

## **Treatment data – RDMD and NDTMS**

The Regional Drugs Misuse Database, a "public health surveillance system" for monitoring trends in problem drug users presenting for treatment has been in operation since 1990.

The system underwent a review and was revised in April 2001 as the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS).

The NDTMS focuses on problem drug users presenting to specialist drug agencies and GPs offering structured care. It introduced a form of "client review" to collect summary data on key interventions and the length of time a person was in contact with an agency.

## Data from the Regional Drugs Misuse Database – Fiscal years 1995/96 – 2000/2001

**Table 1: Users by main drug**

Main Drug	1995	%	1996	%	1997	%	1998	%	1999	%	2000	%	Total	%
Heroin	5877	54.1	6041	54.8	4337	50.4	5768	49.0	5969	48.2	6635	50.0	34617	51.0
Methadone	1736	16.0	1951	17.8	1198	13.9	1591	13.5	1401	11.3	1440	10.9	9327	13.7
Other Opiates	217	2.0	193	1.7	122	1.4	297	2.5	282	2.3	254	1.9	1365	2.0
Amphetamines	369	3.4	331	3.0	277	3.2	279	2.4	275	2.2	192	1.4	1723	2.5
Cocaine	342	3.2	345	3.1	415	4.8	516	4.4	643	5.2	735	5.5	2996	4.4
Crack	741	6.8	701	6.4	761	8.8	1364	11.6	1733	14.0	1917	14.4	7217	10.6
Cannabis	698	6.4	757	7.0	868	10.1	1293	11.0	1436	11.6	1414	10.7	6476	9.5
Ecstasy	128	1.2	106	1.0	82	1.0	94	0.8	103	0.8	127	1.0	640	0.9
Benzodiazepine	373	3.4	258	2.3	224	2.6	251	2.1	272	2.2	256	1.9	1632	2.4
Other	374	3.4	328	3.0	326	3.8	327	2.8	259	2.1	300	2.3	1914	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>10855</b>		<b>11029</b>		<b>8610</b>		<b>11780</b>		<b>12363</b>		<b>13270</b>		<b>67907</b>	

- Table 1 shows the profile of main drug reported over the six fiscal years.
- In 2000/2001, 50% (6635/13270) of reports were heroin, followed by crack, comprising 14.4% of all reports.
- Cocaine comprised 5.5% of reports in 2000/2001
- Increase in the number and percentage of reports mentioning cocaine and crack across the six-year period.
- Reports of crack increased more than two fold across this period from 741 in 1995/96 (where they comprised 6.8% of all reports) to 1917 in 2000/2001 (14.4% of all reports); reports of cocaine approximately doubled across the same period from 342 to 735 in 2000/2001.
- Crack is a particular issue for London where it comprised 14.4% (1917/13270) of reports in 2000/2001 and was the second most commonly reported main drug; in the South East and Eastern region (1999/2000 data) it only comprised 2.6% (165/6368) and 2.4% (89/3680) of reports respectively. (The South East region comprises Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Isle of Wight, North and mid Hampshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Portsmouth and SE Hampshire, Southampton & SW Hampshire and the Eastern region comprises Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Essex & Suffolk.)

Any Drug	1995	%	1996	%	1997	%	1998	%	1999	%	2000	%	Total	%
Heroin	6809	28.7	6829	28.7	5029	26.4	6757	25.1	6949	25.4	7748	27.5	40221	26.9
Methadone	3336	14.2	3561	14.7	2289	12.0	2868	10.7	2656	9.7	2578	9.2	17338	11.6
Other Opiates	544	2.3	520	2.2	374	2.0	754	2.8	618	2.3	572	2.0	3982	2.3
Amphetamines	1197	5.0	1442	6.0	844	4.4	1019	3.8	811	3.0	612	2.2	5925	4.0
Cocaine	890	3.8	895	3.7	895	4.7	1054	3.9	1255	4.6	1388	4.9	6377	4.3
Crack	1935	8.4	2128	8.8	2178	11.4	3704	13.8	4567	16.7	4987	17.7	19559	13.1
Cannabis	2522	10.6	2608	10.8	2652	13.9	3894	14.5	3867	14.1	3811	13.5	19954	13.0
Ecstasy	575	2.4	495	2.0	374	2.0	482	1.8	487	1.8	567	2.0	2970	2.0
Benzodiazepines	3056	12.9	3172	13.1	2061	10.8	2846	9.8	2683	9.4	2371	8.4	15869	10.6
Alcohol	1637	6.9	1392	5.8	1520	8.0	2680	10.0	2734	10.0	2503	8.9	12466	8.3
Other	1132	4.8	1031	4.3	865	4.5	1028	3.8	843	3.1	1037	3.7	5936	4.0
Total	23713		24173		19081		26906		27350		28174		149397	

**Table 2: Users by any drug (multiple responses allowed)**

- Table 2 shows the number of users by any drug – any drug comprises main drug plus subsidiary drug.
- Subsidiary drugs record those taken in the last four weeks and may not necessarily indicate problem drugs.
- Data on frequency and amount are not always completed, which also hinders clear identification of problem drugs from drugs used.
- Notwithstanding, large numbers of drug users were using multiple drugs in the past four weeks – including cannabis, crack, cocaine, amphetamine and benzodiazepines.
- In 2000/2001, 27.5% (7748/28174) of reports were heroin, followed by crack, comprising 17.7% of all reports
- Cocaine comprised 4.9% of reports in 2000/2001.
- As with the trends for main drug reports of crack increased over two fold over the six-year period from 1985 in 1995/96 (where they comprised 8.4% of all reports) to 4997 in 2000/2001 (17.7% of all reports). Reports of cocaine increased by 56% during the period from 890 to 1388
- The drug profile reflects problem use of people presenting to services not problem use in the population. Reports are dominated by opiates
- Equally, the use of secondary drugs reflects use by heroin users or poly-drug users rather than their use in the population.

	Amgs		Benzos		Cannabis		Cocaine		Crack		Ecstasy		Heroin		Methadone		Other		Other Opiates		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
White	184	1.8	218	2.4	838	9.7	582	6.5	841	9.4	83	1.0	4638	51.7	1140	12.7	227	2.5	193	2.2	8871
Black African		0.0	1	0.5	62	37.0	7	9.2	79	32.0	2	0.9	71	30.0	5	2.9	1	0.5		0.0	222
Black Caribbean	2	0.2	3	0.4	132	16.3	28	3.5	413	61.1	1	0.1	200	24.8	20	2.5	5	0.6	4	0.5	808
Black Other	6	0.8	3	0.5	63	12.0	18	2.8	276	42.7	6	0.8	203	31.4	36	5.6	11	1.7	4	0.6	647
Black ethnic groups - subtotal	8	0.5	7	0.4	277	18.5	54	3.2	782	45.4	9	0.5	474	28.3	61	3.6	17	1.0	8	0.5	1677
Indian		0.0	7	2.4	46	16.0	8	2.1	22	7.8	2	0.7	181	62.8	11	3.8	8	3.1	4	1.4	288
Bangladeshi		0.0	1	0.6	9	5.0	1	0.6	9	5.0	0.0	0.0	150	62.8	11	5.1		0.0		0.0	181
Pakistani		0.0	1	0.8	16	12.2	1	0.8	8	6.1	0.0	0.0	98	74.8	3	2.3	2	1.5	2	1.5	131
Asian ethnic groups - sub total	0	0.0	9	1.5	71	11.8	8	1.3	38	6.5	2	0.3	428	71.5	25	4.2	11	1.8	6	1.0	600
Chinese		0.0	0.0	5	9.3	0.0	5	9.3	0.0	5	9.3	0.0	35	70.4	6	11.1		0.0		0.0	34
Other	7	0.6	6	0.7	108	12.0	35	4.0	131	14.9	13	1.5	435	48.4	85	10.8	27	3.1	25	2.8	880
Missing	13	1.2	18	1.5	86	7.9	58	5.1	138	12.8	10	0.9	620	57.0	113	10.4	18	1.7	17	1.6	1088
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1414</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1817</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>6535</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>13270</b>

**Table 3: Users by ethnicity and main drug 2000/2001**

- Table 3 shows the number and proportion of reports by ethnic group and main drug for the fiscal year 2000/2001.
- With the exception of the Black ethnic group (black African, Caribbean and other) the most commonly reported main drug was heroin ranging from 49.4% (435/880) in the other ethnic group to 71.5% (429/600) in the Asian ethnic groups.
- In the Black ethnic group crack was the most commonly reported main drug (45.4% (762/1677) of reports) followed by heroin (28.3% (474/1677)).

## **National Drug Treatment Monitoring System from April 2001**

**Data from the NDTMS for April 2001- March 2002 (Contacts) can be found at**

<http://www.lho.org.uk/hil/drug.htm> This site is the London Drugs Indicators project and brings together data on drug use in London covering prevalence, Drugs act offences, blood borne viruses, Arrest referral, Treatment (NDTMS), Drug related mortality, ambulance call outs, hospital admissions and drugs misuse deaths.

- In the first fiscal year of the new system presented below, data were requested for both clients new to services and existing clients.
- The database contains information on people in treatment in London agencies and will not include London residents in treatment elsewhere, although expect this number to be small. It includes information on non-London residents in treatment agencies within London.
- Data are presented by borough of residency (as opposed to treatment)

- Table D10 <http://www.lho.org.uk/hil/drug3.htm#a8> shows the number and percentage who had treatment by borough of residence and main Drug for April 2001-March 2002.
- Not surprisingly a similar pattern to the RDMD data for 2000/2001.
- The most commonly reported **main** drug being heroin comprising approximately 57% of the 19,000 reports, followed by crack, comprising 11% of all reports.
- The boroughs with the highest percentage of crack as a **main** drug were Wandsworth, Hackney, Haringey, Waltham Forest and Kensington and Chelsea.

However slightly artificial cut of the data given that majority of users reported are polydrug users so Table D11 <http://www.lho.org.uk/hil/drug3.htm#a8> presents users by drug profile and borough of residence

- Drug profiles are defined as:  
 Heroin + Crack are those who used both heroin and crack and any other drug  
 Heroin - crack are those who used heroin (without crack) and any other drug  
 Crack - heroin are those who used crack (without heroin) and any other drug  
 Any other drug are those who used any other drug other than crack or heroin ( cocaine, methadone, other opiates, ecstasy, amphetamines, benzodiazepines, cannabis)
- 16% of the 19,000 reports involved heroin and crack and 20% involved crack without heroin
- The proportion reporting crack-cocaine in Inner London is approximately 42%, nearly half of which is among people who also use heroin
- The boroughs with the highest percentage of crack without heroin use (20% or more) were Brent, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Southwark, Tower hamlets, Wandsworth, Waltham Forest and Westminster

Table D6 <http://www.lho.org.uk/hil/drug3.htm#a8> Gives the Number and percentage who had treatment by drug profile and ethnic group April 2001-March 2002

- Note: Overall, among reports to the NDTMS of people presenting to specialist drug agencies approximately 70% were white and less than 10% from black ethnic groups
- Nearly 20% of those reporting crack use were from the Black ethnic group, compared to only 9% of those using heroin and crack and 4% of those using heroin only. 63% of those reporting crack use were white, compared to 73% using heroin and crack and 76% using heroin only.
- Note: According to the latest projections from the GLA, 12% of the population aged 15-44 in London are from Black ethnic groups. Therefore, the Black population were over represented in those reporting crack use, but under-represented in those seeking treatment
- 46 % of the black ethnic group used crack without heroin compared to 17% of whites
- 61% of the black ethnic group reported any crack use (with or without heroin) compared to 33.1% of the white ethnic group.

Treatment services geared towards opiate use and attract an older population of users.

## **Arrest referral**

Arrest referral (AR) is a crime reduction initiative that seeks to identify drug users at the point of arrest, encourage them to address their drug problem and obtain appropriate treatment.

AR schemes do not offer an alternative to prosecution or due process but provide help with getting access to treatment services.

The arrest referral service is offered to all arrestees by a custody officer as part of the booking-in process. Dedicated drug workers based either on-site or on-call to the custody suite contact all arrestees who express an interest in the service. In addition, AR workers are able to visit the cells to introduce the scheme directly to arrestees, emphasising its independence from the police and voluntary nature.

For arrestees who choose to be assessed and possibly referred through the AR scheme to drug treatment information is collected on drug use, treatment history, income, offending behaviour and assessment outcome..

The data presented here does not include data from contact only arrestees, i.e. those who refused or were inappropriate for AR assessment. Data for all assessments undertaken by AR workers in London for the calendar year 2001 are presented.

## Key points

- In 2001, arrest referral workers in London assessed over 6600 arrestees
- Arrest referral workers assessed approximately 5% of the total number of people arrested in London per year in 2001.
- In Inner London 55% of arrestees assessed were White, 28% from Black ethnic groups, and 9% Asian ethnic groups. In Outer London 80% were White, 8% from Black ethnic groups and 8% from Asian groups..
- In London, 59% of those assessed reported using heroin in the last month, and 56% used crack-cocaine, with 41% reporting using both heroin and crack-cocaine.
- In England and Wales, the proportion of arrest referral assessments reporting heroin use was similar at 56%, but the proportion reporting crack use was substantially less at 22%.
- Nearly 50% of those reporting crack use (and no heroin use) were Black, compared to only 16% of those using heroin and crack and 11% of those using heroin only (Table C10)  
<http://www.lho.org.uk/hil/drug3.htm> - a2
- Therefore, the Black population were over represented in those reporting crack use and being assessed.
- Arrest referral workers target those arrested for acquisitive (shoplifting) and drug related crimes. These form the two largest single crime groups of those assessed. Those arrested for violent crimes are often screened out by police as inappropriate. Therefore the crime profile of those assessed does not mirror that of the arrestee population as a whole

### **Comparison of Arrest Referral Data and Treatment data.**

- There are considerable differences in the population seeking drug treatment, and being arrested and assessed in London and England that centre on the use of crack-cocaine and drug use among ethnic groups. A substantially higher proportion of crack-users arrested were from Black ethnic groups compared to those in treatment.
- Overall, among reports to the NDTMS of people presenting to specialist drug agencies approximately 70% were white and less than 10% from black ethnic groups. In contrast, among reports to LARM of people assessed in police stations less than 60% were white and 24% from Black ethnic groups.
- Approximately 20% of problem crack users presenting for treatment (who do not also report heroin use) were from Black ethnic groups. Whereas, 50% of crack-users assessed by arrest referral workers were from Black ethnic groups.
- There are a number of competing explanations for these discrepancies in the ethnic breakdown between treatment and criminal justice populations which merit urgent investigation. Alone these data may suggest but in no way provide conclusive evidence of inequity of access to treatment and/or inequity of arrest by ethnic group. Since, we do not know the true ethnic breakdown of heroin and crack-cocaine users in London we need further evidence to indicate which population - problem drug users in treatment or arrested - is under or over represented by Black ethnic groups.