

# TCADA Research Brief

## Need in Texas for a Range of Services for Chemically Dependent Adults



Texas Commission on  
Alcohol and Drug Abuse

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# Need in Texas for a Range of Services for Chemically Dependent Adults

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*Persons who are chemically dependent often have other physical and mental problems that also need treatment. This paper is a brief look at some of those other problems that have been identified through various Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA) research studies. This is not an authoritative scan of the co-morbid problems facing chemically dependent persons, but it does provide evidence of the extent and complexity of those problems which should be addressed when providing treatment.*

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT NEEDS**

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### ***Estimates of the Number of Persons in Need***

Estimating the number of chemically dependent persons who are in need of services is difficult. Because substance use is a hidden problem, different data sources must be used to gain a picture of the number of individuals who are in need of treatment.

The 1996 *Texas Survey of Substance Use Among Adults* (Wallisch 1997) reported that 17 percent of the Texas adult population had problems with alcohol and 4 percent had problems with drugs. In comparison, the 1993 survey found that 18 percent of Texas adults had problems with alcohol and 3 percent had problems with drugs.

The telephone household survey not only asked about substance use problems, but it also queried motivation for treatment and ability to pay for services. Based on these questions, TCADA estimates that in 1996 there were about 190,000 Texas adults, or 1 percent of the adult population living in households who were medically indigent,<sup>1</sup> needed and wanted treatment.<sup>2</sup> Only 10 percent of these persons in need received services in treatment programs funded by TCADA in 1997.

However, the actual number needing treatment may be even higher, because general household surveys miss those individuals who are at highest risk of drug use, especially heroin and cocaine users, since they do not have telephones, are in prison, are out on the street dealing drugs, or are homeless. TCADA periodically conducts surveys on some of these high-risk groups.

Surveys on newly admitted Texas prison inmates (Farabee 1994, 1995) found that among male inmates, 63 percent met the DSM-III-R definition of substance abuse or dependence.<sup>3</sup> Among new female prison inmates, 63 percent were substance abusers or substance dependent. A survey of new probationers in Bexar, Dallas, and Harris Counties found that 59 percent were either substance abusers or substance dependent (Maxwell and Wallisch 1998).

Still other methods must also be used to estimate the number of hard-core drug users who may need treatment. The capture-recapture method used TCADA's Client Oriented Data Acquisition Process (CODAP) treatment admission data to estimate that there are some 50,000 heroin addicts in Texas who need publicly-funded treatment and that only 7 percent of those in need were currently being served (Maxwell 1997).

### **Characteristics of Persons Entering Treatment**

CODAP information is collected on every person entering a chemical dependency treatment program funded by TCADA.<sup>4</sup> Cocaine, both crack and powder, accounted for 33 percent of all treatment admissions in 1997, as compared to 38 percent in 1993. Heroin accounted for 13 percent in 1997, as compared to 9 percent in 1993.<sup>5</sup>

Admissions for methamphetamine and amphetamine dependence comprise only 5 percent of adult admissions, but this proportion is expected to grow based on reports of a large increase in the use of methamphetamines in the north Texas area, according to local correspondents who participated in the Texas Epidemiology Work Group<sup>6</sup> in May, 1998 (Maxwell 1998).

The following tables provide detailed information on the characteristics of persons admitted for a primary problem with cocaine, heroin, or stimulants based on route of administration.

**Characteristics of Clients Admitted to TCADA-Funded Treatment by Primary Problem with Cocaine by Route of Administration—Jan.-Dec. 1997**

	Crack Smoke	Powder Cocaine Inject	Powder Cocaine Inhale
# Admissions	6,366	1,040	956
% of Cocaine Admits	76%	12%	11%
Average Age	34	32	29
Lag-1st Use to Tmt-Yrs.	8	10	8
% Male	52%	58%	63%
% African American	60%	5%	10%
% Anglo	31%	72%	43%
% Hispanic	9%	22%	46%
% CJ Involved	39%	42%	48%
% Employed	17%	20%	33%
% Homeless	12%	8%	2%
Average Income	\$6,376	\$7,931	\$8,352

**Characteristics of Clients Admitted to TCADA-Funded Treatment by Primary Problem with Heroin by Route of Administration—Jan.-Dec. 1997**

	Inject	Inhale
# Admissions	3,083	199
% of Heroin Admits	94%	6%
Average Age	36	31
Lag-1st Use to Tmt-Yrs.	14	8
% Male	64%	51%
% African American	11%	40%
% Anglo	49%	29%
% Hispanic	39%	27%
% CJ Involved	35%	31%
% Employed	16%	24%
% Homeless	10%	1%
Average Income	\$5,439	\$6,042

While most heroin addicts in Texas inject, there has been an increase in the proportion who inhale, and this group has very different characteristics from those who are injectors. For instance, notice that the lag from first regular use of heroin to entering treatment for heroin inhalers is about half that of those who inject.

Unlike cocaine and heroin, where the characteristics of users are quite different, depending on route of administration, clients admitted to treatment with a problem of amphetamines or methamphetamines tend to look very similar.

The proportion of adult needle users entering TCADA-funded treatment programs has decreased from 32 percent in 1988 to 25 percent for 1997. Heroin injectors are most likely to be male, older, and half are persons of color, while injectors of stimulants and cocaine are far more likely to be Anglo.

### **Economic Cost of Treatment**

The *Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Texas: 1997 Update* (Liu 1998) estimated that the cost to treat alcohol and drug abuse in Texas amounted to \$1.5 billion. This estimate includes treatment costs in both facilities that are publicly-funded and facilities that are privately-funded.

## **SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES, HIV, AND AIDS TREATMENT NEEDS**

### **TCADA Survey Findings**

Surveys of incoming Texas female prison inmates and new probationers in Bexar, Dallas, and Harris Counties asked females who were interviewed

**Characteristics of Clients Admitted to TCADA-Funded Treatment by Primary Problem with Amphetamines by Route of Administration—Jan.-Dec. 1997**

	Smoke	Inject	Inhale	Oral
# Admissions	119	788	236	122
% of Stimulant Admits	9%	62%	19%	10%
Lag-1st Use to Tmt-Yrs.	8	11	8	10
Average Age-Yrs.	29	30	28	30
% Male	37%	50%	45%	47%
% African American	1%	1%	1%	0%
% Anglo	92%	96%	89%	89%
% Hispanic	5%	2%	9%	11%
% CJ Involved	37%	49%	46%	51%
% Employed	19%	20%	29%	25%
% Homeless	10%	7%	6%	8%
Average Income	\$6,500	\$6,592	\$8,915	\$7,925

**Characteristics of Needle Using Clients Admitted to TCADA-Funded Treatment Centers—Jan.-Dec. 1997**

	Heroin	Stimulants	Cocaine
# Admissions	3,083	788	1,040
Average Age	36.3	30.4	31.8
% Male	64%	50%	58%
% African American	11%	1%	5%
% Anglo	49%	96%	72%
% Hispanic	39%	2%	22%
% Employed	16%	20%	20%
% CJ Involved	35%	49%	42%
% Homeless	10%	7%	8%
Average Income	\$5,439	\$6,592	\$7,931

about sexually transmitted diseases (STD). Among the female prison inmates, 36 percent reported ever having had a sexually transmitted disease, and 13 percent reported having two or more of these diseases during their lifetimes. The most common were syphilis (14 percent) and gonorrhea (16 percent). Some 2 percent said they had been diagnosed with HIV or AIDS. Substance-dependent inmates were over twice as likely as nondependents to report ever having a STD (48 percent v. 23 percent).

Among female probationers, 19 percent reported ever having had a sexually transmitted disease, and 7 percent reported having two or more of these diseases. The most common diseases were trichomoniasis (8 percent) and gonorrhea (7

percent). None reported having HIV and AIDS. Substance dependent female probationers were more than three times as likely (38 percent) to have ever contracted a STD as all other female probationers (11 percent).

A study of the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases and hepatitis B and C in 435 frequenters of crack houses in Houston found evidence of syphilis infection in 13 percent, herpes simplex virus-2 (HSV-2) in 61 percent, HIV in 11 percent, hepatitis B in 52 percent, and hepatitis C in 42 percent of the persons interviewed (Ross 1997). Some 84 percent met the DSM-III-R diagnosis for drug dependence. Sexual behavior indicated a mean of 2.4 partners in the past month for men, 3.7 for women. Sexual behavior was largely vaginal, although women also reported more than twice the level of oral sex than men did.

The Houston crack house study found the highest odds ratios were associated with injecting drugs for hepatitis C and HIV infection. For HIV, the odds ratio<sup>7</sup> for sexually transmitted diseases was high and similar to that for injecting drug use, which confirms the association between sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection. Treatment for crack addiction should be seen as a direct way of reducing the incidence of HIV infection.

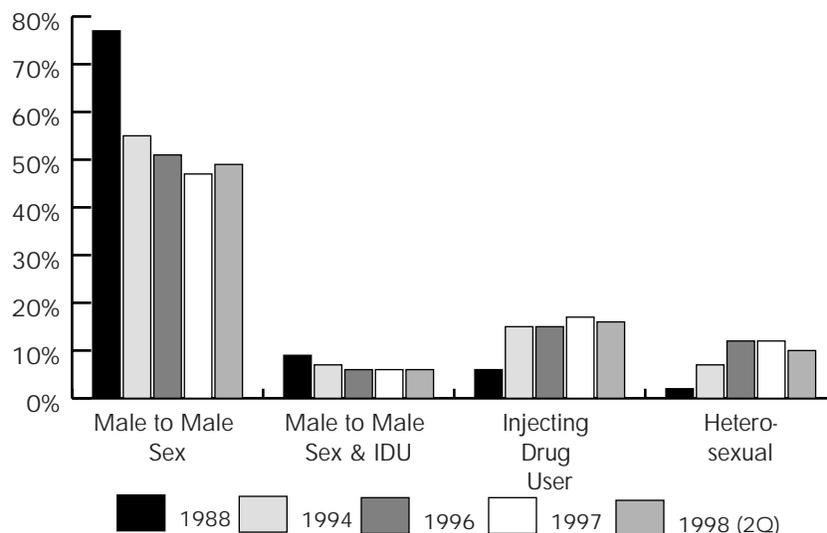
The surveys of incoming Texas prison inmates and probationers also collected information on HIV risk using the Southwest

Regional Research Group Sex Risk Index, which predicts the occurrence of sexually transmitted diseases. Male prison inmates who had no substance problems had a mean Sex Risk Score of 7.15,<sup>8</sup> while those who were classified as drug or alcohol abusers had a score of 8.44. Male inmates who were drug or alcohol dependent had a mean score of 13.0. In comparison, female inmates with no substance problems reported a mean score of 2.4, as compared to 2.7 for women who were alcohol or drug abusers and 11.0 for women who were alcohol or drug dependent.

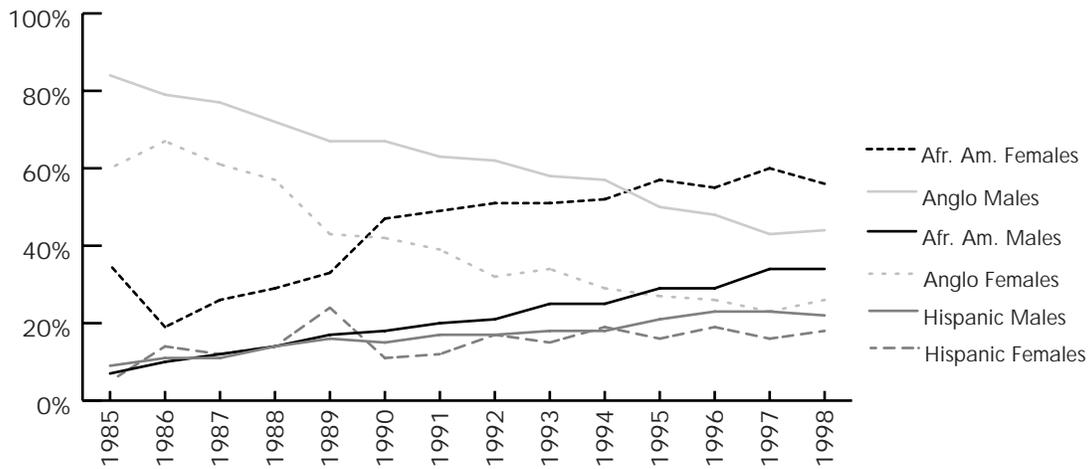
Probationers who had no substance abuse problems had a mean Sex Risk Score of 2.49, while those who were alcohol or drug abusers had a mean score of 3.55, and those who were alcohol or drug dependent had a mean score of 6.83.

Among prison inmates who had ever injected drugs or engaged in one of the high-risk sexual behaviors in the thirty days prior to incarceration, 62 percent of female inmates and 64 percent of male inmates met the criteria of being at high risk

Reported AIDS Cases in Texas as of June 30, 1998, by Route of Transmission



**Male and Female Reported AIDS Cases by Race/Ethnicity  
January 1, 1985 through March 31, 1998**



of contracting HIV. Inmates who were drug or alcohol dependent were significantly more likely (81 percent) than non-dependent inmates (42 percent) to be classified as being at high overall HIV risk.

Among new probationers, 39 percent met the criteria for being at high risk of HIV. Some 58 percent of probationers who had substance problems were at high overall HIV risk, as compared to only 27 percent of new probationers who reported no substance use.

### **Texas Department of Health Data**

As of June 30, 1998, the proportion of adult and adolescent AIDS cases related to injecting drug use has gone from 15 percent in 1988 to 23 percent in 1998. In 1988, 6 percent of the cases were injecting drug users (IDUs), and 9 percent were male-to-male sex and IDUs; in 1998, 16 percent of the cases were IDUs, and 6 percent were male-to-male sex and IDUs. The proportion of cases resulting from heterosexual contact has gone from 2 percent in 1988 to 10 percent in 1998. It should be noted that for 1998, the mode of

exposure of 17 percent of the cases was still classified as unspecified.

In 1988, 3 percent of the AIDS cases were females over age 12; for 1998, 17 percent were female. In 1988, 15 percent of the adult and adolescent cases were African American; in 1998, 38 percent were African American. Of the female cases, 56 percent were African American, and of the male cases, 34 percent were African American.

### **Economic Cost to Society**

The *Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Texas: 1997 Update* estimated that HIV/AIDS cases which are the result of injecting drug use cost Texans \$160 million in 1997.

## **MENTAL ILLNESS TREATMENT NEEDS**

### **TCADA Treatment Data**

TCADA funds several pilot programs which treat persons who are dually diagnosed. Dual diagnosis is a term referring to individuals who are substance dependent and also have a severe, persistent

mental disorder such as depression, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia, among others. In the first nine months of fiscal year 1998, a total of 1,035 persons have been served in these programs. This same trend is shown in CODAP, which reports the source of referral. During the same time period, 1,994 persons were referred to TCADA-funded treatment through a civil court commitment because they were found to be a danger to themselves or others. These referrals included those to the pilot programs as well as other programs which are approved to treat these persons.

CODAP collects information on prescribed medications which clients were taking at admission. Between September 1997 and July 1998, 22 percent were on such medications. Six percent (1,355 clients) were taking anti-anxiety drugs, 4 percent (662 clients) were taking anti-depressants, and 26 clients were taking anti-psychotic medications. The level of mental health impairment of these clients was reinforced by the fact that during treatment, of the 21,765 clients discharged between September 1997 and July 1998, 16 percent received anti-anxiety medications and 14 percent received anti-depressants. The clients who were most likely to receive these medications had been served in detoxification programs and their primary drugs of abuse were opiates and depressants.

CODAP also collects information on DSM-IV diagnoses if the program has staff who have been trained to give such diagnoses. Although non-substance abuse DSM-IV diagnoses were given to only 28 percent of the clients (5,612 persons) admitted in the same time period, 90 of them were

diagnosed with schizophrenic disorders, 407 had depressive disorders, 170 had bipolar disorders, and 11 were psychotic.

### **TCADA Survey Findings**

*Gambling in Texas: 1995 Surveys of Adult and Adolescent Gambling Behavior* (Wallisch 1996) found that 4 percent of the adults surveyed in this household telephone survey reported problems with both substance abuse and mental health.

The *1993 Texas Survey of Substance Use Among Adults* (Wallisch 1994) found that individuals who had problems of substance abuse or dependence were significantly more likely than others to also have a mental health problem. For instance, while 20 percent of adults with no substance problems reported a mental health problem, this was true for 41 percent of adults who were dependent on alcohol and 85 percent who were dependent on drugs.

The 1993 and 1994 surveys of incoming adult prisoners included a brief depression scale and some single-item mental health indicators to allow for comparison between substance-dependent inmates and inmates who were not substance dependent. The mean Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale score for all female inmates was 17.6, as compared to 15.6 for all male inmates.<sup>9</sup> Female inmates who were substance dependent scored 19.5 v. 15.6 for non-dependent females, while male inmates who were not substance dependent had a mean score of 16.4 v. 14.2 for males who were not substance dependent.

Among new probationers in Bexar, Dallas, and Harris Counties, the mean depression scale for

females was 17.1 as compared to 15.1 for males. Probationers with substance abuse problems reported a depression index score of 16.6 as compared to 14.1 for those without substance abuse problems.

In terms of other measures of mental health, female prison inmates who were substance dependent were more likely than other female inmates to report that mental health problems had significantly interfered with their lives (52 percent v. 28 percent). Among male inmates, the scores were 26 percent for substance dependent v. 14 percent for non-dependent.

Among probationers, those with at least one substance problem were more likely than those with no substance problems to report their mental health problems had significantly interfered with their lives (32 percent versus 20 percent). And those with at least one substance problem were more likely than probationers with no problems to have sought treatment for their mental health problems (22 percent v. 14 percent).

## **OTHER MEDICAL TREATMENT NEEDS**

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### ***TCADA Treatment Data***

Little Texas-specific information is available as to other medical needs of substance abusers. Analysis of CODAP discharge records from September, 1997 through July, 1998, showed that while 93 percent of the discharged clients had no other disabilities, 3 percent (574) had mental illness, 2 percent (408) had other medical disabilities, 1 percent (193) had a physical impairment, and 0.6 percent (123) had a mobility impairment. Between

0.1 and 0.3 percent each had hearing impairments, visual impairments, learning disabilities, brain injuries, and substance abuse disabilities covered by Social Security.

In addition, over 7 percent of the clients had impediments to treatment such as not speaking English, illiteracy, no transportation, medical or dental problems, lack of support for treatment, or hindrances due to family or job responsibilities.

### ***TCADA Survey Findings***

The 1994 survey of incoming female inmates found that 61 percent had problems with tuberculosis, high blood pressure, heart problems, stroke, pneumonia emphysema, diabetes, asthma, arthritis, cancer, kidney infection, or thyroid problems. The most commonly reported problems were high blood pressure (17 percent), asthma (17 percent), and arthritis (15 percent).

Among female probationers, 52 percent had problems with the same diseases, and the most commonly reported problems were high blood pressure (20 percent), kidney problems (16 percent), asthma (12 percent), and arthritis (10 percent).

The female prison inmates were also asked a free-response question regarding any serious injuries they had sustained, and 25 percent reported such injuries. The most common problems were back injuries (7 percent) and bone fractures (9 percent). Some 4 percent reported having been stabbed or shot. Substance dependent women were approximately twice as likely as non-dependent women (16 percent v. 8 percent) to report injuries.

Twelve percent of female probationers reported serious injuries. The most common were broken bones (4 percent), back injuries (3 percent), and knee injuries (1 percent). Substance dependent female probationers were more likely to have had an injury (16 percent) than other female probationers (10 percent) were.

## **COMPULSIVE GAMBLING PROBLEM TREATMENT NEEDS**

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### ***TCADA Survey Findings***

The 1995 gambling survey found that 2.7 percent of the adults surveyed in this household telephone survey reported problems with both substance abuse and gambling. As compared to 5 percent of adults overall who had gambling problems, 11 percent of those who abused substances and 19 percent of those who were dependent had problems with gambling as well.

The survey of new probationers found that those who were substance dependent were more likely than others to report gambling-related problems, and both the survey of female prison inmates and the 1993 survey of adults in the general Texas population found that substance misusers were more likely to have problems with gambling than non-misusers.

## **PARENTING NEEDS**

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### ***TCADA Treatment Data***

Of the adult clients who entered TCADA-funded treatment in 1997, 41 percent had children under 19 years of age living with them. The average number of children living with these parents was 2.14. A total of 428 pregnant women were admit-

ted to treatment and they already had 269 children prior to the pregnancy reported at admission.

### ***TCADA Survey Findings***

Female prison inmates were more likely to be parents than were male prison inmates (84 percent versus 73 percent) and female inmates were more likely to have had children living with them at the time of arrest (62 percent versus 47 percent). Among probationers, 75 percent of the females had children living with them at the time of arrest, as compared to 49 percent of the males.

The typical female inmate who was a mother had 2.7 children with an average age of 8.4 years. The typical female probationer who was a mother had 2.4 children with an average age of only 7.5 years.

Of the mothers in prison, 23 percent reported having been investigated by Child Protective Services workers during the year prior to their arrest, and substance dependent mothers were significantly more likely than non-dependent mothers to have been under investigation (28 percent versus 18 percent).

Of mothers on probation, 15 percent had been investigated by Child Protective Services workers in the year prior to arrest, and substance dependent mothers were more than twice as likely as non-dependent mothers to have been investigated (27 percent versus 10 percent).

### ***Endnotes***

- <sup>1</sup> Texans were considered medically indigent if they were either uninsured, covered by Medicaid, had a city or county health card, or had an annual household income of less than \$10,000.

- <sup>2</sup> This number is about 50 percent higher than the 120,000 Texans estimated in 1993 who were medically indigent and needed and wanted chemical dependency treatment.
- <sup>3</sup> Many TCADA surveys borrowed from the Diagnostic Interview Schedule which assesses the presence of nine criteria in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Third Edition, Revised* (DSM-III-R) for diagnosing abuse and dependence. The DSM-III-R generally defines problem substance use as continued use despite negative cognitive, behavioral, or physiological symptoms. Substance abuse, then, is defined as the presence of one or two of these symptoms, and substance dependence covers users who experienced three or more symptoms. Substance dependent users are considered in need of treatment.
- <sup>4</sup> Information that would allow an individual to be identified is not collected.
- <sup>5</sup> Alcohol accounted for 38 percent of all admissions in 1997.
- <sup>6</sup> The Texas Epidemiology Work Group has been meeting annually since 1987, and includes representatives from the Drug Enforcement Administration, law enforcement officers, substance abuse treatment providers, outreach workers, researchers, and medical examiners from different cities in the state.
- <sup>7</sup> Odds ratio refers to the ratio of one odds to another and measures how strong the association is between a characteristic and a disease. An odds ratio of “1” means there is no association, whereas an odds ratio of “2” means that odds in favor of the disease are twice as high.
- <sup>8</sup> The lower the mean sex risk score, the lower the frequency of risky sexual behavior.
- <sup>9</sup> A high depression scale score denotes higher levels of depression.

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