

FAST FACTS

Fast Facts About Health Reform, Substance Use and Mental Disorders, Treatment, and Recovery

Every year, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) releases the **National Survey on Drug Use and Health**, the prime source of information on the country's substance use and mental disorders. The survey includes information on the prevalence and patterns of substance use and mental disorders, along with treatment and recovery. This survey, along with many other reliable resources, contains useful statistics to use when promoting **National Recovery Month: Prevention Works, Treatment Is Effective, People Recover (Recovery Month)**. This year's **Recovery Month** theme, "**Join the Voices for Recovery: Recovery Benefits Everyone,**" educates people in the United States about the impact of new legislation on access to health insurance and to treatment and recovery services. SAMHSA supports **Recovery Month** through several of its Strategic Initiatives, particularly the goals of increasing public awareness of substance use and mental disorders, health reform implementation, and offering recovery support through an individual, program, and system approach.

Below are general statistics relating to substance use disorders, mental health problems, recovery, and treatment that support the **Recovery Month** message that prevention works, treatment is effective, and recovery is possible. Additionally, this guide will discuss health reform and how it will affect people living throughout the United States. When developing your **Recovery Month** materials, include information in this fact sheet to convey the importance of recovery and to solidify your statements with facts.

Statistics on Prevention

- A majority of Americans (80 percent) have positive feelings about prevention and recovery from substance use disorders.¹
- Research shows that those who begin drinking at a later age are less likely to develop a substance use disorder than those who begin before age 21.²
- Children who learn about the risk of drugs at home are up to 50 percent less likely to use drugs than those who are not taught about the dangers.³
- Early geriatric screening and case management for mental health problems can result in significant decreases in institutionalization (2.5 percent are institutionalized with intervention versus 16.9 percent without intervention) and death (2.5 percent die with intervention versus 6.1 percent without intervention).⁴
- Mental health intervention initiatives, including school-based programs that target cognitive, problem-solving, and social skills of children and adolescents, have been found to reduce depressive symptom levels by 50 percent or more, one year after the intervention.⁵

Data on Substance Use and Misuse

- According to the World Health Organization, worldwide, approximately 2.5 million people die each year due to alcohol use and 15.3 million people have a drug dependence.⁶
- Children of alcohol-dependent parents have a 50 percent chance of developing their own dependence.⁷
- Only a third of parents discuss the risks of abusing prescription medicines with their kids.⁸
- Individuals treated for alcohol misuse are approximately 10 times more likely to commit suicide than those who do not misuse alcohol, and people who abuse drugs have about 14 times greater the risk for eventual suicide.⁹
- The prevalence of past-month alcohol use among youth aged 12 to 17 decreased to 14.7 percent in 2009 from 17.6 percent in 2002.¹⁰

RECOVERY BENEFITS EVERYONE

Data on Mental Health Problems

- Results from the **2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health** data show that in 2009, an estimated 45.1 million adults aged 18 or older in the United States (19.9 percent of the population) had any mental illness in the past year.¹¹
- A little more than half (54 percent) of young adults who know someone with a mental illness believe that treatment can help people with mental illnesses lead normal lives.¹²
- An overwhelming majority of Americans (84 percent) believe that people with mental illnesses are not to blame for their conditions.¹³
- Almost two-thirds of 18- to 24-year-olds know someone with depression or alcoholism and more than 40 percent of the 18- to 24-year-olds know others with a drug addiction.¹⁴
- According to the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study, childhood stressors such as abuse, witnessing domestic violence, and other forms of household dysfunction increase the likelihood of depression and suicide attempts in children, adolescents, and adults.¹⁵

Positive Impressions of Treatment and Recovery

- Approximately 75 percent of the population believes that recovery is possible from addiction to highly abused substances, such as alcohol, prescription drugs, and marijuana.¹⁶
- Half of all adults over age 18 know someone in recovery from an addiction to alcohol, illicit drugs, or prescription drugs.¹⁷
- Fewer than 20 percent of Americans say they would think less of a friend or relative if they discovered that person is in recovery from addiction to alcohol and/or drugs.¹⁸
- Between 70 and 90 percent of individuals with a mental health problem have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life with a combination of medication, therapy, and other support.¹⁹
- Two-thirds of Americans believe that treatment and support can help people with mental illnesses lead normal lives.²⁰

2009 Statistics Related to Substance Use and Mental Disorders

- 4.3 million people aged 12 or older received treatment (at any location) for substance use disorders.²¹
- 2.6 million people received treatment for substance use disorders at specialty facilities (hospitals, drug or alcohol rehabilitation facilities, or mental health centers).²²
- Nearly 20.9 million people aged 12 or older (8.3 percent of the population) needed but did not receive treatment for substance use disorders in the United States.²³
- The rate of substance dependence or abuse for males aged 12 or older was nearly twice as high as the rate for females (11.9 vs. 6.1 percent).²⁴
- 31.9 percent of the 6.1 million adults aged 18 or older who reported an unmet need for mental health care didn't receive mental health services because they believed that their problem could be handled without care. In addition, 18.5 percent of these 6.1 million adults didn't know where to go for mental health care.²⁵
- Approximately 22 percent of adults with substance use and/or mental disorders were uninsured, and one in three had incomes below the Federal Poverty Level.²⁶
- Between 2002 and 2009, the percentage of youths aged 12 to 17 with a substance use disorder declined from 8.9 to 7.0 percent.²⁷

Economic Costs of Substance Use and Mental Disorders

- After individuals receive treatment for their substance use disorder, total medical costs per patient per month are more than halved, from \$431 to \$200.²⁸
- For every \$1 invested in treatment, taxpayers save at least \$7.46 in costs to society.²⁹
- Less than 10 percent of people with substance use disorders receive treatment, at a societal cost of over \$300 billion annually.³⁰
- Substance use disorders cost employers more than \$100 billion annually through increased accidents, increased health care claims and lost productivity.³¹
- The annual economic cost of mental health problems is estimated to be at least \$79 billion. Most of that amount—approximately \$63 billion—reflects the cost of lost productivity in the workplace.³²

Health Reform: What Do I Need To Know?

Health reform has the potential to impact everyone living in the United States, with the signing of the Affordable Care Act by President Barack Obama on March 23, 2010. The Affordable Care Act gives Americans more freedom and control over their health care, as well as new benefits that ensure people will receive the care they need at a more reasonable cost.

Each insurance plan will differ from person to person, but the Affordable Care Act already provides protections from insurance abuses that affect 2011 employer coverage. Coverage changes under both Medicaid and State Health Insurance Exchanges will be implemented by 2014, expanding coverage to millions who are currently uninsured. Many of the statutes will be implemented over the next few years and it is important to understand the benefits included in your health plan so you can best take advantage of what it has to offer. Below you can find some general provisions of the Affordable Care Act:

- Medicaid, a health program for low income individuals and families, will expand its eligibility to 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level³³ and all newly eligible parents and adults without children will receive benefits, which include essential substance use and mental health services at parity.³⁴
- Insurance companies will be prohibited from imposing lifetime limits in all health plans and insurance policies.³⁵
- Starting in 2014, if an individual doesn't have access to insurance through their employer, they will be able to buy insurance directly in a State Health Insurance Exchange that gives more choices and lower prices.³⁶
- Insurance companies will be prohibited from denying coverage due to a pre-existing condition for children starting in 2011, and for adults in 2014.³⁷
- Starting in 2011, young people, up to age 26, can remain on their parents' health insurance policy.³⁸
- Most health plans will cover some important preventive services at no additional cost to you, including counseling for a substance use or mental disorder.³⁹

Additional information about the Affordable Care Act can be found at <http://www.HealthCare.gov>.

How Will the Affordable Care Act Affect Substance Use and Mental Health Treatment?

The Affordable Care Act along with the Mental Health Parity and Addictions Equity Act (MHPAEA) includes many new provisions aimed at improving coverage and access to substance use disorder and mental health problem prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. Together, both will help millions of people living in the United States whose health insurance plans had previously not covered those services. The passage of the MHPAEA provides parity, or the recognition by insurance services—both public and private—that substance use and mental disorders are treated comparably to other physical health and medical conditions. The following are key substance use and mental health provisions in the new Laws.

- All employer health insurance plans, with more than 50 employees enrolled, must comply with the MHPAEA. This means that if the employer chooses to include substance use and mental health treatment, these services must be offered at parity with other medical and surgical benefits. For instance, the co-payments and deductibles for a visit can't be larger and there can't be greater limits in behavioral health inpatient days than for medical and surgical inpatient days.⁴⁰
- Eligibility for Medicaid will be expanded, and all newly eligible parents and childless adults will receive basic benefits, including essential substance use and mental health services at parity.⁴¹
- A National Prevention Council has been created with the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Director as a member.⁴²
 - Substance use disorders has been listed as a national priority for that council's report to Congress.⁴³
 - SAMHSA will be required to be consulted on issues related to preventing substance use and mental disorders.⁴⁴

Inclusion of websites and other resources mentioned in this document and on the *Recovery Month* website does not constitute official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

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