



Informing Research and Policy through Social Work Practice

PRN Datagram.....PRN Datagram.....PRN Datagram.....PRN Datagram

Substance Abuse Treatment Activities  
PRN 1, 4, 2001

**What is NASW's Practice Research Network?**

With funding support from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, NASW created the concept of a Practice Research Network (PRN). NASW is designing a series of practice-based research surveys that will build the information resources of the social work profession. The first survey included elements about client and provider demographics as well as more detailed information about substance abuse treatment. 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.

PRN Working Group

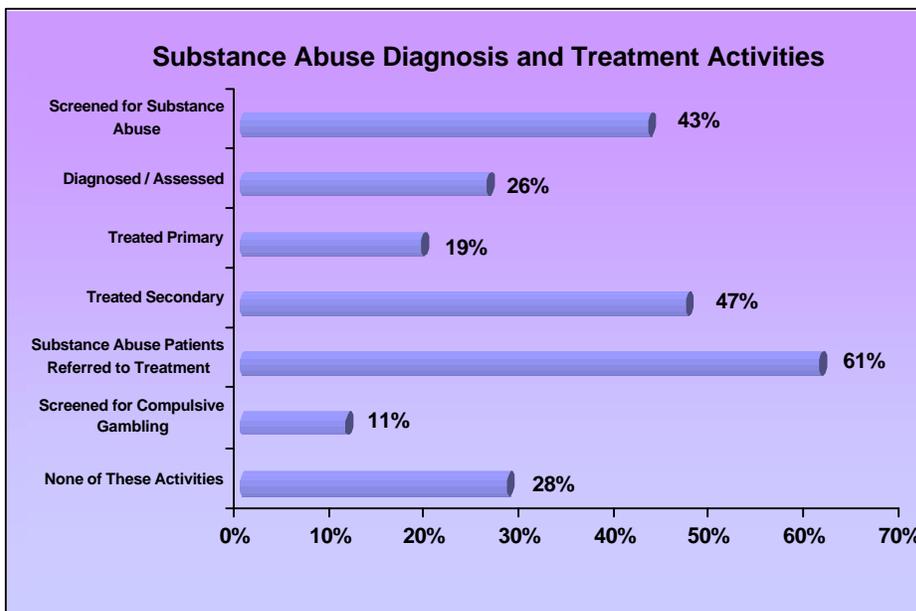
- Barbara Shank, Chair
- Gloria Aguilar
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- Camielle Call-Tarbet
- Jerry Flanzer
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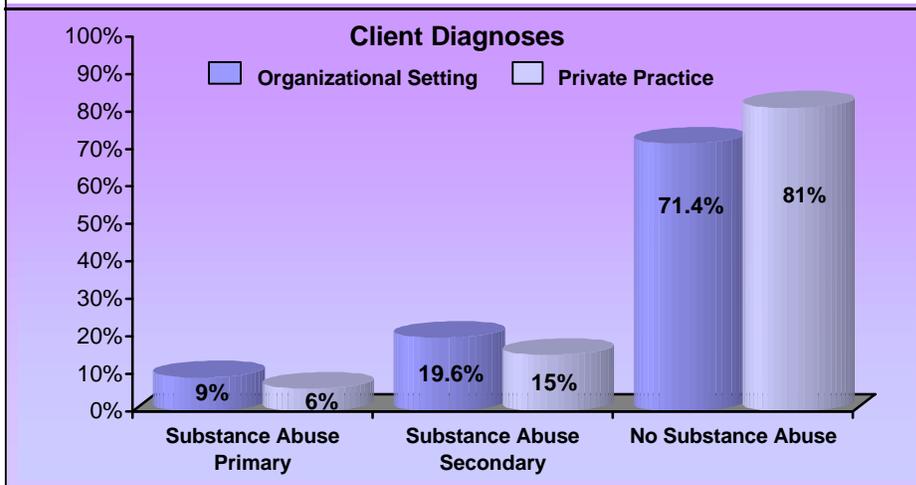
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**Practice Research Survey 2000**

- Conducted in April 2000
- Administered to 2,000 NASW regular members
- Response rate of 81% - making the data highly representative. Margin of error of +/- 2.4% at the 95% confidence level.

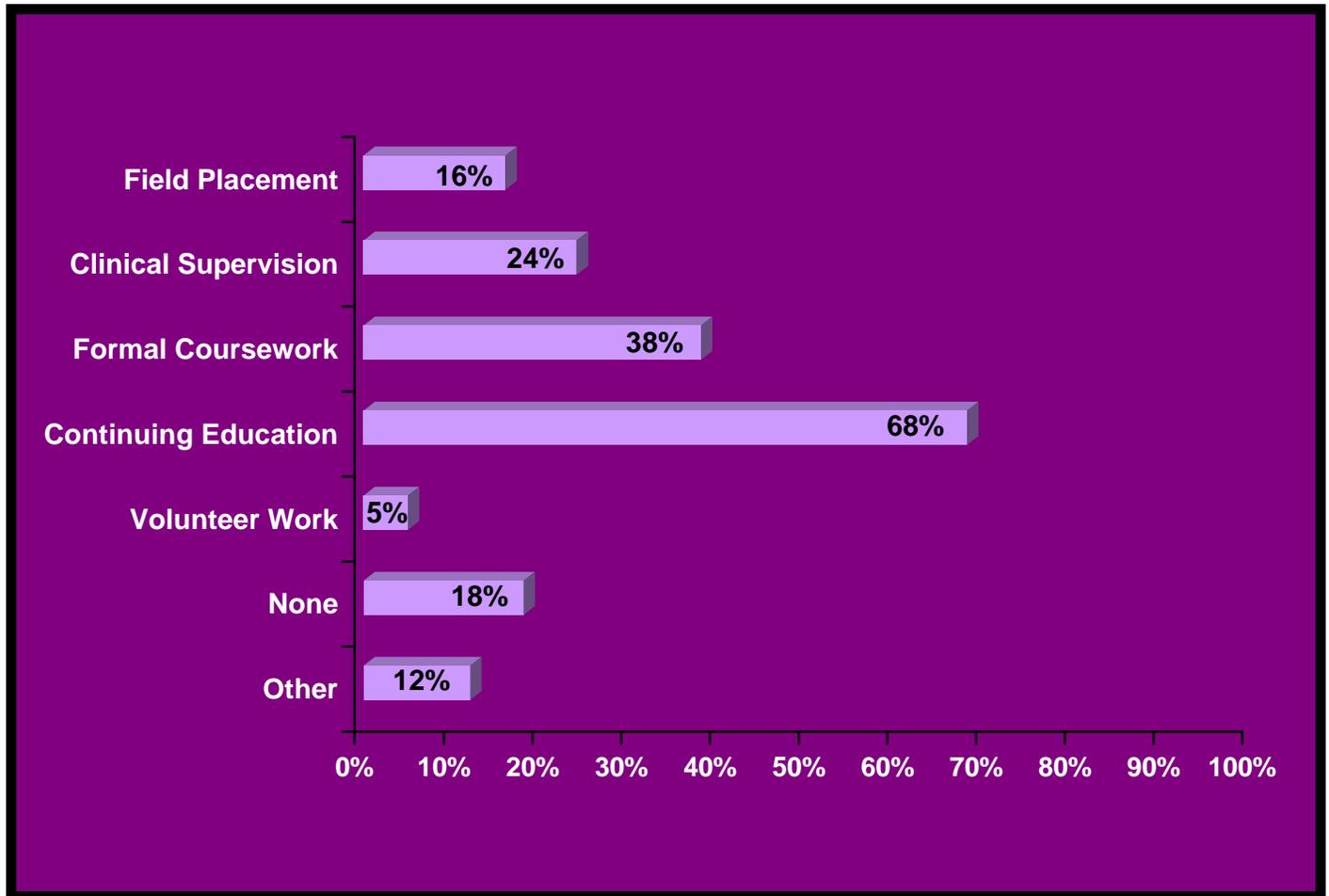


Respondents were asked to report on their treatment activities during the past year that related to substance abuse. Seventy-one percent of respondents indicated taking one or more actions in relation to clients with substance abuse disorders. Forty-three percent had screened for substance abuse. For the activities reported, practitioners in private practice had slightly higher percentages than those employed in organizational settings.



On average, 9% of clients in organizational settings had substance abuse as a primary diagnosis. Slightly more than 19% had substance abuse as a secondary or co-occurring diagnosis, and 71.4% had no diagnosis of substance abuse. Clients in private practice were somewhat less likely to have had either a primary or a secondary diagnosis of substance abuse.

## Substance Abuse Education and Training



Eighty-one percent of NASW regular members indicated they have at some time received education or training in substance abuse treatment. Such education or training included continuing education on substance abuse disorders (68%), formal coursework in substance abuse during an academic program (38%), clinical supervision in substance abuse (24%), field placement in a substance abuse setting (16%), and volunteer work in a substance abuse setting (5%).

Ninety-three percent of members reported having had at least one or more hours of professional development or training in the past year, but fifty-three percent indicated that none of these hours were focused on substance abuse. Members indicated that more than twenty-five percent of clients were reported to have either a primary or a secondary diagnosis of substance abuse. Both private practitioners and members in organizational settings reported that alcohol abuse was the most frequently diagnosed substance abuse disorder. Twenty percent of members' clients with substance abuse disorders had a diagnosis of drug abuse only, whereas, nearly fifty percent were diagnosed with a combination of alcohol and drug disorders.