

OAS Data Spotlight

Treatment Episode Data Set

August 11, 2010

One Fifth of Substance Abuse Treatment Admissions among Persons Aged 50 or Older Are Homeless

As the overall U.S. population ages, so does the population of homeless individuals. Further, the number of older homeless adults is expected to increase by 33 percent in the next 10 years.¹ Addressing the complex behavioral health problems of this growing population will become increasingly important in the next decade.

According to the Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), 42,723 homeless adults aged 50 or older were admitted to substance abuse treatment in 2008, representing 20 percent of all substance abuse treatment admissions in this age group.² The majority of these admissions were male and either non-Hispanic White or non-Hispanic Black (Figure 1). Alcohol was the most common primary substance of abuse, followed distantly by heroin and cocaine (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Gender and Race/Ethnicity of Homeless Substance Abuse Treatment Admissions Aged 50 or Older: 2008

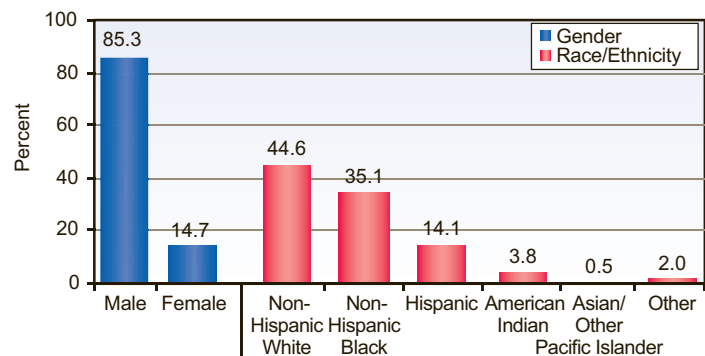
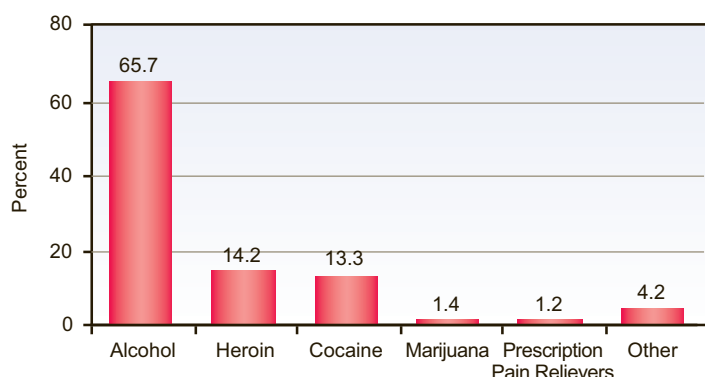


Figure 2. Primary Substance of Abuse among Homeless Substance Abuse Treatment Admissions Aged 50 or Older: 2008



¹ Sermons, M. W., & Henry, M. (2010). *Demographics of homelessness series: The rising elderly population*. Washington, DC: National Alliance to End Homelessness, Homeless Research Institute. [Available at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/2698>].

² *Living arrangements* is a Supplemental Data Set item in TEDS. For further information on TEDS data items see: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies. (2010). *Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). 1998-2008. National admissions to substance abuse treatment services* (DASIS Series S-50, HHS Publication No. SMA 09-4471). Rockville, MD. [Available as a PDF at <http://www.dasis.samhsa.gov/teds08/teds2k8natweb.pdf>]

Source: 2008 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS).

