

Veterans, Substance Use, and Trauma-Informed Care: Analysis of Veterans' Treatment Needs in a Multi-state Sample of Inmates

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Conflicts of Interest:

- None to declare

Data Source:

- **Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 2004**
- ICPSR 4572
- *United States Department of Justice*
- *Office of Justice Programs. Bureau of Justice Statistics*

Background

- As of 2016, there were approximately 20.4 million living veterans in the United States, (PEW, 2017).

Male Veterans	Female Veterans
Non-white	White
Non-Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
+Married	+Divorced/separated
-Uninsured	-Uninsured
-Poverty	-Poverty
Higher income	Lower income

Background: Risk factors for Incarceration:

- Unmet medical/mental health needs
- Traumatic experiences/ PTSD
- Substance Use
- Minority group
- Not married
- Less education
- Younger



(Backhaus et al., 2016; Donley et al., 2012; Edalati & Nicholls, 2017; Greenberg, 2009; MacManus et al., 2013).

Picture credit: Virginia Department of Veterans Services)

Background: Risk factors for Veterans

- Of justice-involved veterans and non-veterans, higher rates of PTSD, Personality Disorders & Asthma were found in veterans, (Williams et al., 2010; Finlay, 2019).
- 1 in 14 veterans had a Substance Use Disorder in 2018, (SAMHSA, 2019)
- Army soldiers deployed twice have 1.6 times greater chance of developing PTSD than those deployed once (Reger et al., 2009)

Research Questions:

- What is the extent of the need for substance use treatment for incarcerated veterans?
- How can treatment better address their unique intersectional needs?



Results

- Military service by using or possessing drugs at the time of the offense

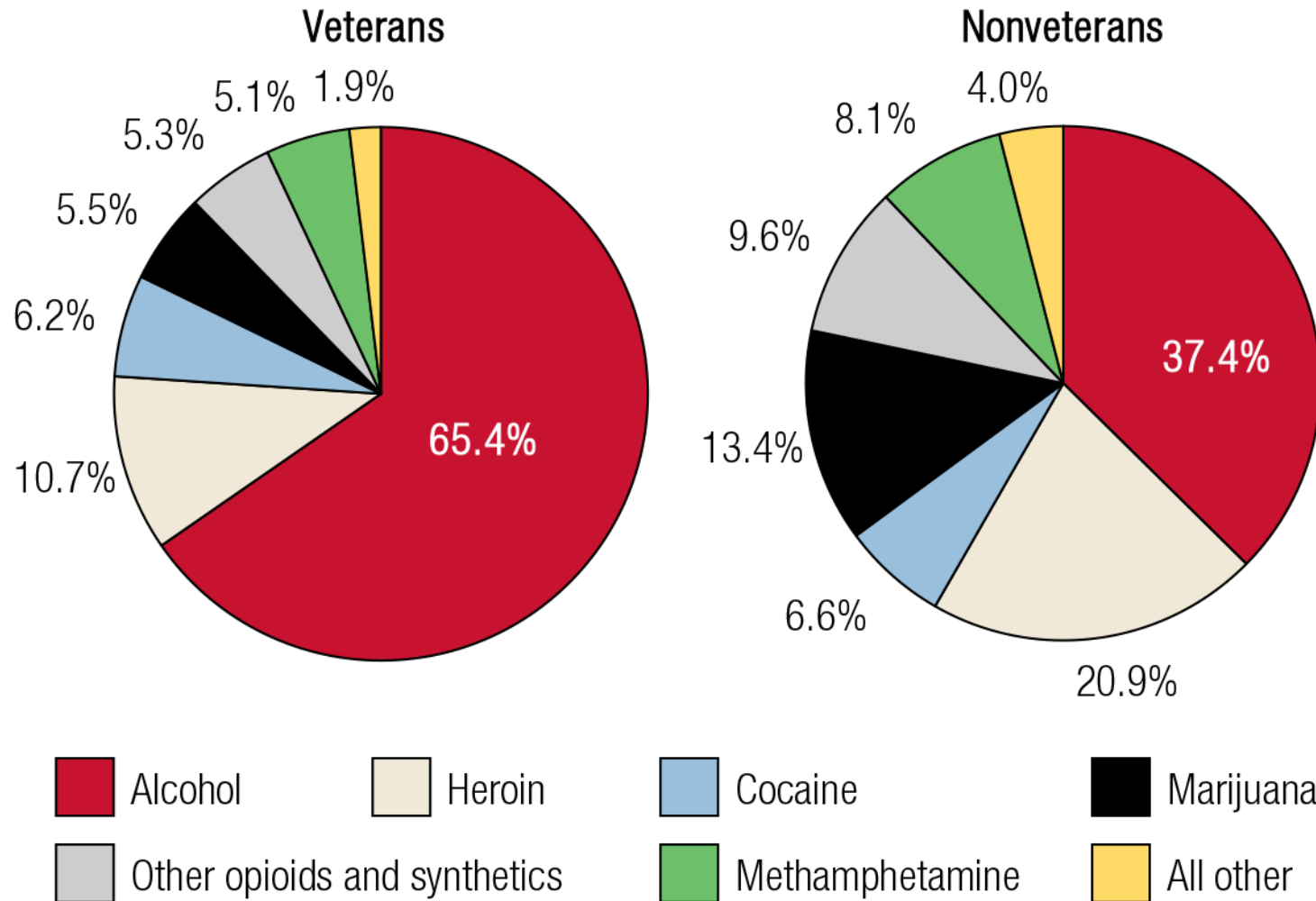
		AT ARREST - USING OR POSSESSING ILLEGAL DRUGS		Total
		Yes	No	
U.S. MILITARY SERVICE	Yes	52 (57.14%)	39 (42.85%)	n=91
	No	792 (58.75%)	556 (41.24%)	n=1348
Total		n=844	n=595	n=1439

Results

- Military Service by Alcohol Use at Time of Offense

		Using Alcohol at the Time of Offense		Total
		Yes	No	
U.S. MILITARY SERVICE	Yes	227 (30.07%)	478 (63.31%)	n=755
	No	2185 (37.96%)	3,571 (62.03%)	n=5,756
Total		n= 2,412	n= 4,049	n= 6,511

Veterans and Substance Use in the United States



- Alcohol
- Heroin
- Cocaine
- Marijuana
- Other opioids and synthetics
- Methamphetamine
- All other

Results

Among incarcerated veterans, Alcohol at TOF by MH Disorder (PTSD, Anxiety, Personality D/O, Other MH/Emotional):

MH Dx	Alcohol at Time of Off		Total
	Yes	No	
PTSD	37 (41.57%)	52 (58.42%)	n=89
Panic or Other Anxiety D/O	31 (43.66%)	40 (56.33%)	n=71
Personality D/O	37 (41.57%)	52 (58.42%)	n=89

Discussion: Treatment needs & access

The Department of Veterans Affairs offers:

- One-on-one counseling
- Family counseling
- Group therapy
- PTSD treatment
- Inpatient/outpatient rehab
- Medications for withdrawal

Discussion: Treatment needs & access

Barriers to Treatment:

- Stigma
- Long wait-list
- Veterans are often private about struggles
- Chronic pain/ war injury -> substance use
- Homelessness

Discussion: Emerging Trends

- Veterans Treatment Court
- Veterans Crisis Line
- Veterans Crisis Online Chat
- Peer Mentoring

Thank you!

Questions?

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