



Turning Point
Alcohol & Drug Centre

What we know about drug use and what it means for practice and policy

Nicole Lee

[Policies] are like sausages...

Its better not to see them being made

(after von Bismarck c. 1850s)



Prevalence of use

	Ever used - % pop	Recent use - % pop
Alcohol	89.9%	86.0%
Cannabis	33.5%	9.1%
Amphetamines	6.3%	2.3%
Heroin	0.9%	0.2%

Dependent users

	Ever used - % pop	Recent use - % pop	Dependence - % recent users
Alcohol	89.9%	86.0%	5%
Cannabis	33.5%	9.1%	15%
Amphetamines	6.3%	2.3%	10%
Heroin	0.9%	0.2%	50%

National Drug Household Survey, 2008
Dance et al, 1997

Dependent users

	Ever used - % pop	Recent use - % pop	Dependence - % recent users	Dependence – approx n
Alcohol	89.9%	86.0%	5%	741,000
Cannabis	33.5%	9.1%	15%	235,000
Amphetamines	6.3%	2.3%	10%	40,000
Heroin	0.9%	0.2%	50%	17,000

National Drug Household Survey, 2008

Dependent users

	Ever used - % pop	Recent use - % pop	Dependence - % recent users	Dependence – approx n
Alcohol	89.9%	86.0%	5%	741,000
Cannabis	33.5%	9.1%	15%	235,000
Amphetamines	6.3%	2.3%	10%	75,000
Heroin	0.9%	0.2%	50%	140,000

National Drug Household Survey, 2008;
National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre



Dependence

	Dependence – approx n	Proportion dependent users
Alcohol	741,000	62%
Cannabis	157,000	20%
Amphetamines	75,000	6%
Heroin	140,000	12%

Dependence and treatment

	Dependence – approx n	Proportion dependent users	Proportion treatment episodes
Alcohol	741,000	62%	48%
Cannabis	157,000	20%	25%
Amphetamines	75,000	6%	14%
Heroin	140,000	12%	12%

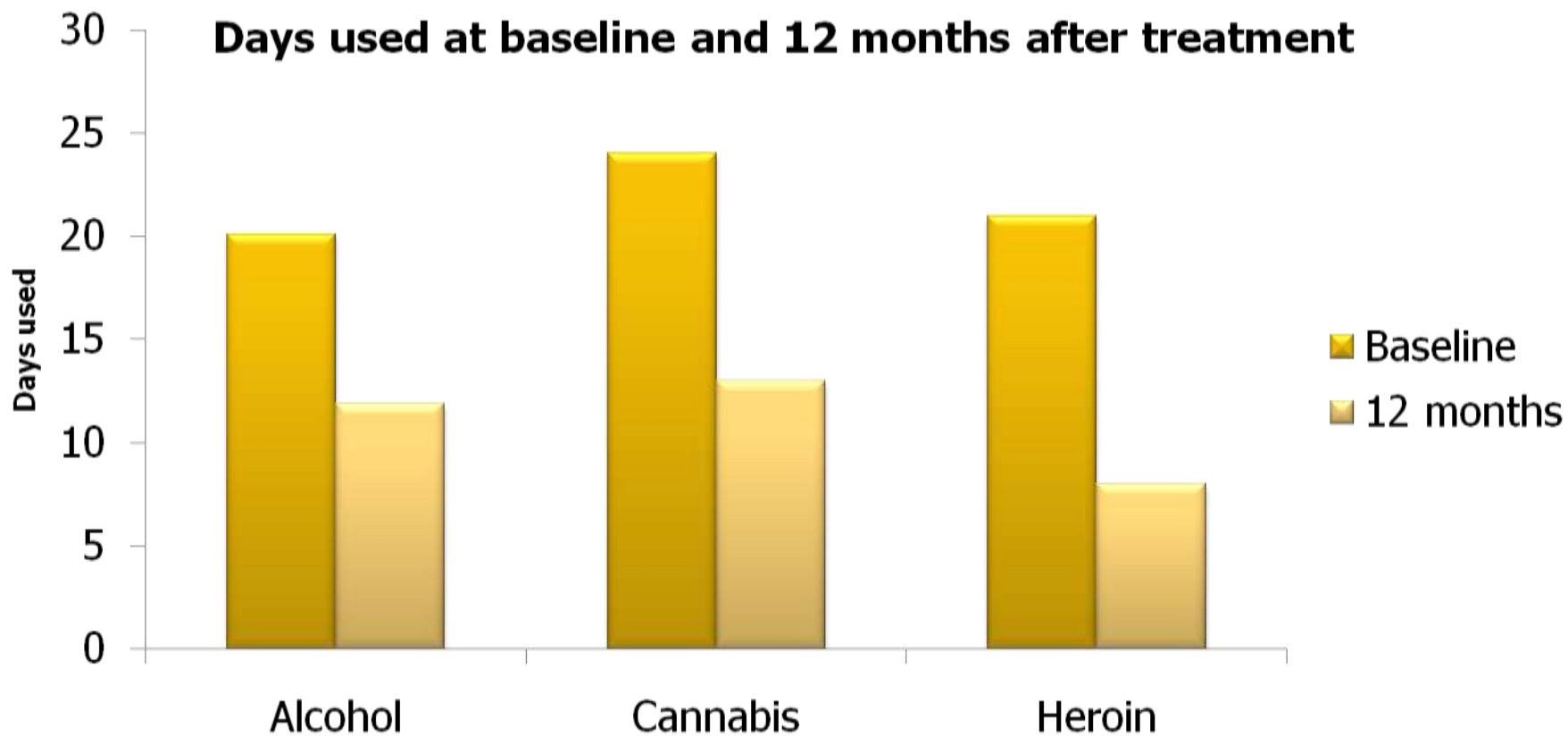
National Minimum Data Set, 2007

Dependence and treatment

	Dependence – approx n	Proportion dependent users	Proportion treatment episodes	Treatment users in Victoria - %
Alcohol	741,000	62%	48%	39%
Cannabis	157,000	20%	25%	24%
Amphetamines	75,000	6%	14%	8%
Heroin	140,000	12%	12%	29%

**National Minimum Data Set, 2007
Turning Point, 2003**

Treatment works!



ATOS Studies



Tertiary treatment responses

- Illicit users coming into treatment at expected rate and getting good treatment
- Fewer dependent drinkers than expected
- Tertiary system quality improvement focus
 - Responding to dependence
 - Translating new treatments to practice faster
 - Attracting dependent drinkers



Risky use

	Recent use - % pop	Dependence - % users	Risky users - %
Alcohol	86%	5%	34%
Cannabis	9.1%	15%	
Amphetamines	2.3%	10%	
Heroin	0.2%	50%	

National Drug Household Survey, 2008



Risky use

	Recent use - % pop	Dependence - % users	Risky users - %
Alcohol	86%	5%	34%
Cannabis	9.1%	15%	86%
Amphetamines	2.3%	10%	90%
Heroin	0.2%	50%	50%

National Drug Household Survey, 2008



Risky use

	Recent use - % pop	Dependence - % users	Risky users - %
Alcohol	86%	5%	34%
Cannabis	9.1%	15%	43%
Amphetamines	2.3%	10%	45%
Heroin	0.2%	50%	25%

National Drug Household Survey, 2008

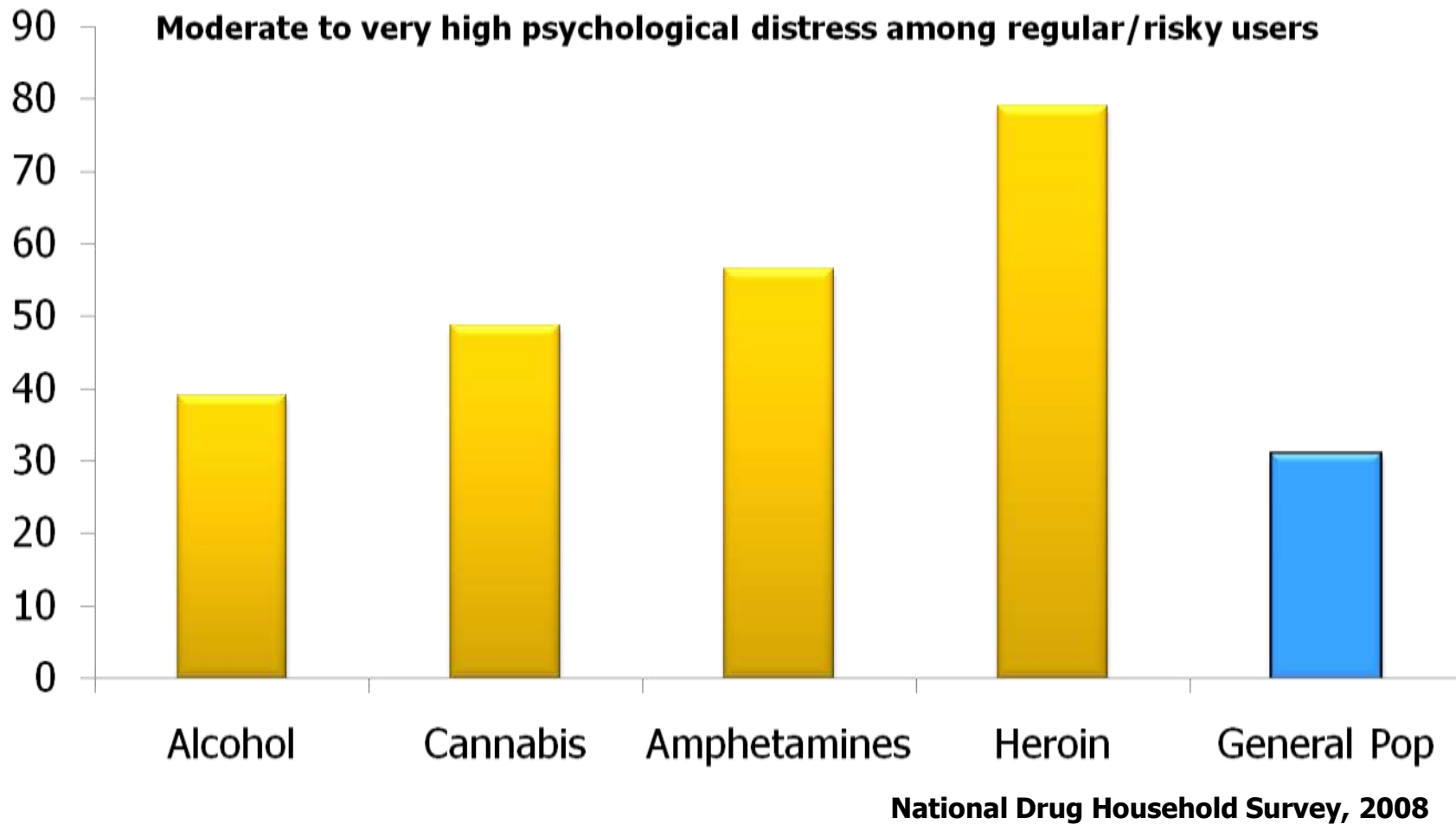


Polydrug use

	Alcohol	At least one illicit
Cannabis	87%	28%
Amphetamines	80%	63%
Heroin	40%	65%

National Drug Household Survey, 2008

Psychological distress





Age

	Av. Age of first use - yrs	Age group with most users - yrs	Median age treatment - yrs
Alcohol	16.9	30-39*	36
Cannabis	18.8	20-29	25
Amphetamines	20.9	20-29	29
Heroin	21.9	20-29	30

National Drug Household Survey, 2008
National Minimum Data Set, 2007



Focus on risky users

- There is a gap in service delivery for the larger group of risky users
 - They are young
 - They have high rates of polydrug use
 - They have significant mental health symptoms
 - But are not necessarily dependent and don't come in to tertiary treatment



Taking the right service to the right place

- Brief interventions are effective
 - Alcohol (Shand et al., 2003)
 - Cannabis (Martin et al., 2005)
 - Amphetamines (Baker et al., 2005)

but

- Need to provide them in an accessible format for young non dependent users



Face-to-face alternatives

- Use Internet and other electronic media
 - Online self help
 - Computerised therapy
 - Online live chat style counselling
 - SMS messaging
 - Social networking, microblogging sites



Benefits of online options

- Easy access to information 24/7
- Anonymity
- Reach
- 'Soft entry' to treatment
- Effective
 - Computer CD-ROM therapy (Kay-Lambkin et al., 2009)
 - See DAR (Kypri & Lee, 2009)



Educating the users to seek help

- Information that helps users or friends identify potentially problematic use rather than information about dangers of use
- Ways to encourage people to be proactive about their health and to seek help
- Using peer networks to prevent transition to risky use and dependence
 - Uptake of injecting
 - Providing alcohol or other drugs

