

Reducing the Burden of Opioid Use Disorder in North Carolina: Harm Reduction Study

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PURPOSE

- To determine trends in the use and public opinion of harm reduction measures, with focus on fentanyl testing strips and naloxone in the 7 western counties of North Carolina

METHODS

- Study Design: Qualitative, Quantitative
- Sample: People who have used illegal drugs within the past year (PWUD) and stakeholders in the community.
- Both participant sets completed surveys with Likert scaling for quantitative data.
- PWUD survey utilized the RAND-36 Health Assessment and questions about substance use history, current frequency of use, and access/use of harm reduction strategies.
- Stakeholders survey utilized Likert scaling to gauge individual opinion on harm reduction strategies.
- All Stakeholders and 100 PWUD surveyed for qualitative data.

The survey explored the following areas:

Access to naloxone

Medications for Opioid Use Disorder

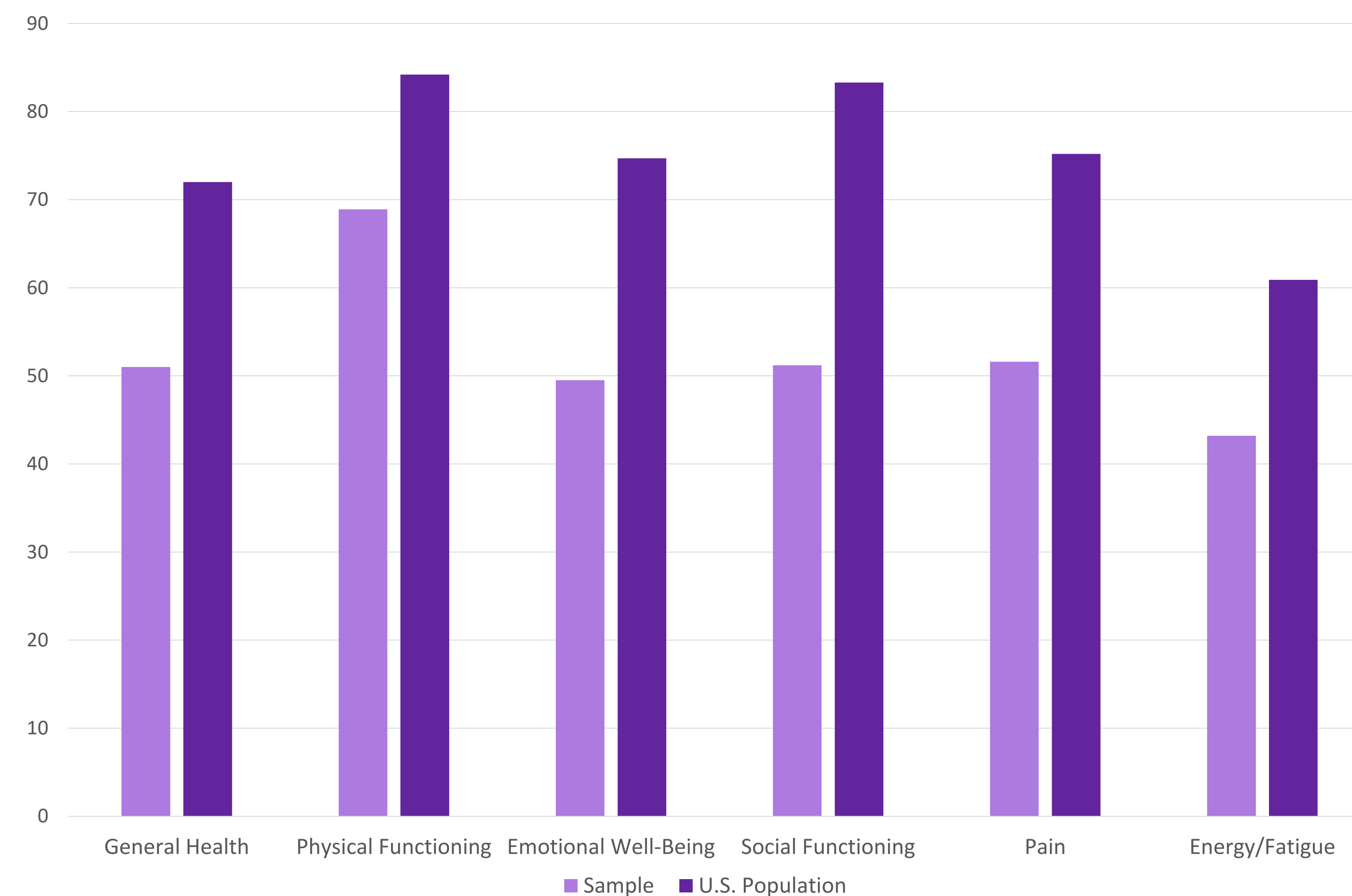
Access to fentanyl testing strips

REFERENCES

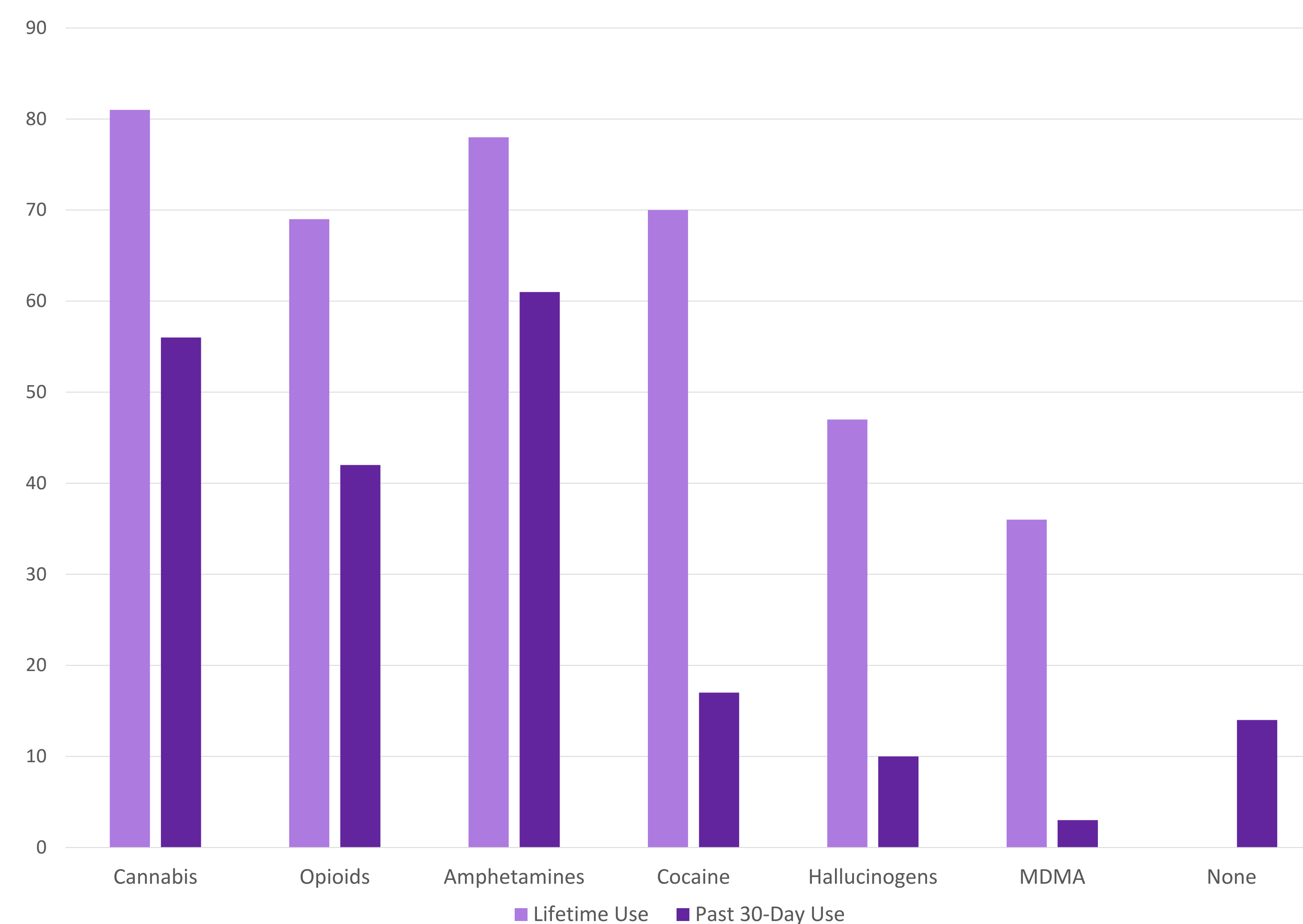
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- Additional references upon request

RESULTS

RAND 36-Item Health Survey Scores Compared to General U.S. Adult Population



Recreational Use of Substances



Use of Harm Reduction Strategies Among Respondents

Strategy	n	%
History of substance use disorder treatment		
No	31	32.0
Yes, currently	21	21.6
Yes, in the past but not currently	42	43.3
Prefer not to answer	3	3.1
Received naloxone kit	49	50.5
Syringe service / exchange	43	44.3
Fentanyl test strips	32	33.0
Methadone treatment	9	9.3
Buprenorphine treatment	36	37.1

DISCUSSION

- As of January 31st, 2024 there were 97 people who use drugs (PWUD) who completed the survey
- Most respondents (94.8%) reported their lifetime recreational substance use with 92.4% reported using more than two substances in their lifetime
- Cannabis was the most used substance (88.0%) followed by amphetamines (84.8%), cocaine (76.1%) and opioids (75.0%)
- 48.9% people stated they have used drugs intravenously, 64.9% stated they have utilized substance use treatment, 50.5% have received naloxone kits, and 44.3% have used fentanyl testing strips
- Most respondents scored 44.3% lower on the RAND-36 health assessment than the average population

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