



Characteristics of People Entering AOD Treatment: Focus on ATS use

The MA Data Project

Emma Black^{1,2,3}, Rachel Deacon^{1,2}, Llewellyn Mills^{1,2}, Adrian J Dunlop^{4,5}, Nadine Ezard^{3,6,7}, Raimondo Bruno^{3,8}, Anthony Shakeshaft³, Michael Farrell³, Jennifer Holmes⁹, Michelle Cretikos¹⁰, Mark Montebello^{2,3,11}, David Reid^{12,14}, Steven Childs¹³, Krista Siefried^{6,7}, Kristie Mammen¹ and Nicholas Lintzeris^{1,2,14}

¹ Drug and Alcohol (D&A) Services, SESLHD ² Sydney University, ³ University of NSW, ⁴D&A Clinical Services, HNELHD ⁵University of Newcastle, ⁶ D&A Services, St Vincent's Hospital, ⁷ NCCRED, ⁸ University of Tasmania, ⁹Centre for Alcohol and Other Drugs, NSW Ministry of Health, ¹⁰ Centre for Population Health, NSW Ministry of Health, ¹¹ D&A Services, NSLHD, ¹² D&A Services, ISLHD, ¹³ D&A Services, CCLHD, ¹⁴ DACRIN



Research Questions

There are two ways to consider the data: by PDOC, or by recent ATS use

1. What are the characteristics of clients entering treatment by Principal Drug Of Concern (PDOC)?
 - ❖ PDOC: alcohol, ATS, cannabis and opioids



Research Questions continued

2. What are the characteristics of clients entering treatment by frequency of ATS use? (Regardless of PDOC)
3. Is there a relationship between frequency of recent ATS use and substance use, health and wellbeing?



(Selected) Methods

- Data sources:
 - NSW Minimum Data Set – Drug & Alcohol Treatment Services (MDS) demographic
 - Australian Treatment Outcomes Profile (ATOP) data
- ‘Treatment entry’ = the 1st ATOP Assessment (not intake)
- 3 year cohort: July 2016-Jun 2019
- Six participating LHDs
- N=44,303 records received. We then excluded:
 - N~20,000 f/up ATOPs
 - N~300 attending for gambling/secondary client
 - **N~5,000 ‘ATOP not applicable’**
 - **N~1,000 no ATS use information recorded**
 - N~4,500 repeat presentations
- Final sample of N=13,864 records analysed



ATS use by Principal Drug of Concern

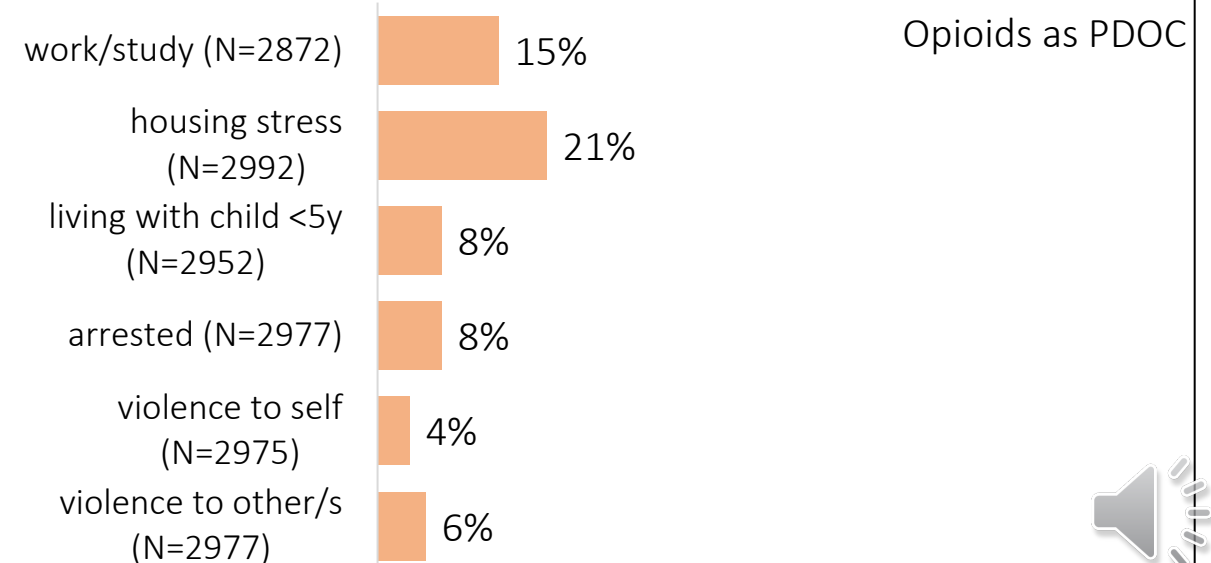
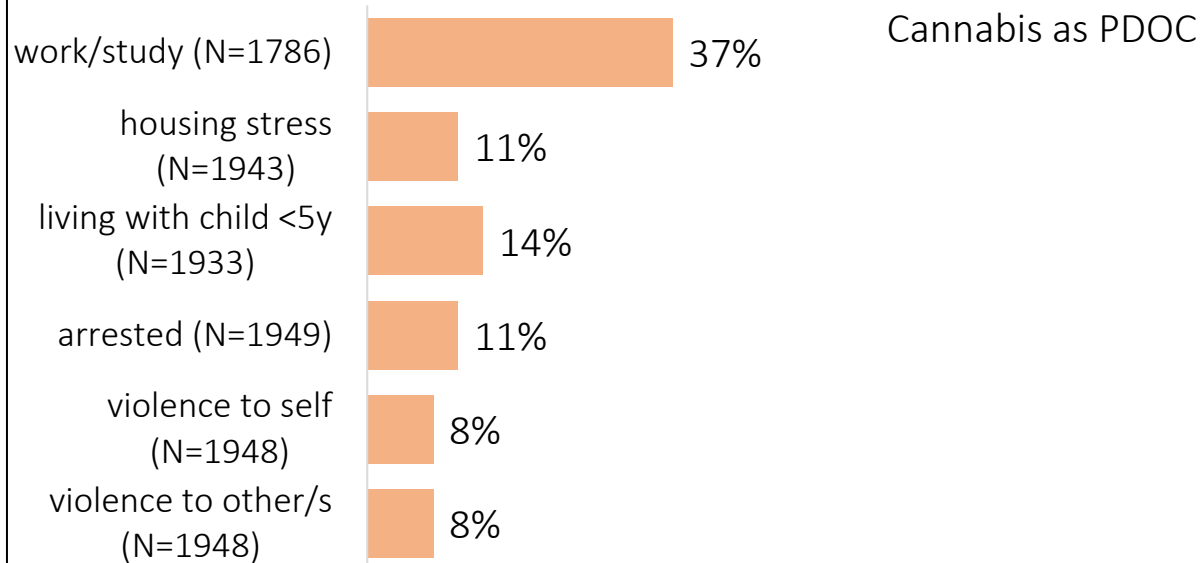
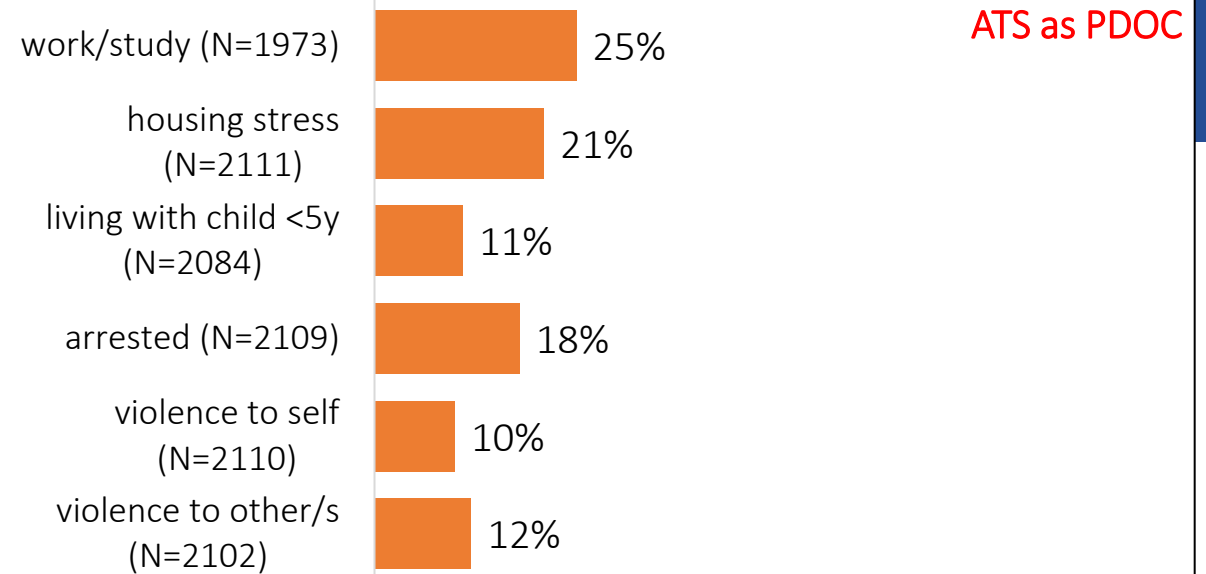
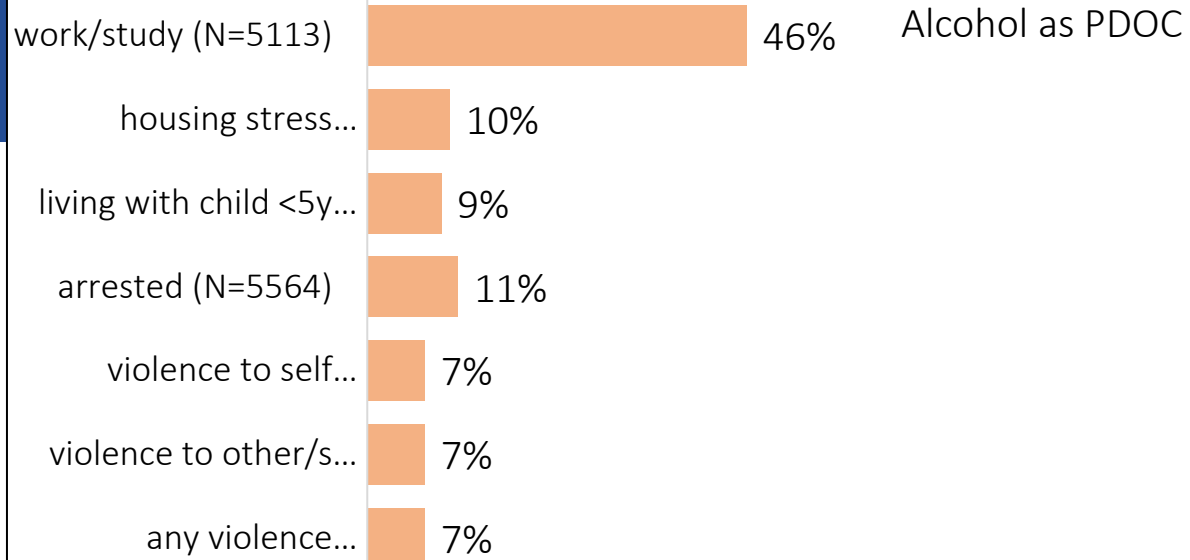


Results: Characteristics by PDOC

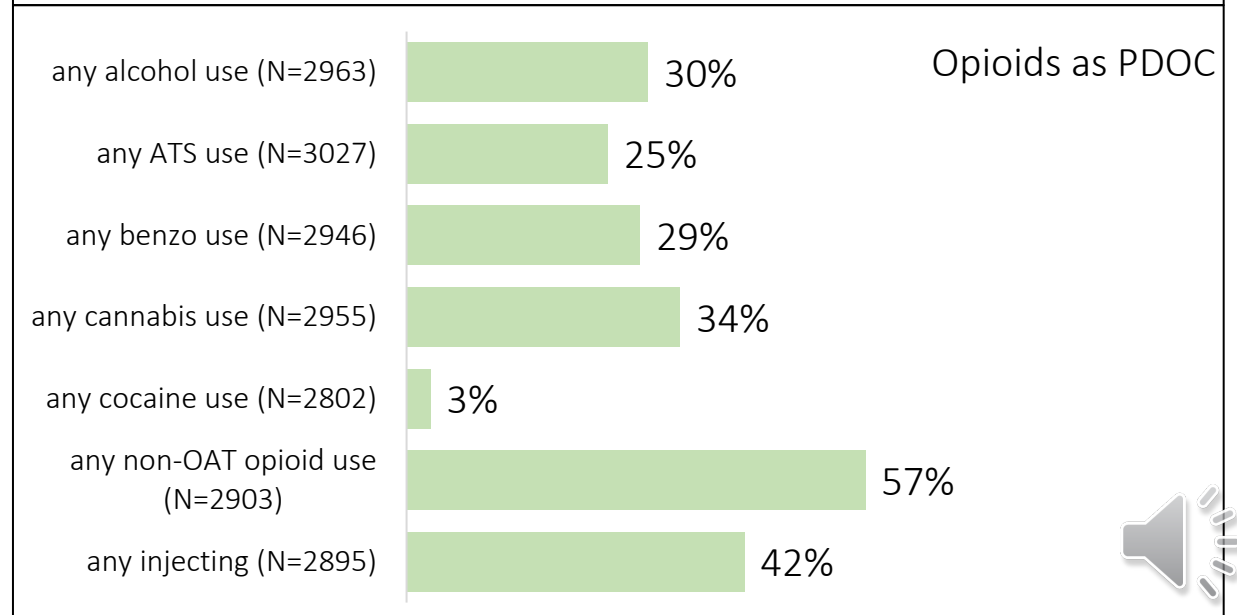
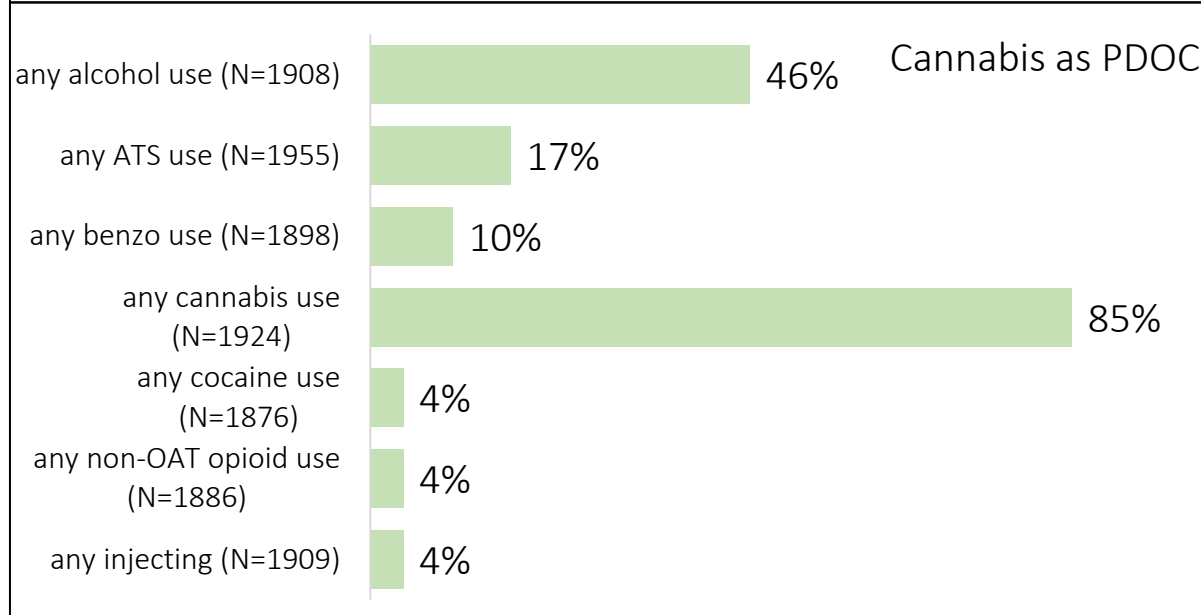
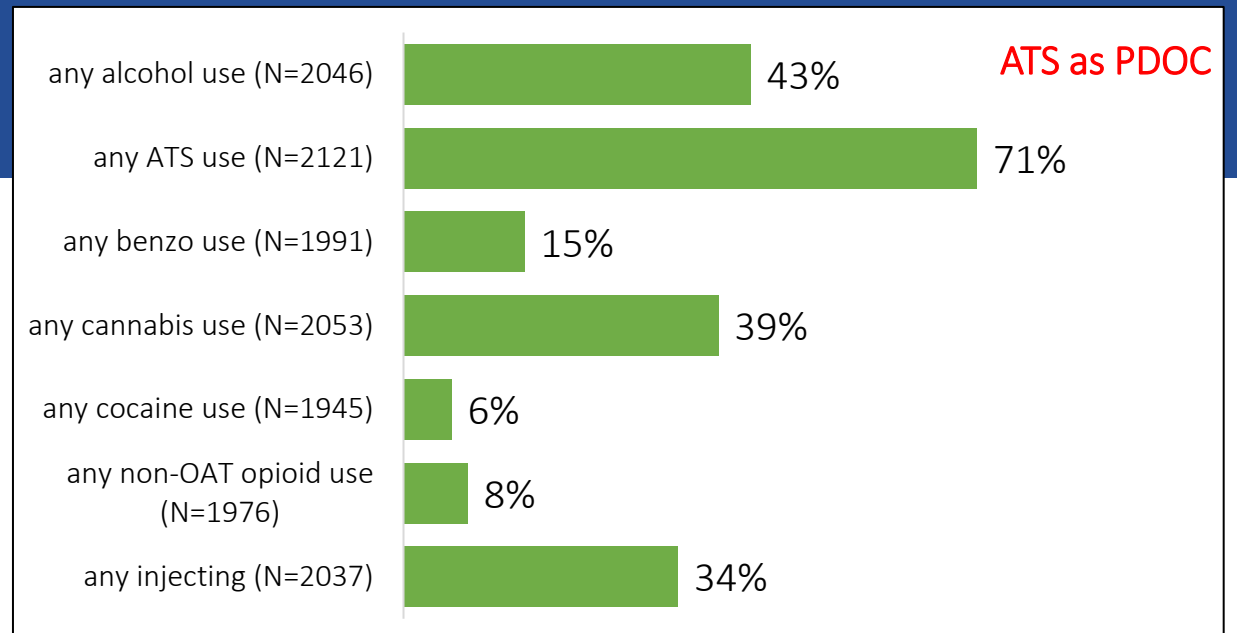
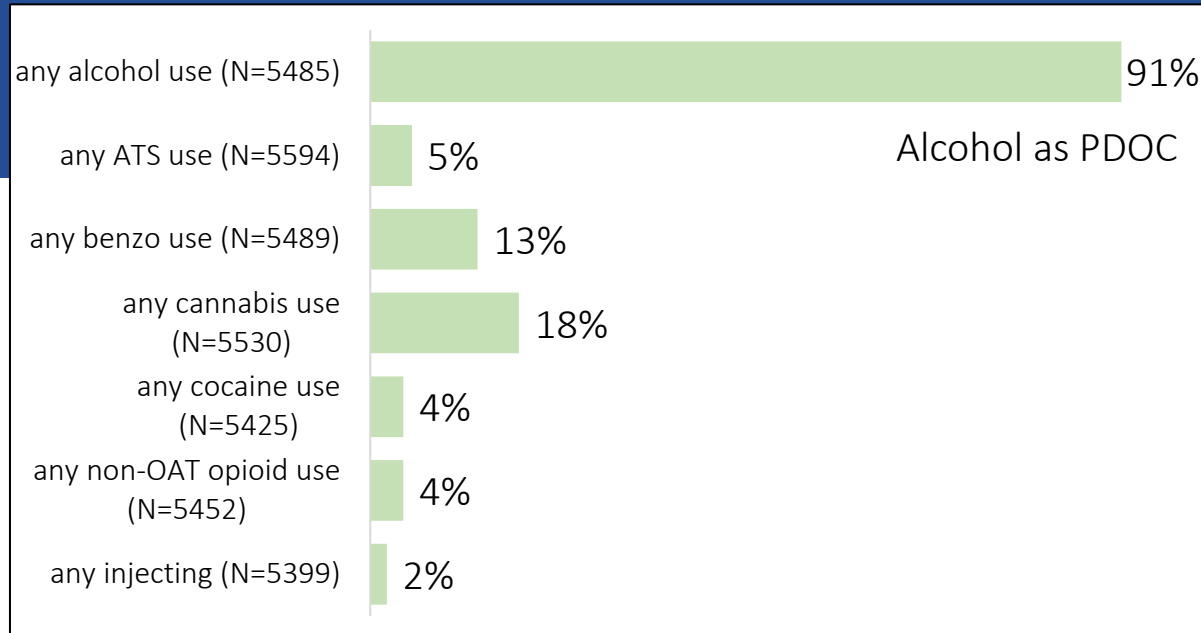
	Principal drug of concern			
	Alcohol N=5,594	ATS N=2,121	Cannabis N=1,955	Opioids N=3,027
Mean age	44y (SD 12.4)	35y (SD 9.3)	32y (SD 11.2)	39y (SD 10.6)
Men	65	63	67	70
Australian-born	80	91	92	92
Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander	7	16	16	22
English preferred language	99	99	92	98



Characteristics by PDOC



Past 28 day substance use by PDOC

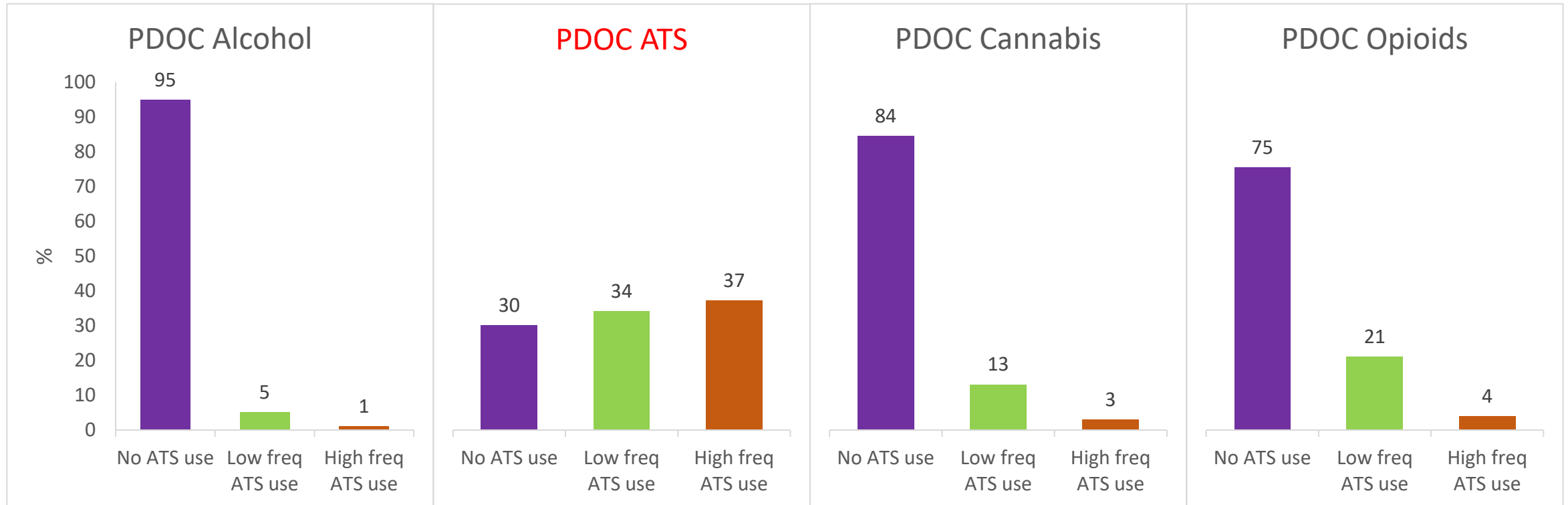


Categorising ATS use

- ■ No ATS use = 0/28 days
- ■ 'Low frequency' ATS use = used between **1-12** days in past 28
- ■ 'High frequency' ATS use = used between **13-28** days in past 28



Frequency of ATS use by Principal Drug of Concern



- People across all PDOC report ATS use. This may be sporadic or regular (e.g. daily).
- Some people entering ATS treatment haven't used ATS for some time (28 days+)



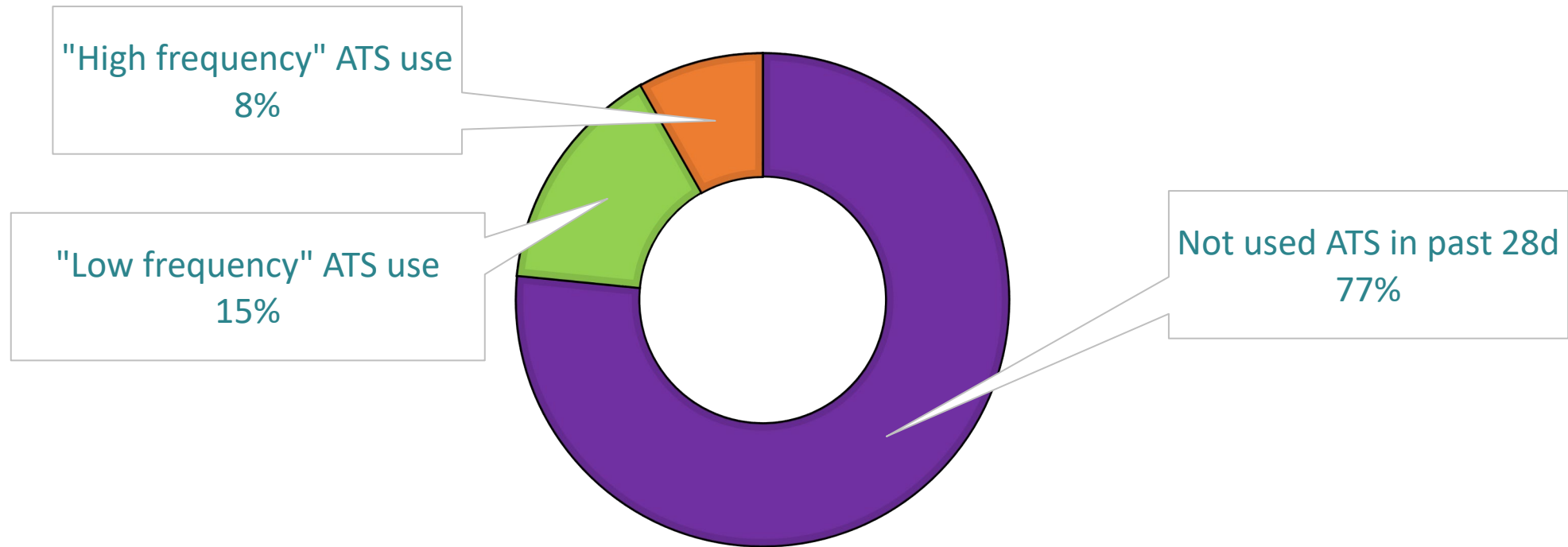
Characteristics by frequency of ATS use

(regardless of PDOC)

- No ATS use = 0/28 days
- 'Low frequency' ATS use = used between 1-12 days in past 28
- 'High frequency' ATS use = used between 13-28 days in past 28



Frequency of ATS use across all clients entering treatment



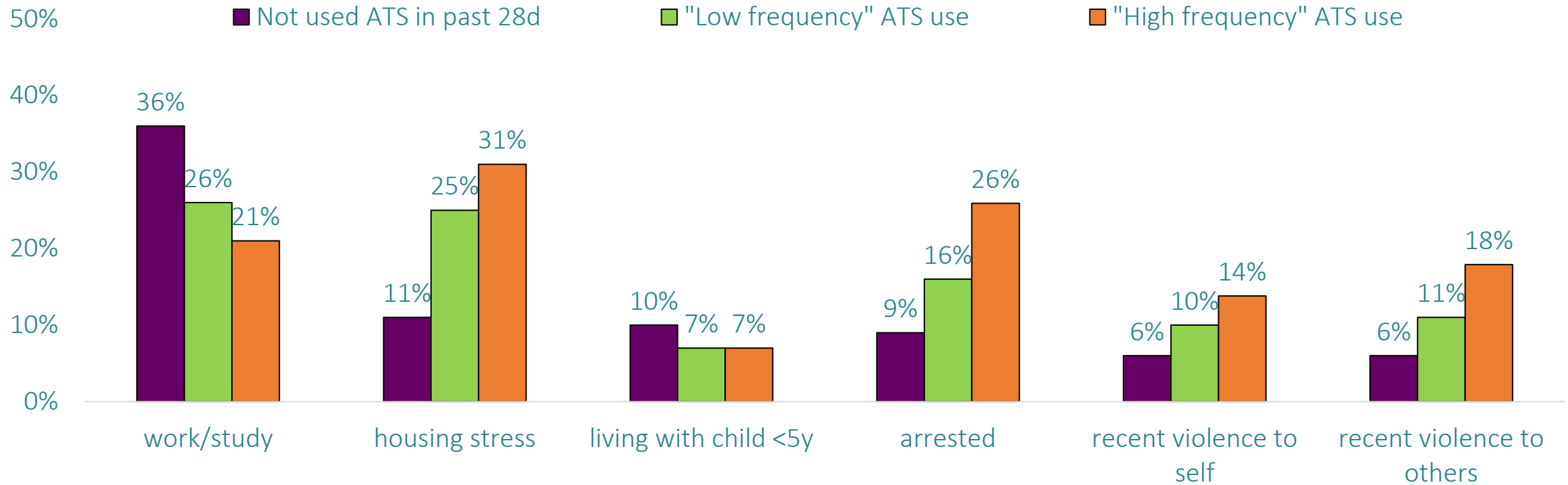
- Over one-fifth of all clients entering treatment have used ATS in the past 28 days
- Around 1 in 15 clients (8%) have done so regularly (13+/28 days)



Results: Characteristics by ATS use frequency

	Frequency of ATS use		
	No recent ATS use N=10,610	Low frequency ATS use N=2,109	High frequency ATS use N=1,145
Mean age	40y (SD 12.7)	35y (SD 9.7)	35y (SD 9.5)
Men	66	70	64
Australian-born	85	91	91
Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander	12	18	15
English preferred language	98	98	99

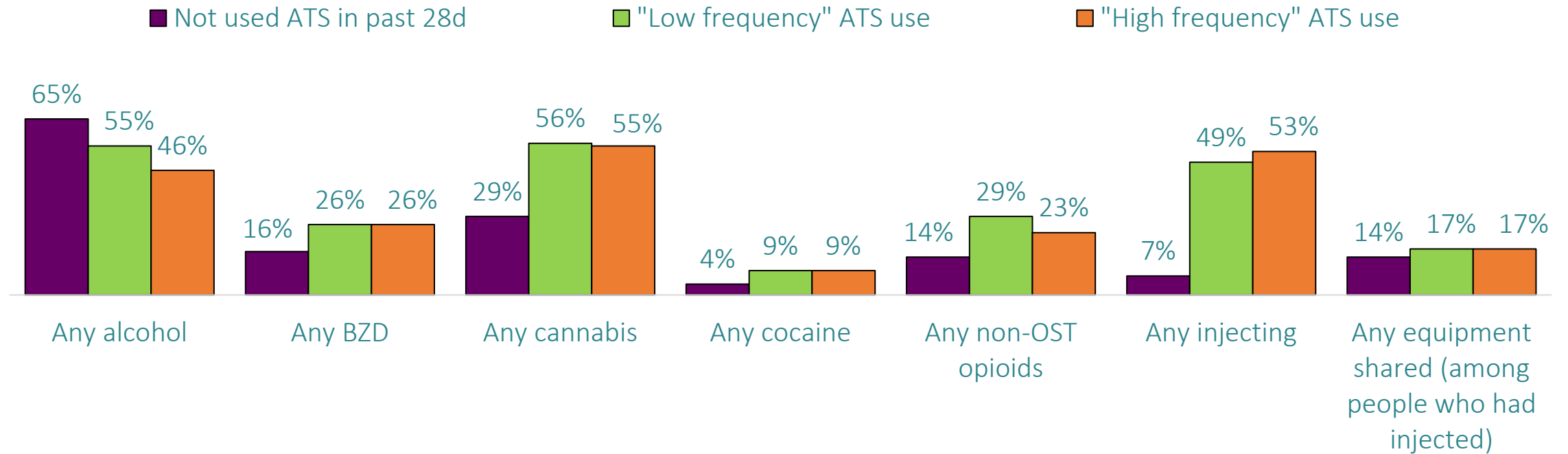
Social conditions by ATS frequency



- Suggests a dose response: the more a person uses, the more challenges they face.
- But: wait for the regression!



Substance use by ATS frequency



- People who use ATS report less alcohol use and greater use of several other substances than non users



Is there a difference between clients
who report no, low & high
frequency ATS use?

*in terms of substance use, socioeconomic factors,
health and wellbeing*



Methods

- Multinomial regression
- Full data were available for 9,981 (72%) of the overall sample
- Dependent Variable: whether person was in the 'no', 'low' or 'high' frequency group
- 20 Independent Variables: demographic, social condition, substance use, health & wellbeing items from ATOP
- Ideally would have conducted linear regression to investigate what factors associated with increasing days of ATS use; however, this was not possible



Results: what factors are associated with ATS use?

Key:	$p \leq 0.001$	$p \leq 0.01$	$p \leq 0.05$	nonsignificant
	'Low' cf. no use			
Age (years)	✓ younger			
Sex (M/F)	✓ men			
Work/Study (Y/N)	✗			
Housing Stress (Y/N)	✓ stress			
Live with Child <5y (Y/N)	✓ not live with child/ren			
Arrest (Y/N)	✓ arrest			
Any Violence (Y/N)	✓ violence			
Alcohol Days	✓ fewer days			
Benzo Days	✗			
Cannabis Days	✓ more days			
Cocaine Days	✗			
Non-OAT Opioid Days	✓ fewer days			
Injected (Y/N)	✓ injected			
Psychological Health 0-10	✓ lower score			
Physical Health 0-10	✗			
Quality of Life 0-10	✓ lower score			



Results: what factors are associated with ATS use?

Key:	$p \leq 0.001$	$p \leq 0.01$	$p \leq 0.05$	nonsignificant
	'Low' cf. no use		'High' cf. no use	
Age (years)	✓ younger		✓ younger	
Sex (M/F)	✓ men		✗	
Work/Study (Y/N)	✗		✗	
Housing Stress (Y/N)	✓ stress		✓ stress	
Live with Child <5y (Y/N)	✓ not live with child/ren		✓ not live with child/ren	
Arrest (Y/N)	✓ arrest		✓ arrest	
Any Violence (Y/N)	✓ violence		✓ violence	
Alcohol Days	✓ fewer days		✓ fewer days	
Benzo Days	✗		✗	
Cannabis Days	✓ more days		✓ more days	
Cocaine Days	✗		✗	
Non-OAT Opioid Days	✓ fewer days		✓ fewer days	
Injected (Y/N)	✓ injected		✓ injected	
Psychological Health 0-10	✓ lower score		✓ lower score	
Physical Health 0-10	✗		✗	
Quality of Life 0-10	✓ lower score		✓ lower score	



Results: what factors are associated with ATS use?

Key:	$p \leq 0.001$	$p \leq 0.01$	$p \leq 0.05$	nonsignificant
	'Low' cf. no use		'High' cf. no use	High cf. low
Age (years)	✓ younger		✓ younger	✗
Sex (M/F)	✓ men		✗	✓ women
Work/Study (Y/N)	✗		✗	✗
Housing Stress (Y/N)	✓ stress		✓ stress	✗
Live with Child <5y (Y/N)	✓ not live with child/ren		✓ not live with child/ren	✗
Arrest (Y/N)	✓ arrest		✓ arrest	✓ arrest
Any Violence (Y/N)	✓ violence		✓ violence	✗
Alcohol Days	✓ fewer days		✓ fewer days	✗
Benzo Days	✗		✗	✗
Cannabis Days	✓ more days		✓ more days	✓ more days
Cocaine Days	✗		✗	✗
Non-OAT Opioid Days	✓ fewer days		✓ fewer days	✓ fewer days
Injected (Y/N)	✓ injected		✓ injected	✓ injected
Psychological Health 0-10	✓ lower score		✓ lower score	✗
Physical Health 0-10	✗		✗	✗
Quality of Life 0-10	✓ lower score		✓ lower score	✓ lower score



Key points (1)

1. Amphetamine type substance use is reported by people across the treatment spectrum, regardless of their main substance of concern
2. People who seek treatment for ATS have not necessarily used ATS recently
 - 30% of people seeking ATS treatment had not used in the past 28 days
3. People who use ATS (regardless of PDOC) often report polysubstance use, social harms and poor wellbeing
 - More housing stress, arrest and violence (as victim and/or perpetrator)
 - Poorer psychological health and quality of life.
 - Other substance use commonly reported by this group



Key points (2)

4. There appears to be somewhat of a 'dose response'

Even when accounting for other factors, ↑ ATS use associated with

- ↑ arrest, injecting, cannabis use
- ↓ quality of life, alcohol use

5. There are sex differences in ATS use among treatment seekers

- Women in treatment who use ATS tend to use them more often

6. ATS & associated harms: *association not causation*



Key points (3)

7. First Nations People: Over-representation in ATS users
8. Living with children aged <5y - parenting support and child protection:
 - One in ten (11%) people with ATS as PDOC
 - 7% of all people who used any ATS in last 28 days
9. Extent of BZDs / cannabis use by ATS users (not surprising – but good to have a measure)
10. The description of frequency of ATS use (days/mth) – interesting (1/3s rule applies)





Thank you

emma.black@health.nsw.gov.au

