



What is NASW's Practice Research Network?

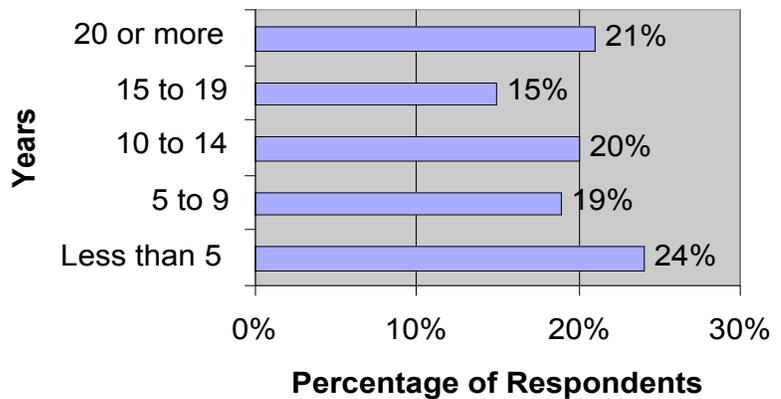
Through funding provided by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), NASW created the concept of a Practice Research Network (PRN). The goal of the PRN project is to collect data from social work practitioners and use the data to develop best practices, inform policy, and improve service delivery. NASW is designing and conducting a series of practice-based research surveys that will help meet this goal. The information presented in this Datagram is from the second survey, conducted in 2002. This survey included elements about client and provider demographics, as well as more detailed information about substance abuse treatment provided by social workers. The second PRN survey, which follows up on the initial effort in 2000, focused on clinical social work practice and substance abuse services issues relevant to the profession.

Practice Research Network Survey 2002

- Conducted during the fall 2002.
- Randomly administered to 2,000 NASW regular members.
- Response rate of 78 percent (n=1,560)—making the data highly representative. Margin of error of +/- 2.5 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

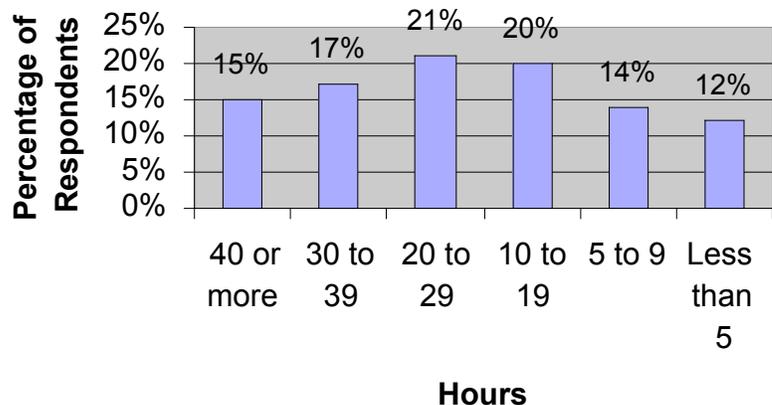
A total of 600 social workers reported that they worked in private practice and, overall, their number of years of experience in private practice is equally distributed. More than three-fourths (77 percent) work in solo practice, while the other 23 percent work in group practice.

Experience in Private Practice



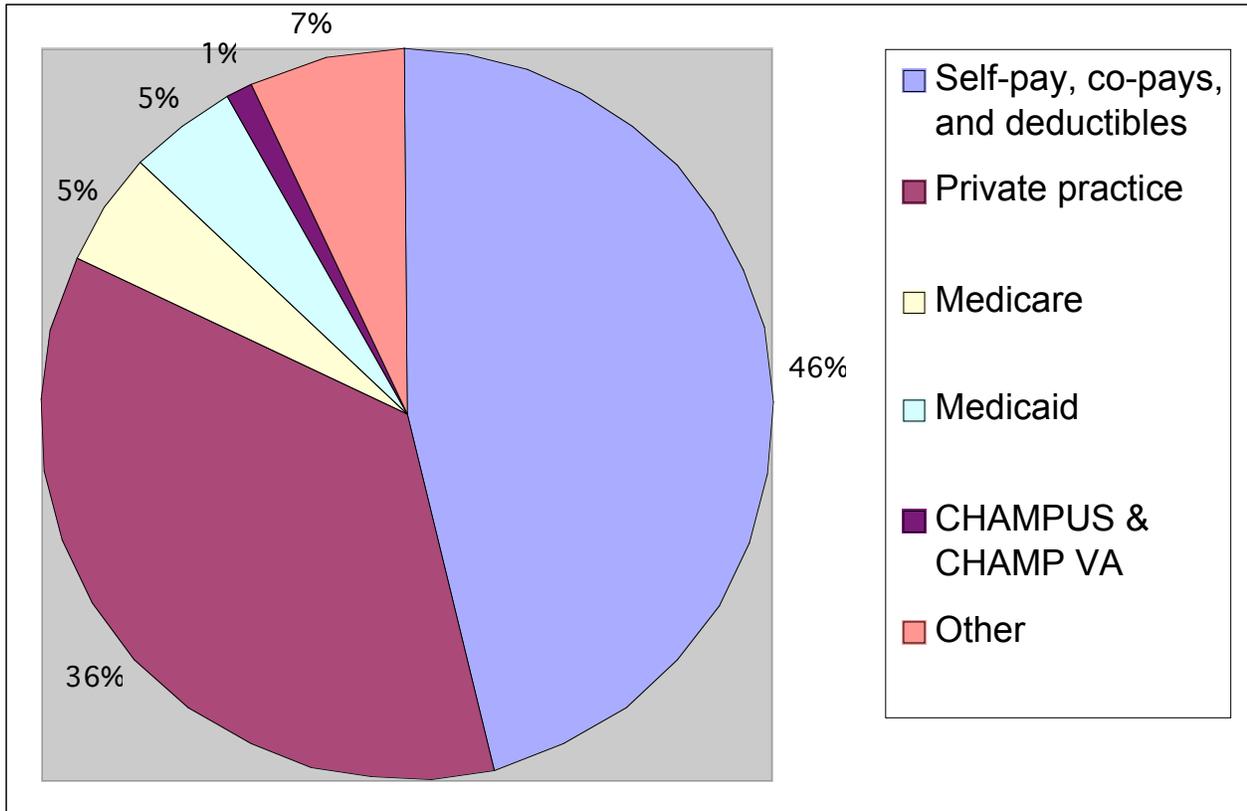
On average, social workers in private practice work approximately 21 hours per week.

Hours Worked per Week



Revenue Source

Just under half (46 percent) of social workers in private practice get their revenue through “self-pay, deductibles, and co-pays,” while more than one-third (36 percent) of their income comes from private insurance. Government insurance programs, such as Medicaid, Medicare, and CHAMPUS/Champ VA, make up approximately 11 percent of the income for professionals in private practice.



NOTE: Percentages are rounded to the closest whole number value in the above graph.

Private Practitioners' Client Data

The majority (74 percent) of clients seen by social workers in private practice are 25 years of age and older. Individuals under the age of 18 make up 15 percent of the client base of social workers in private practice.

Client Base by Gender	
Gender	Percent
Female	63.1
Male	36.9

Nearly two-thirds (63.1 percent) of clients receiving services from social workers in private practice are female.

Number of Clients per Week	
Number	Percent
30 or more	18
Less than 30	78

Note: The total does not equal 100% due to non-response or social workers who reported seeing no clients.

On average, social workers in private practice provide services to 17.5 clients per week.