

2010 Profile of HIV/AIDS in Michigan

Ranked Behavioral Group: IDU

Data from HIV/AIDS Reporting System (eHARS), Supplement to HIV/AIDS Surveillance Project II (SHAS), National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS) & Medical Monitoring Project (MMP)

Overview:

Injecting drug users (IDUs) are the number-three ranked behavioral group in Michigan and account for 16 percent (2,467 cases) of reported infected persons (including MSM/IDU). MDCH estimates there are 3,030 IDUs living with HIV in Michigan. This estimate includes 880 HIV-infected men whose risk is a combination of having sex with other men and injecting drugs (MSM/IDU). (See Table 5, page 3-85).

Race/Ethnicity and Sex:

Of the 2,467 IDU and MSM/IDU persons living with HIV, 1,122 are black men (45 percent), 535 are black women (22 percent), 502 are white men (20 percent), 143 are white women (6 percent), 91 are Hispanic men (4 percent) and 30 are Hispanic women (1 percent). In total, two-thirds (1,657 cases, 67 percent) of the IDU cases occur in black persons. Approximately three-quarters of the cases are among men (71 percent) and 29 percent are among women. See Table 7, page 3-88.

Additional behavioral data on HIV-infected IDUs and other drug users in Southeast Michigan is known from the SHAS interview project. Of the 1,174 persons interviewed in SHAS II between 2000 and 2004, 15 percent (178) injected drugs at some time during their lives. This 15 percent (178) was mostly comprised of males (63 percent). Of all injection drug users, 51 percent (90) reported ever being told by a doctor or health care provider that they had hepatitis C; this was 59 percent of males (53) and 71 percent of females (37).

Age at HIV Diagnosis:

Among men in their 30s IDU is tied with Unknown risk for the second most common mode of transmission (16 percent). Overall, as age at diagnosis increases, the proportion attributed to IDU behavior increases (as opposed to MSM behavior, where the proportion decreases with age). However, this proportion peaks with persons 40-49 and then begins to decrease.

Overall, IDU is the second most common risk for women. However, this is true only for women between 25 and 49 at the time of HIV diagnosis (17 to 30 percent). For women who were 50 and older at HIV diagnosis, IDU falls behind Unknown risk and becomes the third most common mode of transmission. There are very few cases of HIV/AIDS attributed to IDU among persons who were teenagers at the time of their HIV diagnosis (4 percent) and half of those are among male MSM/IDU). See Table 9, page 3-90.

Concurrent Diagnoses:

Of the 15,285 persons living with HIV/AIDS in Michigan, 54 percent (8,317 cases) have progressed to AIDS. Of these, 3,561 (43 percent) had concurrent HIV and AIDS diagnoses. IDUs make up 18 percent (N = 1,490) of persons living with AIDS, of which 33 percent (N = 490) had concurrent HIV and AIDS diagnoses. Overall, IDUs are less likely than either heterosexuals or MSMs to get tested late in the progression of HIV disease. See Table 5, page 3-85.

Geographic Distribution:

Within high prevalence counties (see Figure 2 on page 3-15), 16 percent of reported cases are IDU, while in the lower prevalence counties 14 percent of persons living with HIV/AIDS are IDU. These percentages include those male IDUs who are also MSM. Data not included in Tables.

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Non-injection drug use:

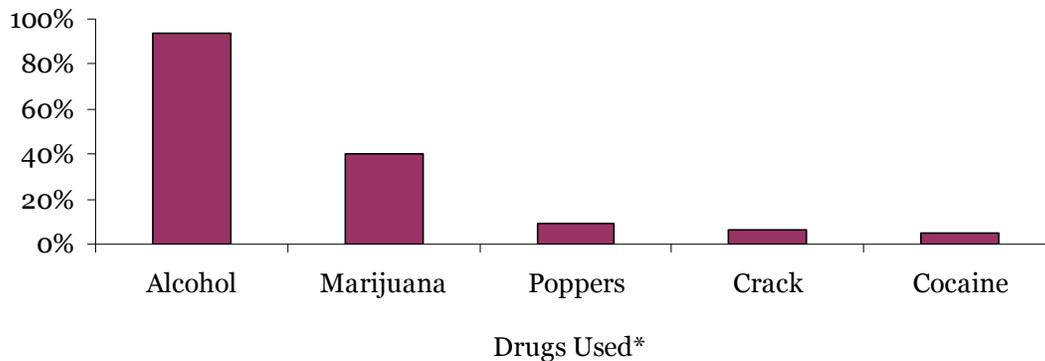
Among SHAS participants, 174 (98 percent) were injection drug users who had ever used some kind of non-injection drugs in the past. When injection drug users were asked about ever being in a drug or alcohol treatment program, 135 persons (76 percent) responded in the affirmative. Forty-two percent (74 persons) of injection drug users are potential alcoholics—17 percent of males (44 persons) and 28 percent of females (30 persons). A ‘potential alcoholic’ is defined as a person who answered ‘Yes’ to two or more of the following questions on the SHAS II questionnaire: 1) Have you ever felt you ought to cut down on your drinking?, 2) Have people ever annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?, 3) Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?, and 4) Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or rid yourself of a hangover?

Asking these screening questions of all respondents revealed that 32 percent (371) are potential alcoholics—31 percent of males (263) and 32 percent of females (108). Other drug use information shows 772 (66 percent) of all respondents (1,174) have ever used some kind of non-injection drugs in the past. Among non-injection drug users, the primary non-injected drug for men and women was marijuana, followed by crack cocaine for both men and women. Further SHAS data describing the drug use behaviors of participants in this project are available online at www.michigan.gov/hivstd.

Injection drug use:

Figure 29 shows the most frequently reported drug use among the persons living with HIV who were in care and interviewed for the MMP in 2007. Ninety-nine percent reported having not injected drugs in the 12 months prior to the interview. However, about two-thirds admitted to using non-injection drugs and alcohol in the 12 months prior to the interview (shown in Figure 29). While injection drug use was reportedly used the least, alcohol was used the most.

Figure 29: Most Frequently Used Non-Injection Drugs (MMP, 2007)



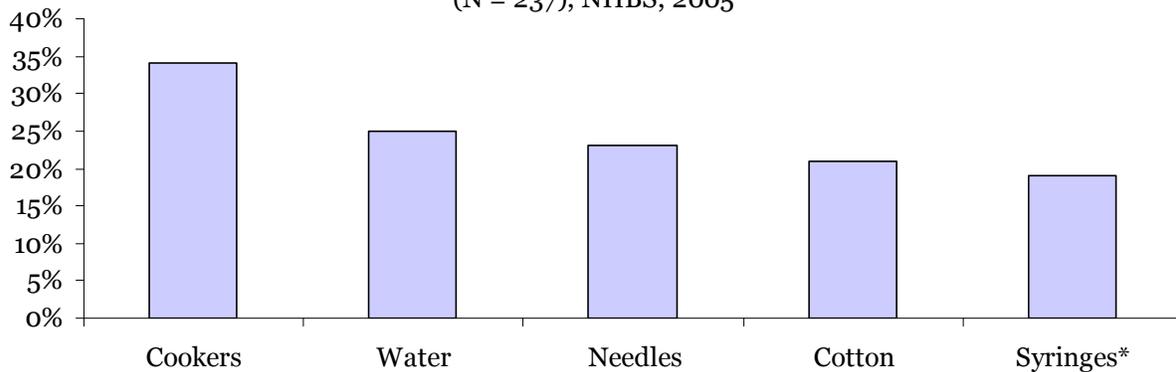
*Drug use is not mutually exclusive (one case can be represented in multiple categories)

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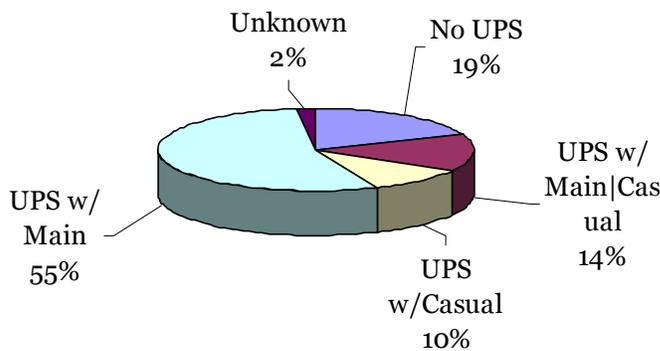
Forty-six percent (237 persons) of injection drug users interviewed during the IDU1 cycle of the NHBS Project (2005) in Wayne County shared some form of drug equipment and 35 percent (178 people) reported using a sterile needle for all injections. There was no consistent pattern among which equipment was or was not shared: 34 percent shared cookers, 25 percent shared water, 23 percent shared needles, 21 percent shared cotton, and 19 percent shared syringes for dividing drugs (Figure 30). However, 77 percent (399 persons) responded that they never share needles, suggesting that many reuse their own needles. Six percent (32 persons) reported sharing all pieces of equipment.

Figure 30: Equipment Sharing Among IDUs who share drug equipment (N = 237), NHBS, 2005



*Syringes were shared to divide drugs, not for injecting

Figure 31: Unprotected Vaginal Sex (UPS) among IDUs by Type of Sexual Partner (NHBS, 2005)



Condom Use:

Additionally, data was collected on condom use from the IDU1 cycle of NHBS (Figure 31). Nearly 80 percent (346 persons) of injecting drug users reported having unprotected vaginal sex 12 months prior to the interview. Fifty-five percent (239 persons) reported unprotected sex with main partners only and 24 percent (107 persons) with casual only or casual and main partners. Forty-four percent (194 persons) of this mainly HIV negative sample never discussed their HIV status or their partners' HIV status before having sex the first time.

Trends and Conclusions:

Between 2004 and 2008, the proportion of newly diagnosed persons who were injection drug users (IDU) decreased by an average of 14 percent per year. This a continuation of the decreasing trend we have seen over the past 5 years we have run trend reports. Data from Michigan's HIV Behavioral Surveillance suggest reductions among IDUs may partly be attributable to the success of harm reduction programs, such as needle exchange. For more information on trends overtime, see the section on Trends in HIV/AIDS Data on pages 3-18–21.