OSAM-O-GRAM

DATE: January 2004
DATELINE: Ohio

Wright State University
The University of Akron

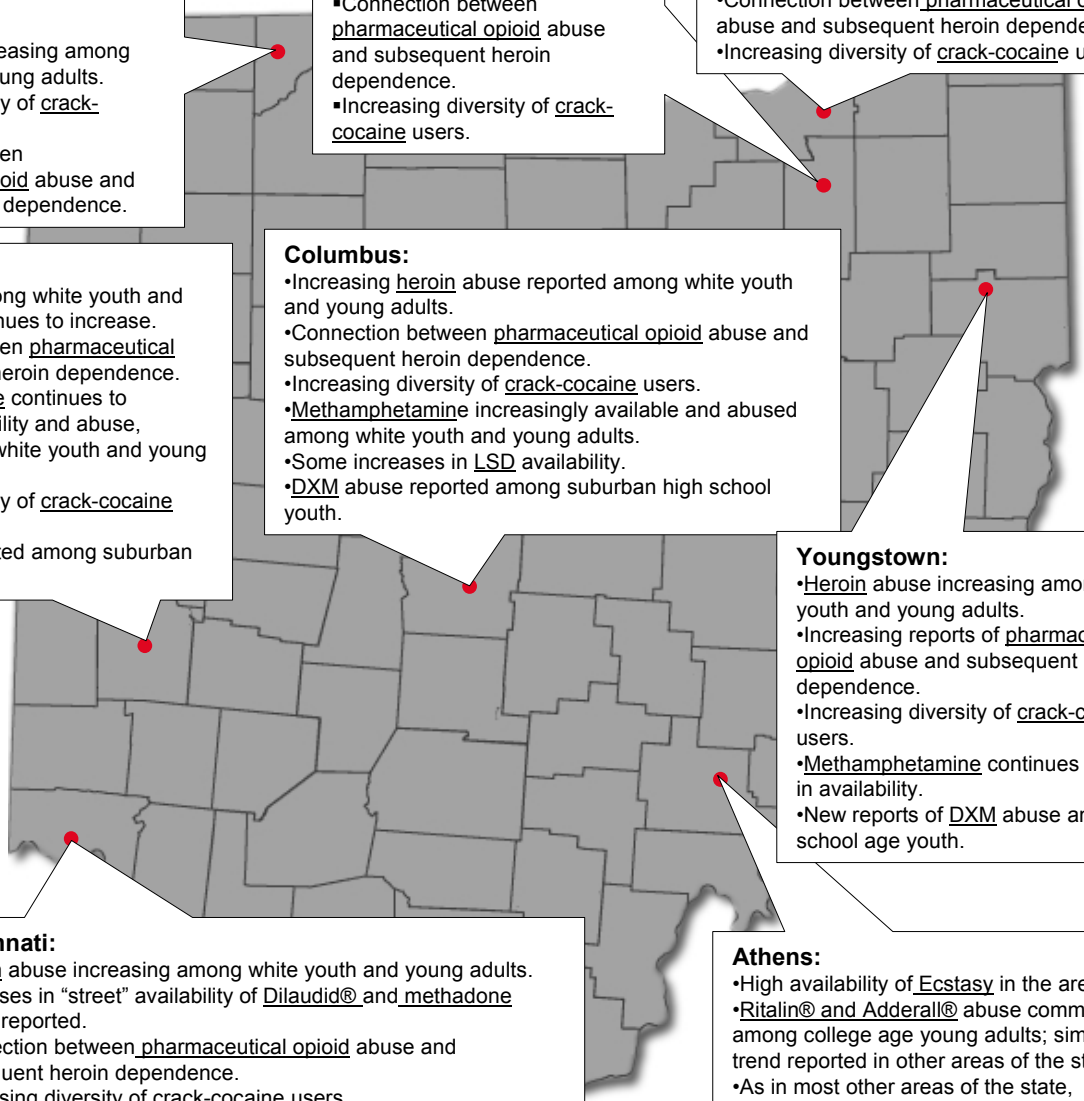
OSAM Network Executive Summary: June 2003 – January 2004 Period

Highlights of Statewide Drug Use Trends

Akron:
▪Methamphetamine continues to increase in availability and abuse among white young individuals.
▪Increasing heroin abuse among white youth and young adults.
▪Connection between pharmaceutical opioid abuse and subsequent heroin dependence.
▪Increasing diversity of crack-cocaine users.

Cleveland:
•ADAM data indicate relatively high levels of PCP abuse as compared to other areas of the nation.
•Heroin abuse increasing among white youth and young adults.
•Connection between pharmaceutical opioid abuse and subsequent heroin dependence.
•Increasing diversity of crack-cocaine users.

Toledo:
•Heroin abuse increasing among white youth and young adults.
•Increasing diversity of crack-cocaine users.
•Connection between pharmaceutical opioid abuse and subsequent heroin dependence.



Dayton:
•Heroin abuse among white youth and young adults continues to increase.
•Connection between pharmaceutical opioid abuse and heroin dependence.
•Methamphetamine continues to increase in availability and abuse, especially among white youth and young adults.
•Increasing diversity of crack-cocaine users.
•DXM abuse reported among suburban high school youth.

Columbus:
•Increasing heroin abuse reported among white youth and young adults.
•Connection between pharmaceutical opioid abuse and subsequent heroin dependence.
•Increasing diversity of crack-cocaine users.
•Methamphetamine increasingly available and abused among white youth and young adults.
•Some increases in LSD availability.
•DXM abuse reported among suburban high school youth.

Youngstown:
•Heroin abuse increasing among white youth and young adults.
•Increasing reports of pharmaceutical opioid abuse and subsequent heroin dependence.
•Increasing diversity of crack-cocaine users.
•Methamphetamine continues to increase in availability.
•New reports of DXM abuse among high-school age youth.

Cincinnati:
•Heroin abuse increasing among white youth and young adults.
•Increases in "street" availability of Dilaudid® and methadone tablets reported.
•Connection between pharmaceutical opioid abuse and subsequent heroin dependence.
•Increasing diversity of crack-cocaine users.
•Methamphetamine continues to increase in availability and abuse in the suburban areas.

Athens:
•High availability of Ecstasy in the area.
•Ritalin® and Adderall® abuse common among college age young adults; similar trend reported in other areas of the state.
•As in most other areas of the state, active users reported an increase in availability of powdered cocaine.

The Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring Network (OSAM)
January 2004 Meeting
Executive Summary
Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services

This Executive Summary reports highlights of the OSAM Network meeting held in Columbus, Ohio, February 6, 2004. The report is based on substance abuse trends data collected and analyzed by Regional Epidemiologists in Athens and surrounding counties (rural southeast), Akron-Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, and Youngstown, Ohio. Regional Epidemiologists interviewed active and recovering drug users, law enforcement personnel, and treatment providers, and collected statistical data from law enforcement, county coroners' offices, and treatment facilities to compile their regional drug trend reports. Scientists at WSU and the University of Akron reviewed their findings and compiled this report.

CRACK COCAINE

•Crack-Cocaine Abuse Remains an Increasing Problem in Most Areas of the State.

Availability of crack cocaine remains high in most areas of the state. Reportedly, drug dealing and abuse continues to be concentrated in the inner-city communities; however, both active users and law enforcement professionals from Cleveland, Dayton and Toledo reported increasing crack availability in suburban areas. Similar to the previous reporting periods, an average price for a gram of crack was reported to be $50-$60, and $800 for an ounce. Active and recovering users, law enforcement professionals, and treatment providers continue to report increasing diversity of the user population. Crack-cocaine abuse among young individuals, some in their teen years, continues to be reported in most areas of the state. Smoking continues to be the most common method of administration, although crack injection was occasionally reported by active and recovering users.

COCAINE HCL

•Availability of Powdered Cocaine Remains High; High-School Aged Youth Continue to be Reported as One of the Fastest Growing Populations of Users.

Reports about the increasing availability of relatively inexpensive powdered cocaine, a trend first identified in January 2003, continues in the current reporting period. Reports about the quality of the drug vary across different regions of the state; however, active users tend to report decreases in the quality of the drug. The prices have remained similar to the previous reporting period; according to active user reports, a gram of powdered cocaine sells for $50-$60 on average. According to active users, treatment providers, and law enforcement professionals from across the state, one of the fastest growing populations of powdered cocaine users are high-school age adolescents. Snorting continues to be the most common method of administration, especially among younger users. Lacing marijuana and tobacco cigarettes with powdered cocaine was reportedly increasing in most areas of the state. Active users and law enforcement professionals from most reporting areas of the state provided evidence about possible increases in speedball injection (mixing heroin and powdered cocaine) among more experienced heroin users. Increased availability of the drug is seen as being responsible for changes in this drug use pattern.

HEROIN

•Heroin Continues to Increase in Availability and Abuse Across Most Reporting Areas of the State.

Increases in heroin availability and abuse, first observed in 2001, continued in the current reporting period. Reportedly, whitish powdered heroin is typically available in most areas of the state. However, black-tar-type heroin continues to be available in the Toledo area and has been increasing in availability in the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus and Youngstown areas. Active and recovering user reports about the quality of the drug vary, but increasing reports about heroin-related overdose cases suggest that the potency has been high.

According to active and recovering user reports, heroin prices typically average $150-$180 per gram in most reporting areas of the state. Prices in the Columbus area were reportedly lower, averaging $100-120 per gram. According to treatment providers, active and recovering users, the fastest growing population of new heroin users continues to be white suburban young people in their late teens and early twenties. New heroin users typically start off snorting the drug, but many eventually transition to intravenous use. The relationship between initial abuse of pharmaceutical opioids, especially OxyContin®, and subsequent transition to heroin abuse continues to be reported by users and treatment providers in most reporting areas of the state.

OTHER OPIOIDS

•Abuse of Pharmaceutical Opioids Continues to Be an Increasing Problem Throughout the State.

Similar to the previous reporting periods, abuse of pharmaceutical opioids continues to increase in most areas of the state. Active and recovering abusers, treatment providers, probation officers and law enforcement professionals reported high availability of OxyContin® (oxycodone controlled-release), Vicodin® (hydrocodone), Lortab® (hydrocodone), Percocet® (oxycodone & acetaminophen), and Darvocet® (propoxyphene & acetaminophen) in most areas. Reports about abuse of Duragesic® (fentanyl transdermal system) were obtained in most areas of the state as well. Some increases in Dilaudid® (hydromorphone) availability were reported in the Cincinnati, Akron and Toledo areas. Increases in abuse of methadone tablets were reported in the Akron, Cincinnati and Youngstown areas. Among all pharmaceutical opioids, OxyContin® continues to be one of the most commonly abused. Reportedly, it sells for $0.50 – $1 per milligram. According to active user and treatment provider reports, abuse of pharmaceutical opioids is increasing among very diverse segments of the population, but white adolescents and young adults continue to be the fastest growing group of new users. The connection between initial prescription opioid dependence and subsequent transition to heroin abuse continues to be reported by drug users and treatment providers in most reporting areas of the state.

MARIJUANA

•High Availability of Marijuana Continues to be Reported Across the State.

High availability of marijuana continues to be reported across the state. According to drug users and law enforcement professionals, the quality of the drug has been increasing in most areas of the state. Reportedly, 1/8 ounce of mid-grade marijuana on average sells for $30, and high grade marijuana sells for $50-60 per 1/8 ounce. Marijuana abuse continues to be reported among very diverse populations of users; it remains the primary illicit drug of abuse among adolescents.

METHAMPHETAMINE AND OTHER STIMULANTS

•Reports About Methamphetamine Availability Are Increasing in Different Regions of the State. Prescription Stimulant Abuse Continues to Be Reported Among College Age Youth.

Active users and law enforcement professionals continue to report increasing availability of methamphetamine in the Akron, Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, and Youngstown areas. Treatment providers expressed general awareness about increases in methamphetamine abuse, but so far only the Akron area has reported some increases in treatment admissions for methamphetamine dependence and abuse. Cases of drug manufacturing continue to be reported at increasing numbers across most areas of the state. However, according to drug users and law enforcement professionals, some methamphetamine available is trafficked in from outside the state. Reported average prices of higher quality methamphetamine vary from $100 to $150 per gram across different regions of the state. According to drug user reports, white suburban youth in their late teens and early 20s continue to be one of the fastest growing groups of new methamphetamine users. Some of these users may get introduced to the drug at rave-type parties. Law enforcement professionals describe poor white males in their 30s as another group of methamphetamine abusers–many of whom may also be involved in drug manufacturing.

Abuse of Adderall® (amphetamine mixed salts) and Ritalin® (methylphenidate) continues to be reported in the Akron, Athens, Columbus, Dayton, and Youngstown areas. Adderall® continues to have higher demand than Ritalin®, and its abuse is especially common among some college age young adults who often abuse the drug as a "study aid."

DEPRESSANTS

•Prescription Tranquilizer Abuse Remains Common. Abuse of Dextromethorphan-Containing Over-the-Counter Medications Is Reportedly Increasing Among Adolescents.

The illicit use of benzodiazepines, especially Valium® (diazepam), Xanax® (alprazolam), and Klonopin® (clonazepam) remains relatively common among very diverse populations of users. Benzodiazepines are commonly abused with other substances to enhance or modify their effects. Reports from law enforcement professionals, active users, juvenile probation officers, and treatment providers in the Columbus, Dayton, and Youngstown areas suggested increasing abuse of over-the-counter cough & cold medication containing dextromethorphan. Typical abusers were described as high-school age youth.

HALLUCINOGENS

•Availability and Abuse of LSD Varies Across the State; Some Increases in Availability of Psilocybin Mushrooms Reported in Several Areas of the State.

In the current reporting period, drug users interviewed in the Akron, Athens, Cincinnati, Dayton and Youngstown areas reported decreases in availability of LSD. However, availability of LSD in the Columbus area was reportedly increasing. Some increases in availability of psilocybin mushrooms were reported in most areas of the state. According to active users, LSD continues to sell for $5-$10 per hit, and psilocybin mushrooms on average sell for $25-35 per 1/8 ounce. Interviews with drug users suggest that typical LSD and psilocybin users continue to be white adolescents and young adults.

•Most Areas of the State Continue to Report Decreases in Ecstasy (MDMA) Abuse.

In June 2003, the OSAM Network first reported possible decreases in Ecstasy abuse. In the current reporting period, drug users, treatment providers, and law enforcement personnel from the Akron-Canton, Dayton, Columbus, Toledo, and Youngstown areas continue to report that popularity of the drug has been decreasing among traditional Ecstasy users, described as white youth who attend rave-type parties and dance clubs. Even though the drug is still relatively easy to obtain, the quality has reportedly been decreasing. Ecstasy prices continue to average at $20 per tablet.

•Reports About PCP (Phencyclidine) Abuse Were Obtained in Several Areas of the State.

Availability and abuse of PCP has been reportedly rare across most areas of the state. However, in the previous and current reporting periods, some cases of PCP abuse have been reported in the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus and Youngstown areas. Abuse is typically common in the form of marijuana or tobacco cigarettes laced with PCP. These cigarettes are usually called "wets," "sherms," or "dips," and on average sell for $20 each. The extent and changes in abuse will be monitored in future reports.

Previous OSAM reports are available at: http://www.odadas.state.oh.us

OSAM-O-GRAMS report key findings of the Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring (OSAM) Network. Informants located throughout the state use qualitative and quantitative data to provide semiannual monitoring of substance abuse trends. The OSAM Network is funded by *the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services by contract to Wright State University and by subcontract to the University of Akron. This OSAM-O-GRAM is based on the January 2004 OSAM Network meeting.*

Harvey A. Siegal, Ph.D., Director, Center for Interventions, Treatment, and Addictions Research;
Robert G. Carlson, Ph.D.; Deric R. Kenne, M.S., Raminta Daniulaityte, PhD
(937) 775-2066 (office) (937) 775-2171 (fax) http://www.med.wright.edu/citar/
Wright State University, School of Medicine, 3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy., Dayton, OH 45435-0001
For more information, visit the ODADAS website: http://www.odadas.state.oh.us.