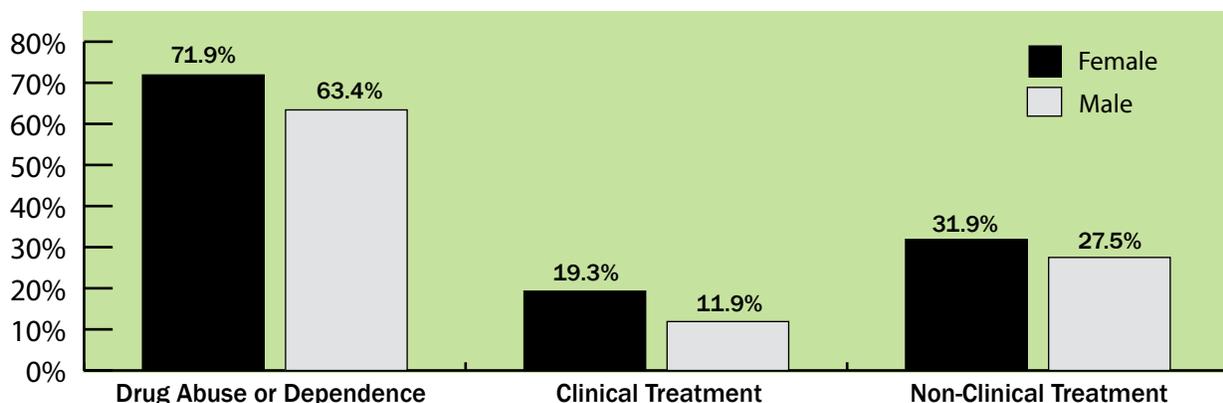




Prison Drug Treatment Remains Sparse; Females Likelier to Access It

Findings published recently in the *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* confirm that, while most people in prisons have illicit drug use histories and diagnosable drug abuse or dependence, few get treatment while incarcerated. Authors analyzed data from a national prison survey,¹ observing high overall drug abuse or dependence rates among inmates with illicit drug use histories, and greater rates among women than men (71.9% of women vs. 63.4% of men). Women participated in both clinical and non-clinical treatment² at higher rates than men: 19.3% of women vs. 11.9% of men received clinical treatment, and 31.9% of women vs. 27.5% of men received non-clinical treatment. Low rates of treatment participation are likely due to a variety of factors, according to authors, including sparse funding, lack of organizational mission to support treatment, and poor integration of prison and treatment systems. They note that differences in participation between women and men may be associated with factors such as greater availability of services for women and greater stigma for men associated with accessing health care services. Authors offer several strategies that may increase treatment participation, including incentives, staff training on the importance of treatment and its effects on health and recidivism, and stigma reduction interventions.

Rates of Inmates with a History of Illicit Drug Use Diagnosed with Drug Abuse or Dependence, and Their Participation in Prison-Based Drug Treatment



Source:

Belenko, S. and Houser, K. A. (2012). Gender Differences in Prison-Based Drug Treatment Participation. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 56(5).

Notes:

¹ Data were collected from the 2004 Survey of Inmates of State Correctional Facilities administered by the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics. The analysis focused only on inmates with a history of illegal drug use, which included 82.3% of males and 81.8% of females in the prison survey.

² Clinical treatment program participation included treatment in a residential unit, outpatient program, maintenance drug program, or detoxification unit. Non-clinical treatment program participation included self-help, twelve-step groups, or drug education classes.

Prepared by the Center for Health and Justice (CHJ) at TASC. CHJ works to build, enhance, and sustain strong and vibrant communities by promoting policies and practices that stop the cycle of drugs and crime. We conduct research and evaluations, and offer policy analysis, trainings, and technical assistance in the fields of health and justice. For more information, visit us online at www.centerforhealthandjustice.org.

To receive Facts on Justice from CHJ, please send an email to research@tasc-il.org with "Join Facts on Justice" typed in the subject line, and your name, title, organization, and email address in the body of the message.

©2012 CHJ – Chicago, Illinois.