

Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

Agency of Human Services, Department of Mental Health
108 Cherry Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani and Walter Ochs

DATE: August 21, 2009

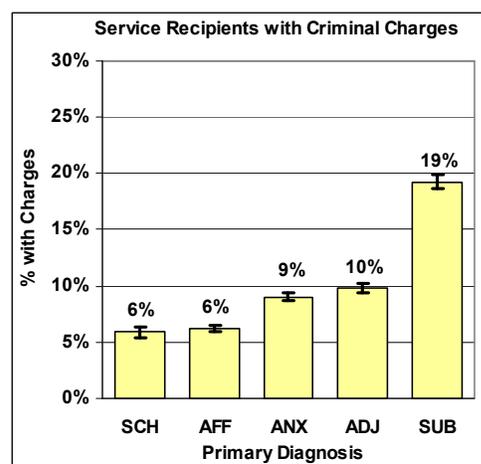
RE: Diagnosis and Criminal Charges for CMH Service Recipients: FY2008

This week's brief report provides information on the relationship between psychiatric diagnosis and criminal justice involvement. Specifically, this report provides information on the rates at which adults served by community mental health centers in Vermont during FY2008 were charged with a crime during the same year. Rates of criminal charges for each of three types of crimes are provided for each of five diagnostic categories¹. This report was prepared in response to a request from Michael Hartman, Vermont's Commissioner of Mental Health.

The findings reported here are based on the analysis of anonymous extracts from databases maintained by the Vermont Department of Mental Health and the Vermont Center for Justice Research. The mental health data include basic demographic and diagnostic information for adults served by mental health and substance abuse treatment programs at a Vermont Community Mental Health Center during FY2008. The justice research data include basic demographic information and type of offense (drug and alcohol, violent, and nonviolent) for all adults charged with a crime in a Vermont District Court during the same time period. Because these data sets do not share unique person identifiers, Probabilistic Population Estimation (PPE) was used to determine the number of individuals represented in both data sets. Individuals charged with more than one type of crime are included in each relevant crime category. Motor vehicle offenses are not included in this analysis.

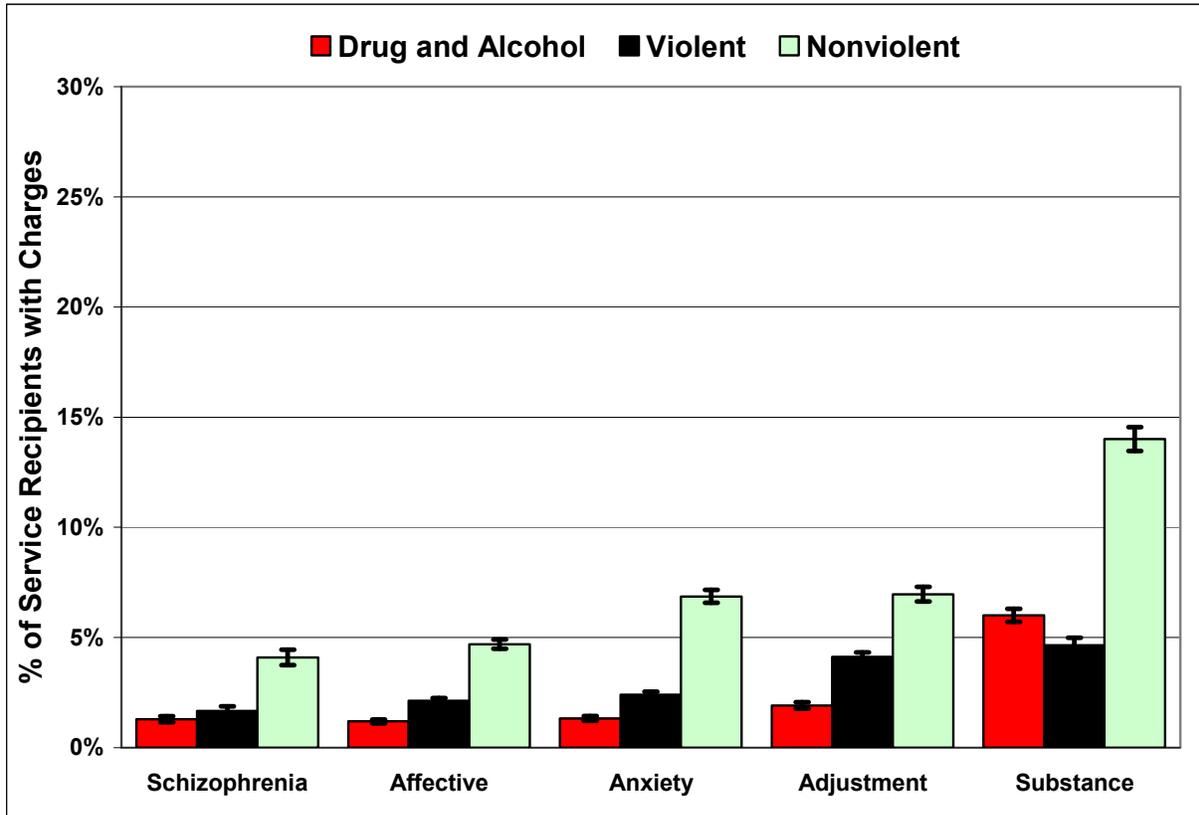
As you will see, service recipients with a primary diagnosis of substance abuse were the most likely to have a criminal charge (19%) and service recipients with a primary diagnosis of schizophrenia or affective disorder were the least likely (6% each). Nonviolent crimes were the most common for every diagnostic group, ranging from 4% of those with a schizophrenia diagnosis, to 14% of those with a diagnosis of substance abuse. Drug and alcohol charges were reported for less than 2% of those with a non-substance abuse diagnosis, to 6% of those with a substance abuse diagnosis.

We look forward to your suggestions for further analysis of these data. As always your questions, comments, or interpretations of these findings can be directed to 802.863.7249 or pip@vdh.state.vt.us.



¹ A detailed list of diagnosis codes used to group each type of disorder can be found in the notes section of the Vermont Department of Mental Health's Annual Statistical Report for 2008: <http://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/report/annualstatistical>.

Criminal Charges in VT District Courts Mental Health & Substance Abuse Service Recipients by Type of Crime and Primary Diagnosis During FY2008



Diagnosis*	Clients #	Drug/Alcohol % with charges	Violent % with charges	Nonviolent % with charges
Schizophrenia	1,593 ± 6	1.3%±0.1%	1.7%±0.2%	4.1%±0.3%
Affective	4,532 ± 12	1.2%±0.1%	2.1%±0.1%	4.7%±0.2%
Anxiety	1,634 ± 6	1.3%±0.1%	2.4%±0.1%	6.9%±0.3%
Adjustment	1,783 ± 6	1.9%±0.1%	4.1%±0.2%	7.0%±0.3%
Substance	3,770 ± 13	6.0%±0.3%	4.7%±0.3%	14.0%±0.5%
Total	13,189 ± 32	2.4%±0.1%	2.9%±0.1%	7.2%±0.2%

*The individual diagnosis codes used to group each type of mental health disorder can be found in the notes section of the Vermont Department of Mental Health's Annual Statistical Report for 2008 : <http://mentalhealth.vermont.gov/report/annualstatistical>

Analysis based anonymous extracts from databases maintained by the Vermont Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Vermont Center for Justice Research. The DMH data include basic demographic and diagnostic information for adults served during FY2008 by Adult Mental Health Outpatient (AOP), Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT), Emergency, and Substance Abuse Treatment programs at the designated community mental health agencies. The justice research data include basic demographic information and type of offense (drug and alcohol, violent, and nonviolent) for all adults charged with a crime in a Vermont District Court during FY2008. Motor vehicle and municipal ordinance charges are not included in this analysis.

Because these data sets do not share unique person identifiers, Probabilistic Population Estimation (PPE) was used to determine the number of individuals represented in both data sets (with 95% confidence intervals).