

The NSDUH Report

June 11, 2004

State Estimates of Persons Needing But Not Receiving Substance Abuse Treatment

In Brief

- In 2002, 2.7 percent of persons aged 12 or older nationwide needed but did not receive treatment for an illicit drug problem, and 7.3 percent needed but did not receive treatment for an alcohol problem
- The States with the highest rates of individuals needing but not receiving substance abuse treatment were mainly in the West, and the States with the highest rates of individuals needing but not receiving alcohol treatment were mainly in the Midwest and West
- Arizona, Montana, New Mexico, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia, were among the States with the highest rates of illicit drug treatment need and alcohol treatment need

Studies show that many individuals who have substance use problems do not receive treatment for those problems.^{1,2} The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), formerly the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA), asks persons aged 12 or older questions to determine whether they needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol problem within the past 12 months. “Any illicit drug” refers to marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), inhalants, hallucinogens, heroin, or prescription-type drugs used nonmedically. An individual was classified as needing treatment for a substance abuse problem if he or she met the criteria for dependence on or abuse of a substance³ or if he or she received specialty treatment for illicit drugs or alcohol in the past year. Specialty treatment is delivered at drug or alcohol rehabilitation facilities (inpatient or outpatient), hospitals (inpatient only), and mental health centers. Specialty treatment excludes treatment at an emergency room, private doctor’s office, self-help group, prison or jail, or hospital as an outpatient.^{4,5}

In this report, estimates of those in need of but not receiving treatment are presented

separately for illicit drugs and for alcohol. There is considerable overlap in these estimates because many people have problems with both illicit drugs and alcohol.⁶ However, the analyses in this report disaggregate persons with multiple substance problems separately.

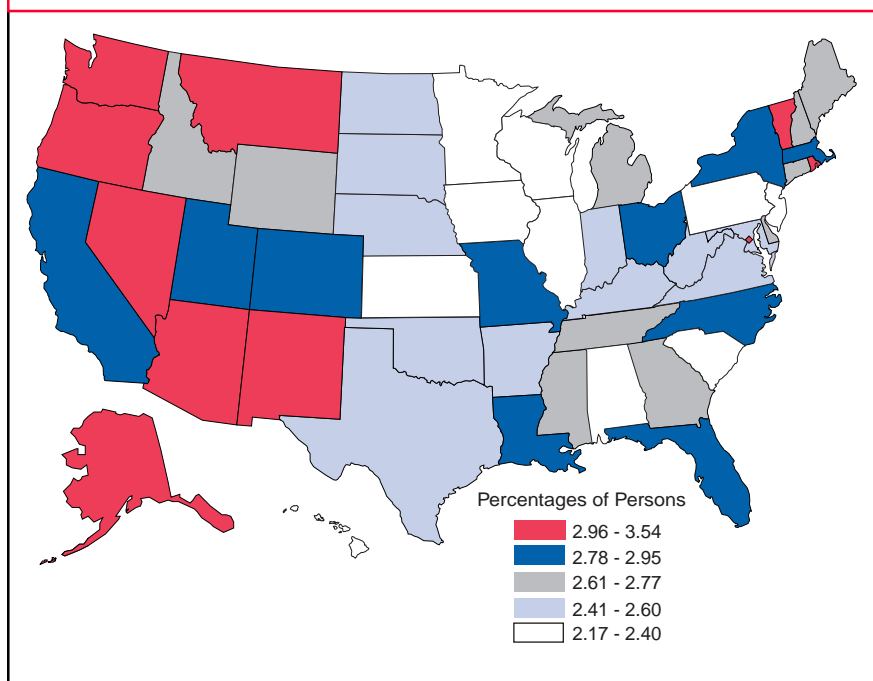
Because NSDUH surveys people in all 50 States and the District of Columbia, it is possible to produce estimates at the State level.^{7,8} This report presents state-level estimates of persons needing but not receiving treatment. National maps (Figures 1 and 2) illustrate the distribution of the State estimates into “fifths,” or “quintiles,” from lowest to highest. States with the highest estimates fall into the top quintile and are in red; States with the lowest estimates are in the bottom quintile and are in white.⁹

Needing But Not Receiving Treatment for an Illicit Drug Problem

In 2002, 2.7 percent of persons aged 12 or older nationwide (about 6.3 million persons) needed but did not receive treatment for an illicit drug problem.

New Mexico had the highest percentage (3.5 percent) of persons aged 12 or older who needed but did not receive treatment for an illicit drug use problem in 2002. Among the 10 States in the top 20 percent for needing but not receiving treatment for an illicit drug use problem, 7 States were in the West (New Mexico, Arizona, Washington, Alaska, Oregon, Nevada, and Montana) (Figure 1). The other states in the top quintile were Vermont, Rhode Island, and the District of Columbia. California was not in the top fifth, but it had the largest total number of persons aged 12 or older who needed but did not receive treatment for an illicit drug use problem in 2002 (approximately 819,000 persons, or about 13.0 per-

Figure 1. Percentages Reporting Needing But Not Receiving Treatment for an Illicit Drug Problem in the Past Year among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by State: 2002



cent of the total number of persons who needed but did not receive illicit drug treatment in the Nation).

Wisconsin had the lowest percentage (2.2 percent) of persons aged 12 or older who needed but did not receive treatment for an illicit drug use problem in 2002. Half of the States in the lowest fifth were in the Midwest (Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, and Illinois). Other States in the lowest fifth were Hawaii, Alabama, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina.

Needing But Not Receiving Treatment for an Alcohol Problem

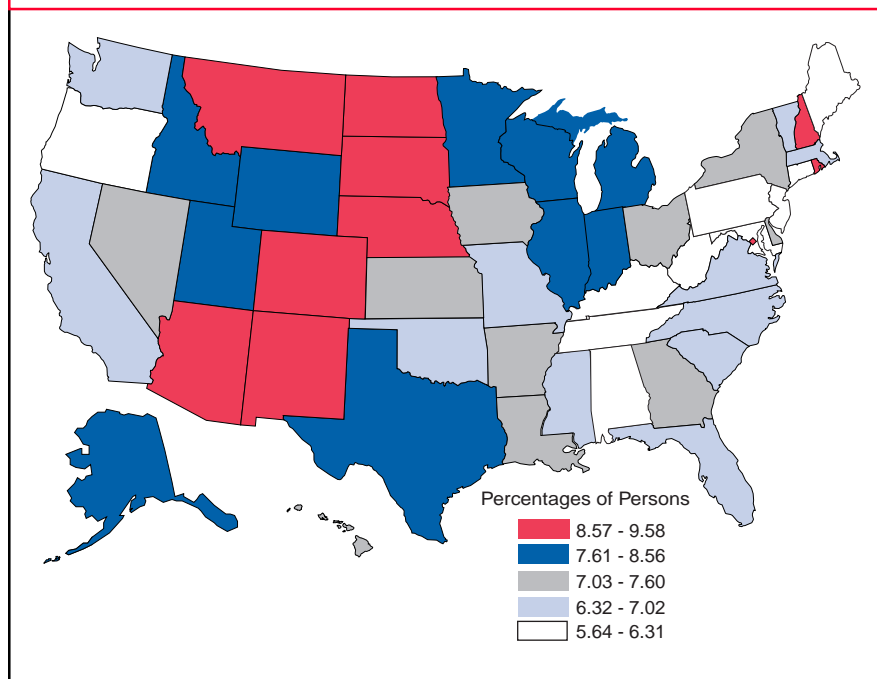
In 2002, 7.3 percent of persons aged 12 or older nationwide (about 17 million persons) needed but did not receive treatment for an alcohol problem.

Nebraska had the highest percentage (9.6 percent) of persons aged

12 or older who needed but did not receive treatment for an alcohol problem. Most of the States in the top fifth were in the Midwest (Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota) or West (Colorado, New Mexico, Montana, and Arizona) (Figure 2). The District of Columbia, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island were also in the top fifth. California had the largest total number of persons aged 12 or older who needed but did not receive treatment for an alcohol problem (approximately 2 million persons, or 11.4 percent of the total number of persons who needed but did not receive alcohol treatment in the Nation) for the Nation).

West Virginia had the lowest percentage (5.6 percent) of persons aged 12 or older who needed but did not receive treatment for an alcohol problem (5.6 percent). Most of the States in the lowest fifth were in the South (West Virginia, Maryland, Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee)

Figure 2. Percentages Reporting Needing But Not Receiving Treatment for an Alcohol Problem in the Past Year among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by State: 2002



or the Northeast (Maine, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania). Oregon was also in the lowest fifth.

End Notes

- Office of Applied Studies. (2003). *Results from the 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 03-3836, NSDUH Series H-22). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- Office of Applied Studies. (2002). *National and state estimates of the drug abuse treatment gap: 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 02-3640, NHSDA Series H-14). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- NSDUH defines substance dependence or abuse using criteria in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV), which includes such symptoms as withdrawal, tolerance, use in dangerous situations, trouble with the law, and interference in major obligations at work, school, or home during the past year. For details, see the following publication: American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- An individual who was dependent on or had abused illicit drugs was counted as receiving treatment only if he or she received specialty treatment in the past year for illicit drugs. An individual who was dependent on or had abused alcohol was counted as receiving treatment only if he or she received specialty treatment in the past year for alcohol. Individuals who reported receiving specialty substance abuse treatment but were missing information on whether the treatment was specifically for illicit drugs or alcohol were not counted in estimates of specialty treatment for illicit drug treatment or in estimates of specialty treatment for alcohol.
- Of the estimated 7.7 million persons aged 12 or older who were classified as needing treatment for an illicit drug use problem in 2002, an estimated 7.1 million were classified with dependence on or abuse of illicit drugs, and an estimated 632,000 persons received specialty treatment for an illicit drug problem in the past year (although they were not classified with dependence or abuse). Of the estimated 18.6 million persons aged 12 or older who were classified as needing treatment for an alcohol problem in 2002, an estimated 18.1 million were classified with dependence on or abuse of alcohol, and an estimated 538,000 persons received specialty treatment for an alcohol problem in the past year (although they were not classified with dependence or abuse).
- An estimated 3 million persons were classified with dependence on or abuse of both illicit drugs and alcohol.
- State estimates presented in this report are

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Prior to 2002, this survey was called the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA). The 2002 data are based on information obtained from 68,126 persons aged 12 or older. The survey collects data by administering questionnaires to a representative sample of the population through face-to-face interviews at their place of residence.

The *NSDUH Report* is prepared by the Office of Applied Studies (OAS), SAMHSA, and RTI International in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina (RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute).

Information and data for this issue are based on the following publication and statistics:

Wright, D. (2004). *State estimates of substance use from the 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Findings* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 04-3907, NSDUH Series H-23). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies.

Also available online. <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov>

Because of improvements and modifications to the 2002 NSDUH, estimates from the 2002 survey should not be compared with estimates from the 2001 or earlier versions of the survey to examine changes over time.

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based on data collected in 2002 and have been developed using a small area estimation (SAE) procedure in which State-level NSDUH data are combined with local-area county and census block group/tract-level data from the State. These model-based estimates provide more precise estimates of substance use at the State level. For a more complete SAE description, see the following publication: Wright, D. (2002). *State estimates of substance use from the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Volume II. Supplementary technical appendices* (DHHS Publication No. SMA 02-3732, NHSDA Series H-16). Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies.

- The percentages of persons needing but not receiving treatment were not calculated by estimating one model for treatment need and another for receipt of treatment and taking a difference at the State level. Instead, they were calculated at the individual level as persons who needed treatment but did not receive it.
- States were grouped into quintiles based on the rankings of percentages to two decimals.