

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland at College Park*

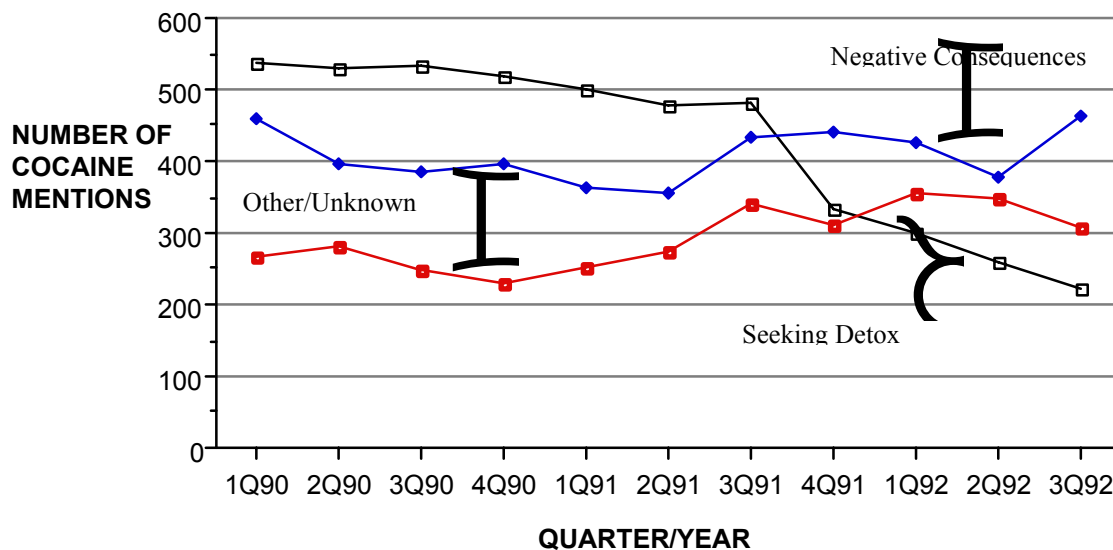
D.C. Metro Area Cocaine Emergencies May Not Be Declining: Analysis Of DAWN Components Aids Interpretation Of Trends

by

Clare Mundell and Eric Wish

Newly available DAWN statistics from the Washington metropolitan area raise questions about the declining cocaine trends previously reported. While total emergency room (ER) mentions for cocaine have declined from 1,266 in the first quarter of 1990 to 996 in the third quarter of 1992, examination of the component indicators shows that the decline can be accounted for by a drop in the number of persons seeking detoxification in an emergency room. In contrast, ER cocaine admissions for negative consequences other than seeking detox (including overdose, withdrawal, chronic effects of use, and unexpected reactions) are at their highest level since the fourth quarter of 1989. The reduction in detox admissions may actually reflect the closing of a local detox facility and the opening in 1992 of a local treatment facility that admitted patients who formerly would have gone to a nearby emergency room. SAMHSA is to be commended for releasing DAWN data that permits more refined analyses of drug trends.

**Estimates of Cocaine Related Emergency Room (ER) Mentions
For Washington, D.C. Metro Area, By Reason For Contact**
(First Quarter, 1990 to Third Quarter, 1992)



† Estimates for 1992 are preliminary.

SOURCE: Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

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