

Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia 2000–01

First report on the National Minimum Data Set

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Alcohol and other drug treatment services in Australia 2000–01

First report on the National Minimum Data Set

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AODTS-NMDS	Alcohol and Other Drugs Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set
ASCDC	Australian Standard Classification of Drugs of Concern
COTSA	Clients of Treatment Service Agencies
DoHA	Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing
IDRS	Illicit Drug Reporting System
IGCD	Intergovernmental Committee on Drugs
MCDS	Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy
NDARC	National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre
NDSHS	National Drug Strategy Household Survey
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NGOTGP	Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program
NMDS	National Minimum Data Set
RRMA	Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Area classification

Highlights

Treatment services

- A total of 393 alcohol and other drug treatment services supplied data for 2000–01, with 52% identified as non-government providers.

Clients

- During 2000–01, reporting services registered a total of 83,529 clients for treatment. Of those clients, 64% were males, 35% were female and 62% were aged between 20 and 39 years. Of all clients, 84% were born in Australia and 92% stated that their preferred language was English.
- Of all clients receiving services for the drug use of others (e.g. a spouse seeking treatment for their partner or a parent seeking treatment for their child) two-thirds were females (66%). Of these females, 51% were aged 50 years or over.
- Approximately 8% of all clients identified themselves as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, in comparison to the 2.4% of Indigenous persons identified in the Australian population (ABS 2002).
- Over a third of all clients (34%) were self-referred. Male clients were more likely than female clients to have been referred from community-based corrections or police or court diversion, with 16% of all male clients referred from the above sources compared to only 6% of all female clients.

Principal drug of concern

- Alcohol was the most common principal drug of concern (34%) for which clients sought treatment. Heroin was the next most common, with 28% of all clients reporting it as their principal drug of concern. Cannabis (14%) and amphetamines (9%) were the next most commonly reported.
- The proportion of clients with heroin as their principal drug of concern varied greatly across States and Territories, ranging from 2% in Tasmania to 43.5% in the Australian Capital Territory.
- Of all Indigenous clients, 49% nominated alcohol as their principal drug of concern (in comparison to 33% of non-Indigenous clients). This pattern was reversed for heroin – more non-Indigenous clients (30%) nominated heroin as their principal drug compared to Indigenous clients (19%).
- Of clients referred from a hospital to an alcohol and other drug treatment service, 53% reported alcohol as their principal drug of concern. Of clients referred from police or court diversion, 31.5% reported cannabis as their principal drug of concern.

- Age was found to interact with drug of concern, in that the proportion of clients seeking treatment for alcohol increased with age, whereas the proportion of clients seeking treatment for heroin decreased with age. (For example, 15% of all clients in the age group 10-19 were seeking treatment for alcohol and 31% for heroin, however 78% of all clients in the age group 50-59 were seeking treatment for alcohol and only 5% for heroin).

Injecting drug users

- Of clients seeking treatment for their own drug use and who reported an injecting drug use status (i.e. excluding the 'not stated' responses), 58% had injected or were currently injecting drug users. Of 10-19 year olds, more females indicated they were currently injecting (49%) than males (41%).