA, MI, MO, MS, NV, NY, ND, OK, SC, and TN.

The Drug and Alcohol Services Information System (DASIS) is an integrated data system maintained by the Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). One component of DASIS is the Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). TEDS is a compilation of data on the demographic characteristics and substance abuse problems of those admitted for substance abuse treatment. The information comes primarily from facilities that receive some public funding. Information on treatment admissions is routinely collected by State administrative systems and then submitted to SAMHSA in a standard format. Approximately 1.6 million records are included in TEDS each year. TEDS records represent admissions rather than individuals, as a person may be admitted to treatment more than once.

The *DASIS Report* is prepared by the Office of Applied Studies, SAMHSA; Synectics for Management Decisions, Inc., Arlington, Virginia; and RTI, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina.

**Information and data for this issue are based on data reported to TEDS through April 1, 2002.**

Access the latest TEDS reports at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/dasis.htm>

Access the latest TEDS public use files at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/SAMHDA.htm>

Other substance abuse reports are available at: <http://www.DrugAbuseStatistics.samhsa.gov>



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