



NC-TOPPS SNAPSHOT

Homelessness Among Adult Consumers



On January 24, 2007, The North Carolina Interagency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs (ICCHP or Council) sponsored their third annual point-in-time survey. The survey was conducted in over 80 counties across the state providing an estimate of people who were homeless on one given night. 10,904 people were identified as homeless, including 3,280 people in families, 2,001 of whom were children.

In general, approximately 30 percent to 40 percent of homeless people are known to have mental illness, and an even higher percentage suffer from addiction disorders (retrieved on January 12th, 2009 from <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/homeless/homelessfacts.htm>).

This Snapshot explores the demographic and personal characteristics of 1,406 homeless adults who sought treatment for mental health and/or substance abuse conditions between July 2008 and December 2008. The following table provides a statewide glimpse of adult consumers who identified themselves as being homeless at their initial NC-TOPPS interview.

Table 1. Demographic and Dispositional Characteristics of Homeless NC-TOPPS Consumers at Initial Interview (N = 1,406)

| Gender & Race/Ethnicity | | Age Group | | DSM-IV Diagnosis | | Co-Occurring | | Important Service Needs | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|
| African American Males | 27% | 18 to 20 | 4% | Drug Dependence | 50% | SA Only | 39% | Housing | 89% |
| Caucasian Males | 27% | 21 to 30 | 18% | Alcohol Dependence | 38% | MH Only | 33% | Employment | 73% |
| Other Males | 2% | 31 to 40 | 26% | Major Depression | 31% | MH & SA | 28% | Medical | 67% |
| African American Females | 24% | 41 to 50 | 36% | Bipolar Disorder | 17% | | | Transportation | 66% |
| Caucasian Females | 17% | 51 to 60 | 16% | Schizophrenia | 12% | | | Educational | 50% |
| Other Females | 2% | 61 & Over | 1% | | | | | Legal | 30% |
| Substance Use Past 12 months | | Housing | | Service Utilization Past 3 Months | | Health Insurance | | Employment | |
| Heroin/opiate, cocaine or marijuana | 61% | Lived in shelters | 58% | Emergency room | 42% | None | 66% | Unemployed | 85% |
| Heavy alcohol | 47% | | | Telephone crisis | 28% | Medicaid | 30% | Employed full-time | 10% |
| Cocaine | 47% | | | Medical/surgical | 18% | Medicare | 4% | Employed part-time | 5% |

*Rounding error or multiple item responses may yield totals more than 100%.

Additional NC-TOPPS figures for the past 3 months:

- 73% report that more than a few times, problems interfere with work, school, or other daily activities.
- 41% have had suicidal thoughts.
- 20% have experienced physical violence.
- 19% have spent nights in jail or detention

For this sample, a typical profile of a homeless NC-TOPPS consumer would be that of an African American male between the ages of 41 and 50 with a drug dependence diagnosis, cocaine being the likely substance of choice. The man would probably be unemployed and without health insurance. This type of information can be used to create and customize programs and services to meet the needs of the consumer.

TIME PERIOD: INITIAL ASSESSMENTS CONDUCTED JULY 1, 2008– DECEMBER 31, 2008

SOURCE: NC-TOPPS ADULT CONSUMERS: HOMELESS – STATEWIDE

* This report excludes methadone consumers.