Co-occurring Mental Health Problems in Treatment Admissions for Substance Use Disorders in Maryland

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Introduction
A mandate of SAMHSA and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is to better integrate prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts for substance use and mental health.

Understanding the prevalence of both substance use and mental health (MH) conditions is needed in order to best prioritize, develop, and implement meaningful prevention and treatment initiatives.

Objectives
To report findings of:
1. overall trends of co-occurring mental health problems among all admissions;
2. substance specific trends of the prevalence of co-occurring mental health problems; and
3. geographic distribution of the proportion of cases associated with mental illness by the county of client residence.

Methods
Data Source: State of Maryland Automated Record Tracking system admissions to state-supported alcohol and drug abuse treatment programs during 2008-2013.¹

Measures:

Overall annual proportion with both disorders
\[
\text{Admissions with current mental disorder in FY} = \frac{\text{Total number of admissions in FY}}{\text{Admissions with current mental disorder}}
\]

Proportion with both disorders by substance type
\[
\text{Admissions with both disorders for primary substance} = \frac{\text{Total number of admissions for primary substance in FY}}{\text{Admissions with current mental disorder}}
\]

Rate of both disorders by county (Y) of client residence
\[
\text{Estimated population} \geq \text{12 years of county Y} = \frac{\text{Admissions with both disorders among county Y residents}}{\text{Admissions with both disorders}}
\]

Findings
The total number of admissions and proportion of admissions with co-occurring mental health problems increased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY ’08</th>
<th>FY ’09</th>
<th>FY ’10</th>
<th>FY ’11</th>
<th>FY ’12</th>
<th>FY ’13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All admissions</td>
<td>41,506</td>
<td>42,291</td>
<td>44,466</td>
<td>46,223</td>
<td>46,490</td>
<td>44,396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH problem deemed present</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Heroin as the primary substance grew faster among admissions with a MH problem compared to overall admissions. Marijuana was less common in admissions with a MH problem than among total admissions.

Rates of co-occurring MH problems were highest in western Maryland, the eastern shore counties and Baltimore city.

Conclusions
Rising co-occurrence of mental and substance use disorders calls for adaptations in treatment strategies to address increasing complexity of providing effective treatment and recovery services.

Variation in proportions of cases involving a mental disorder by jurisdiction of client residence can help target prevention, treatment and mental illness diagnostic resources more efficiently.

Acknowledgements
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