Substance Use Disorders Fact Sheet

The Facts:

**Substance Use is a Key Driver** of adverse outcomes across the spectrum of health and human services delivery systems. In the areas of medical service utilization and potentially avoidable medical costs, research has shown that substance abuse 1) increases the risk of injuries, accidents, and overdoses requiring hospitalization\(^1\), 2) increases the risk of acquiring infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS or hepatitis\(^2\), and 3) causes drug-seeking behavior associated with extreme Emergency Department (ED) utilization\(^3\). Providing treatment to persons with substance use disorders reduces inpatient admissions, ED utilization, and medical costs\(^4\).

**Addiction is defined** as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences. It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain - they change its structure and how it works. These brain changes can be long lasting, and can lead to the harmful behaviors seen in people who abuse drugs. Addiction is a treatable disease. Discoveries in the science of addiction have led to advances in drug abuse treatment that help people stop abusing drugs and resume their productive lives\(^5\).

**2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health** (NSDUH), an annual survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Highlights:

- In 2011, an estimated 22.5 million Americans aged 12 or older were current (past month) illicit drug users, meaning they had used an illicit drug during the month prior to the survey interview. This estimate represents 8.7 percent of the population aged 12 or older.
- The rate of current illicit drug use among persons aged 12 or older in 2011 (8.7 percent) was similar to the rate in 2010 (8.9 percent).
- The number of persons who were past year heroin users in 2011 (620,000) was higher than the number in 2007 (373,000).

**Washington State and Local Prevalence:** The number of individuals (at or below 200% federal poverty level) in need of Substance Abuse Disorders treatment.

**Past Year Need for Alcohol or Illicit Drug Treatment (2011)**\(^6\)

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<th>Youth Ages 12-17</th>
<th>Adults Ages 18+</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Prevalence Rate</td>
<td>Population in Need</td>
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<td>Statewide Total</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>15,285</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitsap</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>486</td>
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**Washington State and Local Penetration:** The number of individuals (at or below 200% federal poverty level) receiving Substance Abuse Disorders treatment relative to the number in need.


\(^5\) National Institute on Drug Abuse (2013)

\(^6\) Department of Social and Health Services Research and Data Analysis Division (RDA) using data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health
Past Year Population Receiving Residential, Outpatient, or Opiate Substitution Treatment Penetration (2011)\(^7\)

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<th>Adult Ages 18+</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Need</td>
<td>AOD Tx Served*</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Total</td>
<td>15,285</td>
<td>7,370</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitsap</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>218</td>
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Research demonstrates that most people who get into and remain in treatment stop using drugs, decrease their criminal activity, and improve their occupational, social, and psychological functioning\(^8\). Findings include:

- Every dollar invested in addiction treatment programs yields a return of between $4 and $7 in reduced drug-related crime, criminal justice costs, and theft\(^9\).
- When savings related to healthcare are included, total savings exceed costs by a ratio of 12 to 1\(^10\).
- Increases in admissions to substance abuse treatment are associated with reductions in crime rates. Admissions to drug treatment increased 37.4 percent and federal spending on drug treatment increased 14.6 percent from 1995 to 2005. During the same period, violent crime fell 31.5 percent\(^11\).
- Substance abuse treatment prior to contact with the justice system yields public safety benefits early on. Drug treatment programs improve life outcomes for individuals and decrease the likelihood that a drug-involved person will be admitted to the criminal justice system\(^12\).

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\(^7\) Department of Social and Health Services Research and Data Analysis Division (RDA) using data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health

\(^8\) National Institute on Drug Abuse (2013)

\(^9\) National Institute on Drug Abuse (2013)

\(^10\) National Institute on Drug Abuse (2013)


\(^12\) Justice Policy Institute (2008). Substance Abuse Treatment and Public Safety.