



COMMUNITY HEALTH DATA BASE

An Information Service of Public Health Management Corporation

Data findings

SUBSTANCE USE IN SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

September 2011

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug and alcohol addiction are linked to short- and long-term health risks, including cancer, risky sexual behavior, and mental health problems. In 2009, 8.9% of Americans aged 12 years or older had a drug or alcohol abuse problem, translating to about 22.5 million people (NSDUH 2009).

In recognition of September as National Recovery Month (formerly known as National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month), this article presents data from PHMC’s 2010 Household Health Survey on substance use among adults 18 years of age and older in the region. These questions of recovery, treatment, and attitudes are new to the Household Health Survey. Specifically, this article presents a brief description of adults who are in recovery—that is, who have ever had an alcohol or other drug problem that is no longer a problem in their life. Additionally, this article presents information about knowledge of friends or family in recovery from substance use, attitudes about community support for professional treatment programs, and other similar topics.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics

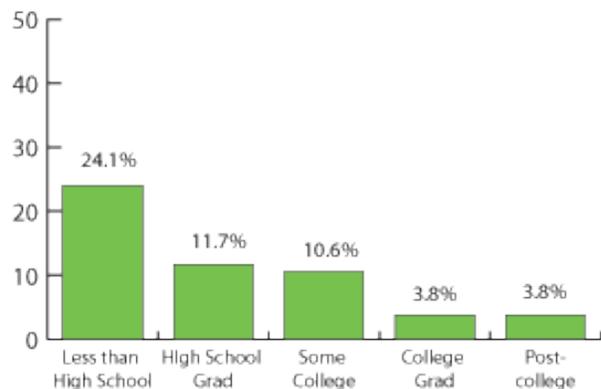
Nine percent of individuals living in SEPA are in recovery; that is, report ever having a substance use problem at some in point their life that is no longer a problem. This percent represents about 269,000 adults. Men are more likely to be in recovery than women (12.7% compared to 5.8%, respectively).

People ages 50 to 59 are more likely to be in recovery than older (60+) or younger individuals (18-49). About 9% of individuals ages 18-49 are in recovery compared to 11.2% for people 50-59, 7.4% for people 60-74 and 4% for people 75 and older.

Education differences are pronounced: 24.1% of people without a high school education are in recovery, while only 11.7% of high school graduates are in recovery (Figure 1). Similarly, poor people (live below 200% of the poverty line) are more likely to be in recovery compared to non-poor people (15.9% compared to 6.6%).

African Americans and Latinos are more likely to be in recovery than White or Asian adults (13.2% and 12.8% compared to 7.7% and 4.1%, respectively) (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Percentage of Adults (18+) in Recovery from Drug or Alcohol Problems by Educational Attainment, SEPA 2010.



Source: PHMC's Community Health Data Base 2010 Southeastern Pennsylvania Household Health Survey



The highest percentage of people who are in recovery live in Philadelphia (11.4% of adults, representing about 130,000 people). Montgomery county has the lowest percentage of adults who are in recovery (6.7% of adults, representing about 40,000 people). Bucks county has 7.5% of adults in recovery, while Chester and Delaware counties both have 8.2% of adults in recovery.

Health

Drug and alcohol problems often go along with mental and physical health status, treatment and recovery (30.9%) are in fair or poor health, representing about

Of people who are in recovery, one-third (33.1%) have a condition. More specifically, 38% of people who are in recovery having a diagnosed mental health condition. Over half (51.75%) adults who are in recovery report currently smoking.

Recovery and Treatment

Since alcohol and [drug addiction](#) may negatively influence mental and physical health status, treatment and recovery is critical. While 23.5 million adults in the US needed treatment for an alcohol or drug problem in 2009, only 2.6 million people received treatment (NSDUH 2009).

In SEPA, about 16% of adults know a household or family member in recovery from an alcohol or drug problem. Additionally, 30% know someone outside of their immediate family in recovery from alcohol or other drugs.

Community support and quality of support is essential to successful recovery (NADARM 2009). Over 80% of adults living in SEPA agree that people with severe alcohol or other drug problems can fully recover. While 86.4% of people living in SEPA agree that communities should support professional treatment, only about half (47.4%) say that addiction treatment in their community is very good. People living in Bucks, Chester and Montgomery counties are more likely to agree that addiction treatment is very good in their communities (50% compared to 45% for Philadelphia and Delaware counties).

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For more information on National Recovery Month, go to www.recoverymonth.gov.

References:

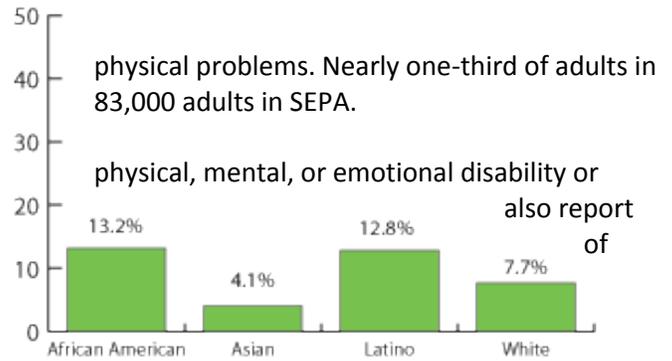
National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (NADARM) 2009. Treatment and Outreach: Finding help for substance use disorders.

http://www.recoverymonth.gov/~media/Images/Files/Kit/2009/508_pdfs/targeted_outreach/Treatment.ashx

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (HSDUH): Volume I. Summary of national findings. September 2010.

<http://oas.samhsa.gov/NSDUH/2k9NSDUH/2k9ResultsP.pdf>.

Figure 2: Percentage of Adults (18+) in Recovery from Drug or Alcohol Problems by Race/Ethnicity, SEPA 2010.



Source: PHMC's Community Health Data Base 2010 Southeastern Pennsylvania Household Health Survey