

Prevalence of participation in a tobacco, alcohol or other drug treatment program – findings from the 2019 Australian National Drug Strategy Household Survey

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Introduction: Substance use, including tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, poses a significant health, social and economic impact. The objective this study was to assess the rate of treatment access for these substance use problems.

Method: The data were drawn from the 2019 Australian National Drug Strategy Household Survey (N= 22,015). Participants who reported the use of substances were included in estimating the weighted prevalence of treatment access in a tobacco, alcohol or other drug treatment program.

Results: In people who reported using opioid in the past year and weekly, 8.6% and 11.8%, of them have had participated in a treatment program, respectively. In people who used tobacco, 13.7% of people who used daily, and 10.6% of people who used in the past year, have accessed a program. In contrast, a smaller proportion of people who used alcohol at risky level have accessed treatment (4.1% for those identified as high-risk and 4.5% as very high-risk). Analyses are underway for other substances and socio-demographic associates for treatment access.

Conclusions: A small proportion of people who may be in need reported that they had accessed treatment program to help them reduce or to quit their consumption. Public health strategies to scale up treatment access is warranted.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: No conflict of interests declared.