



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 to 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 to 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 follows the initial effort in 2000, focusing on clinical social work practice and substance abuse-services issues relevant to the profession.

Social workers responded to a new question on the second PRN survey about the importance of specific sources in learning new techniques for assessment and intervention. The table below summarizes the percentage of each learning source rated 3 or 4 on a scale of 0 to 4, where 0 = "not at all important" and 4 = "very important."

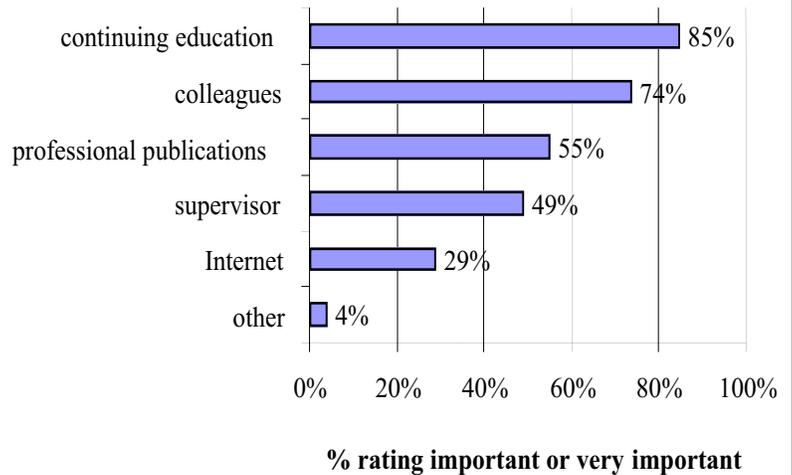
Social workers responded that continuing education (85%) and colleagues (74%) are the most important sources for professional development. Professional publications (books and journals) and supervisors also were important sources for approximately half (55% and 49%, respectively) of the social workers.

In 2002, 93% of NASW members reported they had participated in one or more hours of training or professional development activities in the previous 12 months.

Practice Research Network Survey 2002

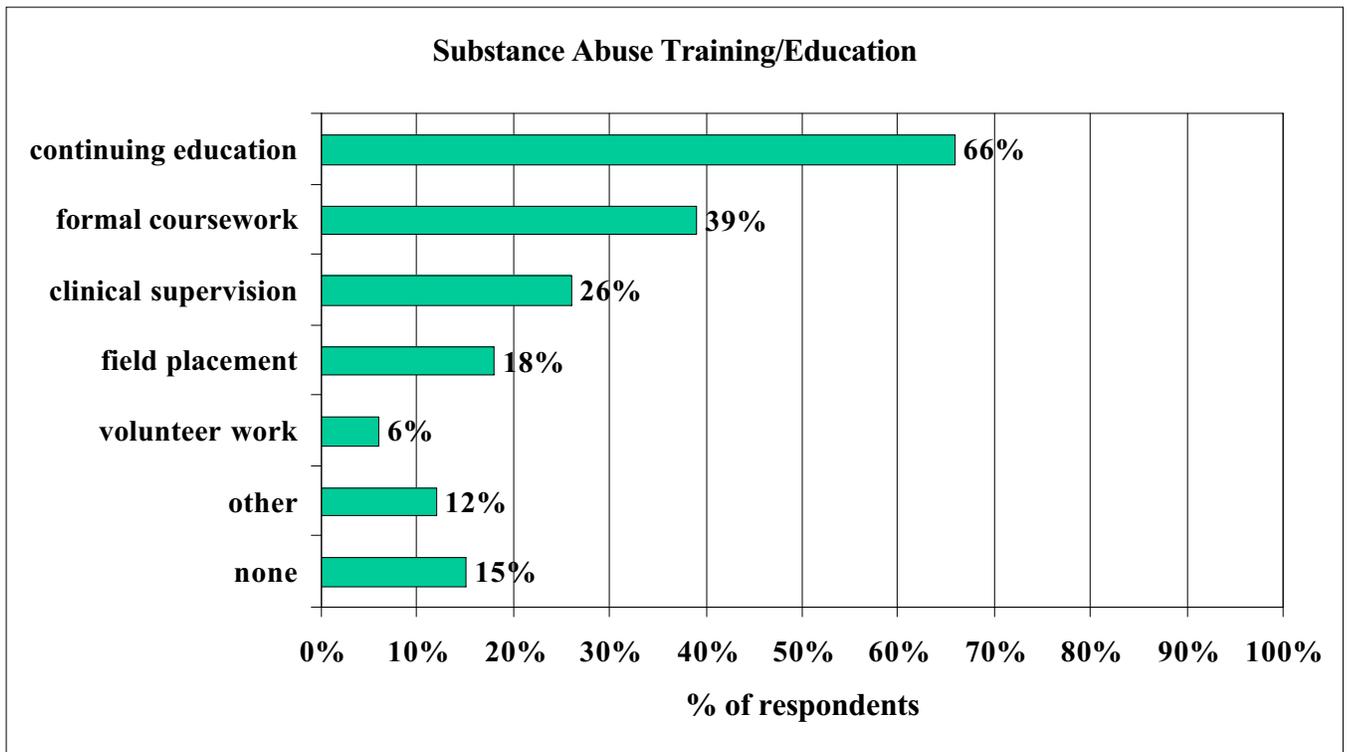
- Conducted during Fall, 2002
- Randomly administered to 2,000 NASW regular members
- Response rate of 78% (n=1,560), making the data highly representative; margin of error of +/- 2.5% at a 95% confidence level

Importance of Learning Sources



Training/Education Specific to Substance Abuse Disorders

Social workers learn about substance abuse through many methods. Two-thirds (66%) of regular NASW members reported receiving substance abuse training/education through continuing education, while 15% of respondents reported they received no substance abuse training/education.



Professional Development Hours

The average number of training hours for 2002 was 32.7 hours, which decreased from the 35.4 hours reported in 2000. An average of 4.3 hours (of the 32.7) were spent on training specific to substance abuse.

