

# Alcohol and Drug Recovery Experiences in Indiana



July 2022

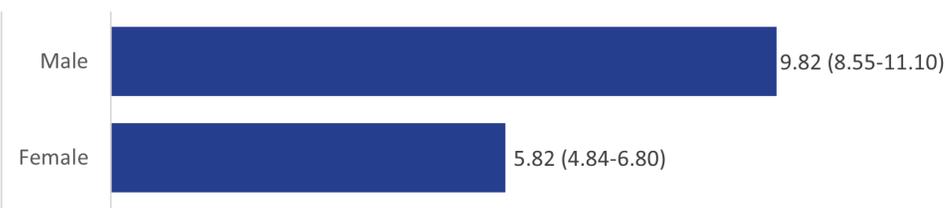
## Introduction

Alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems lead to a national burden of disease, disability, and premature mortality in the United States; however, recovery from these problems is attainable.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration defines recovery as a “process of change through which people improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential”.<sup>2</sup>

In 2020, Indiana elected to include questions about recovery from AOD problems on their Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey. Adult respondents were asked whether or not the use of drugs or alcohol negatively impacted their daily life in the past, but not anymore. If they answered yes to this question, respondents were asked if they considered themselves to be a person in recovery and with which (if any) recovery supports or resources they have ever engaged. These data were analyzed to determine if disparities exist across demographic groups.

## Recovery Experience Prevalence by Sex

Men had a significantly higher prevalence (9.82%) of reporting that AOD problems negatively impacted their daily lives in the past, but not anymore, compared to women (5.82%). This is consistent with national trends, where a higher proportion of men report that AOD problems previously had a negative impact on their lives.<sup>1</sup>



**7.74%** of BRFSS respondents

felt that the use of drugs or alcohol negatively impacted their daily life in the past, but not anymore.

## Fast Facts

- Men (9.82%) had a significantly higher prevalence of drugs or alcohol negatively impacting their daily lives in the past, but not anymore when compared to women (5.82%).
- Those in the 25 to 34 age group had a significantly higher prevalence (14.19%) than all other age groups.
- College graduates had a significantly lower prevalence (5.36%) compared to all other education groups.

## Recovery Experience Prevalence by Income

When compared to the \$25,000-34,999, \$35,000-49,999, and \$50,000+ income groups (7.59%, 9.80%, and 5.94%, respectively), a significantly higher percentage of adults with an annual income of less than \$15,000 per year (16.67%) reported that AOD problems negatively impacted their lives in the past, but not anymore. Additionally, those with an income of more than \$50,000 per year reported that AOD problems negatively impacted their lives in the past, but not anymore, significantly less (5.94%) than the <\$15,000, \$15,000-24,999, and \$35,000-49,999 income groups.



\*All Graphs Include Prevalence (%) with 95% Confidence Intervals

## Perceived Recovery Experiences

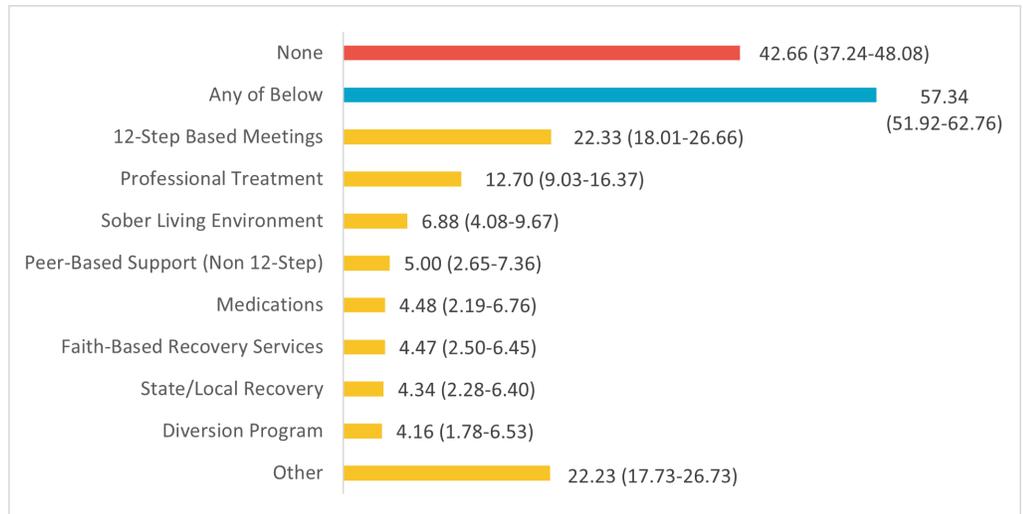
The second question asked respondents who reported a history of AOD problems if they considered themselves to be a person in recovery. 44.08% of respondents in Indiana self-identified as being a person in recovery, which is comparable to the national statistic of 46% from 2017.<sup>1</sup> There were no significant differences between sex, age, or educational attainment, and there was insufficient data to compare respondents based on race/ethnicity.

**44.08%** of BRFSS respondents

who reported a history of AOD problems considered themselves to be a person in recovery.

## Engagement with Recovery Supports and Resources

The third question asked respondents to identify with which recovery supports or resources they have ever (including currently) engaged. Respondents could select multiple options, if desired. A significantly higher percentage (57.34%) of people responded that they used at least one of the listed resources compared to none of the resources (42.66%). Aside from the 'other' recovery support option, 12-step based meetings were used at a significantly higher prevalence (22.33%) compared to any other recovery resource response option.



Respondents could select multiple options, so totals may sum to over 100%

## Conclusions and Future Research Possibilities

- The prevalence of adult Indiana residents in recovery from AOD problems was examined based on different demographic groups, including race/ethnicity, age, sex, income, and educational attainment, using data from the 2020 Indiana BRFSS. Overall, 7.74% of Indiana adults indicated that the use of drugs or alcohol negatively impacted their daily life in the past, but not anymore. 2017 national prevalence estimates are similar to these findings, with 9.1% of all U.S. adults reporting that they used to have a problem with drugs or alcohol, but no longer do.<sup>1</sup>
- Research has shown that individuals in recovery experience significant improvements in quality of life and a decrease in psychological distress; however, lack of affordable recovery support options is a problem for many people.<sup>3,4</sup> Increasing accessibility to affordable and quality recovery supports on both a state and national level may be one way to provide added support to those in recovery from AOD problems.
- Additionally, a small sample size made it difficult to compare some of the demographic groups and various support options. Increasing participant sample size or combining multiple years of data would improve the granularity at which the data can be analyzed and allow for further conclusions.
- Future research possibilities could include quantifying improvements in quality of life when a person is in recovery from an AOD problem, assessing the time since AOD problem resolution, and examining the most effective recovery supports.

1. Kelly, J. F., Bergman, B., Hoepfner, B. B., Vilsaint, C., & White, W. L. (2017). Prevalence and pathways of recovery from drug and alcohol problems in the United States population. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 181, 162–169. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2017.09.028>

2. Recovery and recovery support. (2020, April 23). SAMHSA. <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery>

3. Kelly, J., Greene, M. C., & Bergman, B. (2018). Beyond abstinence: changes in indices of quality of life with time in recovery. *Alcoholism Clinical and Experimental Research*, 42(4), 770–780. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5880708/>

4. Barriers to Addiction Treatment: Why Addicts Don't Seek Help. (2022, March 10). American Addiction Centers. <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/rehab-guide/treatment-barriers>

For more information about alcohol or drug addiction or recovery, please visit the [Indiana Addiction Treatment website](#) or the [SAMHSA website](#). If you or someone you know needs assistance immediately, dial 2-1-1 to be connected to available providers.

For additional information about BRFSS findings related to recovery, please visit [bit.ly/inbrfss](https://bit.ly/inbrfss).

