

The DASIS Report

September 20, 2002

Hispanics in Substance Abuse Treatment: 1999

In Brief

- Alcohol (36 percent), opiates (32 percent), and marijuana (14 percent) were the most common primary substances of abuse among Hispanic admissions
- Hispanic admissions had a larger percentage of admissions for opiate abuse (32 percent) than non-Hispanic admissions (15 percent)
- Hispanic admissions were 77 percent male and 23 percent female compared with 69 percent male and 31 percent female among non-Hispanic admissions

Hispanics are a large and growing segment of the U.S. population. In 1999, Hispanics made up 12 percent of the U.S. population. Similarly, 13 percent of admissions in the 1999 Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) involved Hispanics.¹ Almost 186,000 Hispanic admissions were reported to TEDS in 1999. The term “Hispanic” describes a population that includes several ethnic subgroups representing different countries of origin. TEDS data permit separate analysis of some of these ethnic subgroups, specifically, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Other Hispanic.² In 1999, among Hispanic admissions to TEDS, 42 percent were Mexican, 35 percent were Puerto Rican, 2 percent were Cuban, and 21 percent were Other Hispanic.

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. TEDS records represent admissions rather than

individuals, as a person may be admitted to treatment more than once.

Substance abuse treatment admissions among the Hispanic ethnic subgroups were concentrated in different regions in the country (Table 1). Mexican admissions were largely in the West and Southwest. Puerto Rican admissions were primarily in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States. Nearly half of Cuban admissions were in the State of Florida.

Primary Substance

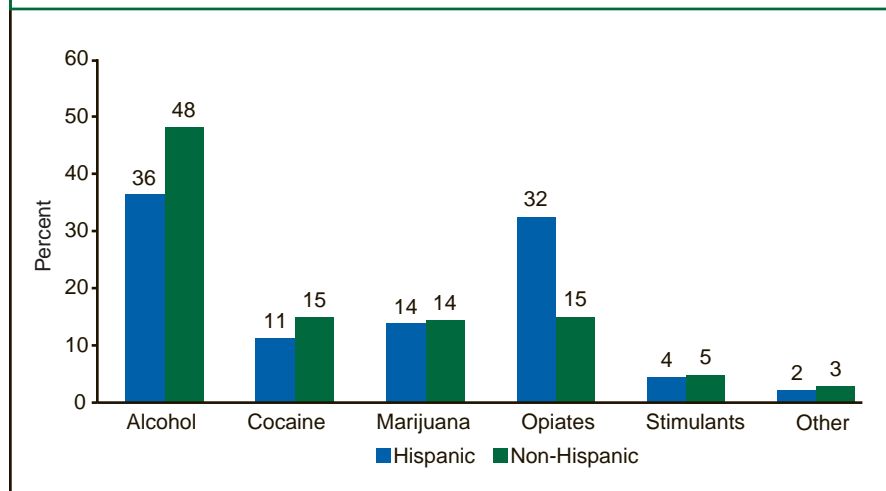
In 1999, the most common primary substances of abuse among Hispanic admissions were alcohol (36 percent), opiates³ (32 percent), and marijuana (14 percent) (Figure 1). Hispanic admissions had a larger percentage of admissions for opiate abuse (32 percent) than non-Hispanic admissions (15 percent). Hispanic admissions had a smaller percentage of admissions for alcohol abuse than non-Hispanic admissions.

There were different patterns of substance abuse admissions among the Hispanic ethnic subgroups (Figure 2). Among Mexican and Other Hispanic admissions, alcohol was the most common substance of abuse, followed by opiates. Among Puerto Rican admissions, opiates were the most common substance of abuse (47 percent), followed by alcohol (26 percent). The most common substances of abuse among Cuban admissions were alcohol (40 percent) and cocaine (28 percent).

Table 1. States with Large Percentages of Hispanic Admissions, by Ethnic Subgroup: 1999

| | <i>Mexican</i> | <i>Puerto Rican</i> | <i>Cuban</i> | <i>Other Hispanic</i> |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | California 49 | New York 44 | Florida 48 | New York 22 |
| | Colorado 14 | Connecticut 14 | New York 13 | California 22 |
| | Texas 12 | Massachusetts 13 | California 11 | Florida 9 |
| | All Other States 25 | All Other States 29 | All Other States 28 | All Other States 47 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Figure 1. Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment, by Ethnicity and Primary Substance of Abuse: 1999



Source: 1999 SAMHSA Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS).

The greatest variation of primary substance of abuse among Hispanic ethnic subgroups was among admissions for stimulants.⁴ Mexican admissions had the largest percentage of stimulant admissions (8 percent) (Figure 2). Stimulants accounted for less than 1 percent of Puerto Rican admissions. Among Cuban and Other Hispanic admissions, stimulants comprised 2 percent and 4 percent of admissions, respectively.

Sex Differences

Hispanic admissions were 77 percent male and 23 percent female compared with 69 percent male and 31 percent female among non-Hispanic admissions (data not shown).

Abuse of alcohol was the most common primary substance abuse problem among Hispanic male admissions (39 percent), followed by opiates (32 percent) and marijuana (14 percent). The most common primary substance of abuse among Hispanic female admissions was opiates (34

Figure 2. Primary Substance of Abuse, by Hispanic Ethnic Subgroup: 1999

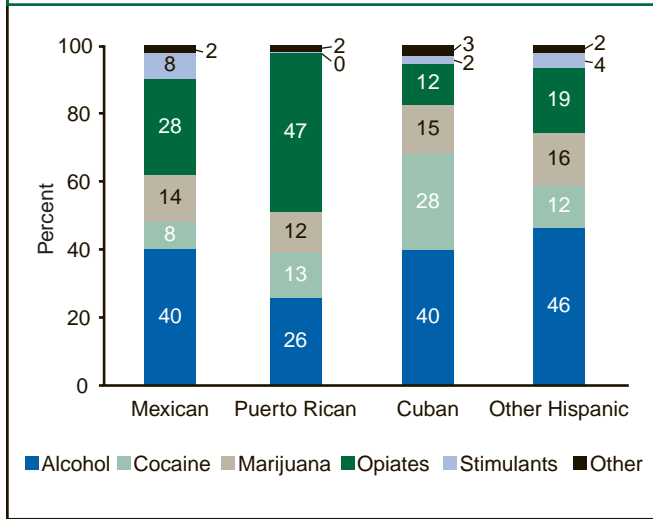
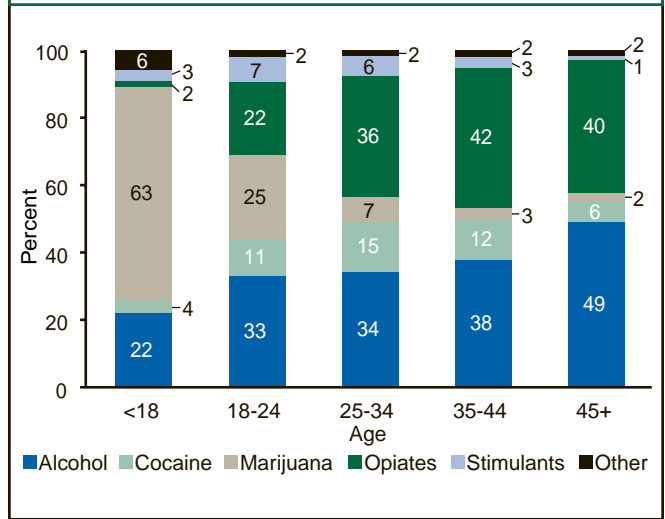


Figure 3. Hispanic Admissions, Primary Substance of Abuse, by Age Group: 1999



percent), followed by alcohol (26 percent) and cocaine (16 percent).

Age

In 1999, the average age of Hispanic admissions was 32 compared with 34 for non-Hispanic admissions (data not shown). The age distribution of Hispanic admissions varied among the Hispanic ethnic subgroups. Admissions aged 25 to 34 constituted the largest number of admissions among Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Other Hispanics. The largest number of Cuban admissions was among admissions between the ages of 35 and 44.

Among Hispanic admissions, the distribution of the primary substance of abuse varied by age group (Figure 3). Marijuana was the most common primary substance of abuse for Hispanic and non-Hispanic admissions 18 years of age or younger (data not shown). Opiates were the most

common substance of abuse for Hispanic admissions aged 25 to 44. However, the most common substance of abuse for non-Hispanic admissions in the 25 to 44 age group was alcohol. Alcohol was also the most common substance of abuse for both Hispanic and non-Hispanic admissions 18 to 24 years old and for Hispanic and non-Hispanic admissions 45 years of age or older.

End Notes

- ¹ Ethnicity was reported in 1999 for at least 75 percent of admissions by 45 states and jurisdictions, excluding Alabama, the District of Columbia, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
- ² The category "Other Hispanic" includes both those identified as being from other Spanish speaking countries and those who were identified as Hispanic with the country of origin not specified.
- ³ Heroin accounted for 99 percent of opiate admissions.
- ⁴ Methamphetamine accounted for 91 percent of stimulant admissions.

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 16, 2001.

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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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Office of Applied Studies

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