

Data Spotlight

National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services

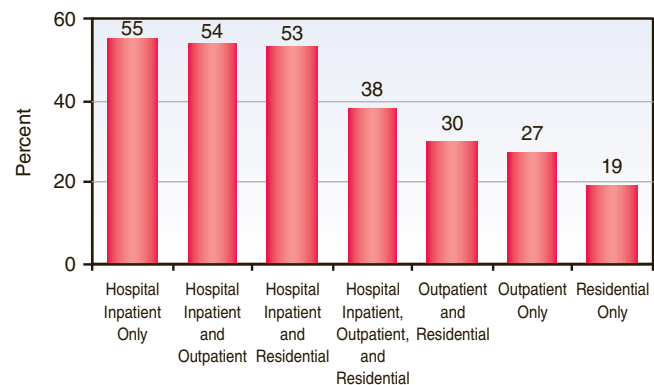
June 21, 2011

One in Four Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities Offers Services in Sign Language

Substance use disorders affect a broad range of people, including some of the estimated 37 million U.S. adults who are deaf or hard of hearing.¹ Although relatively little is known about the rates of substance use disorders among this population, deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals with substance abuse issues likely face unique cultural and communication barriers to accessing appropriate treatment.² It is critical that these individuals have access to facilities that are sensitive to Deaf culture and employ effective communication techniques, including American Sign Language.

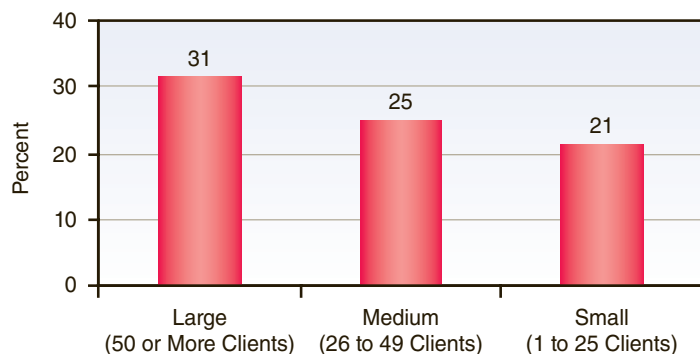
The National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services (N-SSATS) provides information on the availability of services in sign language (including American Sign Language, Signed English, or Cued Speech), either through a staff counselor or an on-call interpreter. In 2009, 3,671 of 13,513 surveyed facilities (or 27 percent) offered services in sign language, which were most common among facilities offering hospital inpatient care (Figure 1) and larger facilities (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Percent of Facilities That Provide Substance Abuse Treatment Services in Sign Language, by Treatment Type: 2009



Note: Examples of sign language are American Sign Language, Signed English, and Cued Speech.

Figure 2. Percent of Facilities That Provide Substance Abuse Treatment Services in Sign Language, by Facility Size: 2009



Note: Examples of sign language are American Sign Language, Signed English, and Cued Speech.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2008, October 9). *Health status and routine physical activities in adults by hearing status*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/dsHearing-Disparities/>

² Iezzoni, L. I., O'Day, B. L., Killeen, M., & Harker, H. (2004). Communicating about health care: Observations from persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 140(5), 356-362.

Source: 2009 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services (N-SSATS). N-SSATS is an annual survey of all substance abuse treatment facilities in the United States, both public and private, that are known to SAMHSA. N-SSATS is one component of the Drug and Alcohol Services Information System (DASIS), an integrated data system maintained by the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. Information and data for this report are based on data reported to N-SSATS for the survey reference date March 31, 2009.

