

Drug Early Warning System



*Working Together to Identify and Respond to
Emerging Drug Trends in Maryland*

MARYLAND DRUG SCAN 2001

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The efforts of many people went into the preparation of this report. We thank those who assisted us in identifying people to serve as Drug Scan contacts, and we especially express our gratitude to the 121 drug abuse experts who agreed to be interviewed. Without their dedication and commitment, this project would not have been possible. Finally, we add special thanks to the interviewers who assisted with this project.

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Maryland Drug Scan is one component of the Drug Early Warning System (DEWS). It is a statewide, county-level, drug use monitoring project designed to obtain perceptions of local drug trends from those who are considered most familiar with drug use problems in Maryland. The goal of Drug Scan is to identify emerging drugs and changes in drug use, and to report the findings to policymakers, researchers, program administrators, and community activists across the state.

What is Drug Scan?

Drug Scan obtains front-line individuals' opinions about drug trends in their areas. The qualitative information collected through Drug Scan supplements the other information gathered through the DEWS program. DEWS researchers combine rich anecdotal information obtained by Drug Scan with other DEWS studies to provide a more meaningful picture of local drug trends.

How is Drug Scan Conducted?

Each year, Drug Scan staff interview approximately 100 to 130 professionals about emerging drug trends in their counties, with the number of individuals interviewed in each county varying from 2 to 11. We interview knowledgeable people working in such areas as treatment, education, prevention, criminal justice, and emergency medicine. Staff recruits Drug Scan contacts continuously based on the following criteria. All contacts must:

- Have regular, direct contact with users,
- Possess in-depth knowledge of drug issues,
- Have been exposed to drug-related problems for more than one year, and
- Be highly credible information sources.

We conducted interviews from October 2000 to March 2001, after which we analyzed all the interviews in each county for relevant information. It is through this analysis that we determined whether to classify a drug as emerging or to note changing use patterns. This report presents results for each county in alphabetical order. Each county summary has two sections. The first section, "Emerging Drugs and Shifting Trends," includes information about any drugs that have recently been identified as a problem in a specific population by at least half of the county's Drug Scan contacts. This section also includes information about any changing patterns of use for drugs such as heroin or cocaine. The second section, "Other Points of Interest," includes information about other drugs that the contacts discussed or were asked about. These drugs are not usually perceived to be significant problems but are used by some individuals in the population served. Terms such as "rarely seen" or "not a big problem" might be used to describe use of these other drugs.

Highlights from this Report

This report highlights Ecstasy, oxycodone products (OxyContin, Percocet, and Percodan), and heroin use in each county. Contacts in the counties expressed concerns with the increasingly common use of Ecstasy in the general population and the fact that its use has moved beyond the rave scene. Contacts in 16 out of 23 counties plus Baltimore City indicated that they were experiencing problems with oxycodone products, and that such products were readily available on the streets through non-legitimate means. Concerns about heroin, however, varied by county and the shifts in use were noteworthy enough to be included in the emerging drugs section. Our interviews revealed that heroin use was most problematic in more urban areas such as Baltimore City and Prince George's County. Some contacts express concerns about potential increases in heroin overdoses.

Though not discussed in great detail, contacts in each county underscored the continued problems with alcohol and marijuana use among youth and adults. They described use of these drugs as "across the board," and noted that both alcohol and marijuana are common elements in polydrug use.

Limitations

The Drug Scan is a qualitative study, not a quantitative survey. It is designed to capture practitioners' perceptions of drug use in populations they interact with. While this is a rich knowledge base, certain biases may emerge in spite of the strong interviewing skills of the Drug Scan staff. For example, interviewers may misunderstand or misinterpret some of the information conveyed. Finally, although we select contacts based on their knowledge of drug use in the populations they serve, there are probably other knowledgeable persons whom we did not talk to.



ALLEGANY COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY use continues to be emerging in the county. The age of the typical Ecstasy user is between 18 and 25, but some contacts have seen users as young as 14. Most contacts noted that this risky behavior is more likely among males. County contacts confirmed that Ecstasy is used at home parties in addition to raves and clubs. Moreover, they said that most Ecstasy pills come from such large cities as Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Finally, the method of ingestion continues to be oral; no contacts mentioned snorting.

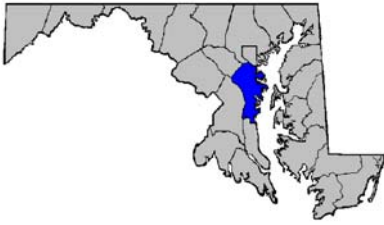
OXYCONTIN use is emerging as a greater problem. Most contacts have not been able to develop a specific profile of OxyContin users but surmise the age range to be 18 and older. They agreed that OxyContin is the prescription drug most widely abused, but some are seeing Percocet use as well. Most individuals use at home and obtain the pills through non-medical use of prescriptions. OxyContin, a time-release synthetic opioid, is consumed orally, snorted or injected. When the pills are crushed, the time-release mechanism is circumvented, generating a quicker and more potent high. This may substantiate the prevalent notion that people can develop a dependence on the drug very quickly. Also, OxyContin use appears to be common with heroin users when heroin is unavailable.

HEROIN is viewed as a drug of concern. Some contacts felt that there is a big heroin problem, noting that heroin users often abuse methadone and oxycodone as well. The typical age of heroin users is 18 and older. Despite its overall use, Drug Scan contacts nevertheless noted a decline in the last two years.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Some contacts expressed concerns over tobacco and smokeless tobacco use among youth. Furthermore, contacts felt that Ecstasy, prescription medications, heroin, and crack will continue to cause concerns in the future. Prescription medication abuse, in particular, was cited by most contacts as a future drug problem.

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ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is no longer a party drug but is used in more casual social environments.

Although its use has been reported for the past couple of years, it continues to be seen as emerging because of its migration to other populations beyond the rave scene. Typically, use and experimentation begins in people as young as 14 or 15. But it is predominantly used by males ages 18 to 25. Contacts note that younger users tend to be unsupervised. Ecstasy is most often obtained through local dealers rather than a network of acquaintances. Notably, youth are under the impression that this drug is relatively harmless, if used in moderation.

OXYCONTIN is found to be increasing along with concern over its use by heroin users as an alternative drug.

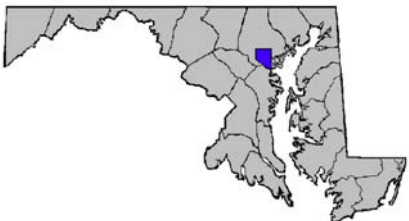
OxyContin use is reported among individuals in their late teens to adults in their 40s and 50s. Contacts have indicated that people obtain OxyContin through a variety of means, including thefts from local pharmacies, prescription fraud, doctor shopping, and stealing prescriptions from family and friends. Some contacts revealed that people are frequently obtaining prescription drugs through the mail as well as through non-medical use of prescriptions.

HEROIN use is up slightly. While Drug Scan 2000 found heroin to be an emerging drug, 2001 contacts reported that heroin is not yet widespread in the county, though there has been a slight increase in use. Further, most of the heroin is purchased in Baltimore City. Contacts indicated that heroin could be twice as expensive within Anne Arundel County.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Contacts indicated some use of psychedelic mushrooms by school age youth while Ketamine, GHB, and DXM were rarely seen. One contact noted that LSD is not as prevalent as in past years.

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BALTIMORE CITY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is increasingly seen more outside raves at house parties and is used more by younger populations. In fact, use seems to be restricted to younger populations (as young as 14). Labeled “the party drug,” it is commonly supplied through local markets. One contact said that Ecstasy is seemingly leading some toward heroin use. It is reportedly sold with Ritalin, marijuana, PCP, heroin, and cocaine, and is used in conjunction with alcohol. Some contacts see Ecstasy use predominantly among white populations, while others see use among a variety of race/ethnic groups.

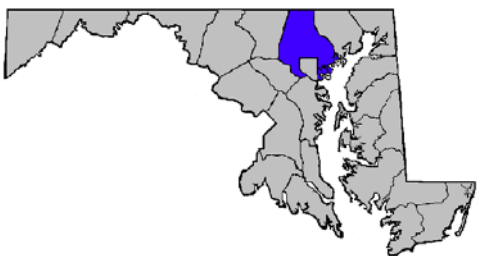
OXYCONTIN is classified as an emerging drug among adolescents and adults. OxyContin or Percocet (Oxycodone products) are abused by a wide variety of race/ethnic groups and ages. People in their early teens through the 30s are using OxyContin and it’s becoming increasingly popular among younger users. It is taken orally or injected intravenously. Contacts said that some of the older injection drug users use OxyContin to stave off the effects of heroin withdrawal. Reports indicated that OxyContin and alcohol are used together.

HEROIN is the most mentioned drug of abuse in Baltimore City. Contacts indicated that heroin is a major part of Baltimore City’s drug problem and that it is always available. While heroin use is not a new problem, within the last year, however, there have been some changes in the user population. According to one contact, recently there have been more female than male users, and users are younger than before. Adolescents are abusing heroin in their early teens; they begin by snorting and soon switch to injecting. Some users never snort; their initial heroin use is with a needle.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Cocaine is used among all age groups, both sexes, and all race/ethnic groups. It is often injected with heroin, but is also smoked. Older users (over 40) have mentioned using cocaine for sexual favors; some prostitutes require clients to use cocaine with them. Cocaine and alcohol are used to reduce the heroin high. Marijuana is considered by some to be a gateway drug and young people are less fearful about using it openly.

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BALTIMORE COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY has a new image as a social drug. Its use and distribution have noticeably, but not drastically, increased outside the rave scene, making it available to younger users and to a broader population. African Americans were identified by a contact as a relatively new population of Ecstasy user. One report noted that increases in use might indicate that more people are dealing.

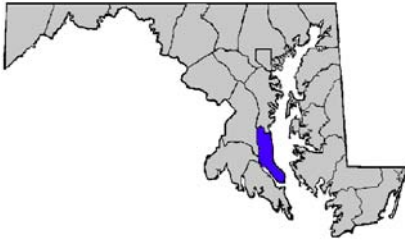
OXYCONTIN abuse has increased with adolescents. Contacts revealed that individuals 14 - 25 are reported as the primary abusing population. Adolescents are obtaining it from friends who have valid prescriptions; OxyContin users tend to use heroin when that prescription runs out. Since prevalence has been low in the past, it is believed among respondents that treatment centers miss a lot of OxyContin abuse because they do not normally test for it.

HEROIN use has increased in the county, especially in young female users. There is just as much heroin being sold in the county as in Baltimore City, plus there is more snortable heroin available. Injection use has decreased, however, following AIDs education outreach. Gender and race/ethnicity are not factors in heroin use: people begin to use this drug in their early teens and keep it as a drug of choice well past their late 20s.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Ketamine and both powder and crack cocaine were also mentioned. Ketamine has reportedly been used sporadically and is snorted, ingested, or mixed into drinks by teenagers and young adults. Cocaine is an old problem in the county, but its use has increased among adults regardless of race/ethnicity or gender. It is usually used with other drugs like alcohol or marijuana. Finally, Percocet is relatively inexpensive and available at local drug markets.

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CALVERT COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is no longer used solely at raves. All contacts agreed that Ecstasy is a problem in the county and that its casual use is common. Youth use Ecstasy at home parties and in the context of “just hanging out.” The typical age of the user is between 14 and 20. Pills cost an average of \$20 each, but some said they have seen one pill sell for about \$40. Contacts speak of the pills coming in a 4-pack called a “stack.” Most contacts were unsure where the drug comes from but believe that Washington, D.C. and Baltimore are the likely sources.

OXYCONTIN use increase is causing concern. OxyContin users are typically between 20 and 40, and both male and female. It is consumed orally as well as snorted, the latter to circumvent the time-release mechanism of the pills. Pills come mostly from legitimate prescriptions, but also through prescription abuse. Heroin users will frequently use OxyContin in lieu of heroin. Methadone is used to treat heroin and OxyContin dependence. Treatment personnel find it more challenging to treat OxyContin dependence because it is difficult to gauge the methadone dose required.

HEROIN use is a growing concern because of the increased number of overdoses. Drug Scan contacts have become concerned about the number of overdoses in the county in the past 12 months. They said that long-time users are overdosing, which might validate the notion that the purity of heroin is increasing. Injection use is common, although many users also snort. Contacts agreed that the primary source of heroin in the county is Baltimore City.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

LSD seems to be more common with individuals under 21, according to contacts. The drug is ingested orally on “blotters” and is popular at parties and raves. Crack cocaine use, which seems to be leveling off, is more common among African Americans, while Caucasians seem to prefer powder cocaine. Contacts indicated that Prince George’s County and St. Mary’s County are the primary sources for crack.

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CAROLINE COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is perceived to be one of the emerging drugs. The age of the average Ecstasy user ranges from 14 to 30, with use being most popular among youth 14-20. Use seems to be fairly equal among males and females and among African Americans and Caucasian. Ecstasy is usually used predominately at raves but also at home parties and less commonly at bars. Contacts admitted that they are lacking good information about Ecstasy use because it is still new to the local drug scene. They indicated that use is continuing to increase at a rapid pace. Ecstasy is bought from dealers who attend raves, and in out-of-town clubs in major cities and resorts where the price ranges between \$25-\$35 per pill.

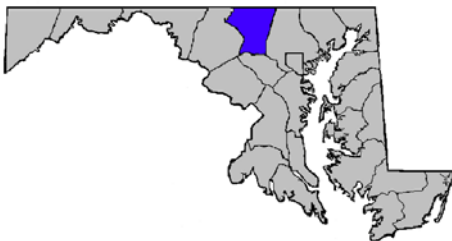
OXYCONTIN is used by individuals in a wide range of ages, but its primary users are white females. Its use is emerging on the drug scene with the average age of the user beginning at 21 and spanning through middle adulthood. OxyContin use usually occurs on the street or in the home and people obtain it most frequently from pharmacies and by doctor-shopping. Those who have been prescribed OxyContin for a medical condition are also selling the drug. The typical purchase price for one OxyContin pill ranges from free (dealers offer pills at no charge to entice use) to \$25.

HEROIN use has increased within the last year. Contacts said that heroin is not considered an emerging drug, although its use has been steadily increasing, is spreading into the 18-25 year-old populations. The typical heroin user has had a long history of marijuana and crack cocaine use. Heroin is primarily snorted, but there is some smoking and even less injection use. Use usually occurs at home or on the street once the drug has been purchased from local dealers, who are often friends with the users. Heroin is sold for \$10-\$20 per gram locally and it is frequently used with cocaine.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Contacts expressed concern that crack cocaine will cause a problem in the future. Crack cocaine use is popular with individuals from 14 to over 30, and predominately African American males. Cocaine is either snorted or smoked in conjunction with marijuana and is most often used on the street or in unsupervised homes. Severity of addiction and availability are highly correlated.

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CARROLL COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is now perceived to be an emerging problem. It is becoming more common to use Ecstasy in everyday social situations. One contact reported that there are instances where individuals will purchase a large number of pills in an attempt to lower the per-pill cost. Further, some youth will purchase a double stack (a double-sized pill) for \$30 to \$35 rather than an average-sized pill. In the past year, there have been instances where Ecstasy has been cut with heroin, cocaine, PCP, and Ketamine. High school and college age populations are seeking treatment more often – action that stress the need for increased focus and attention on education and prevention.

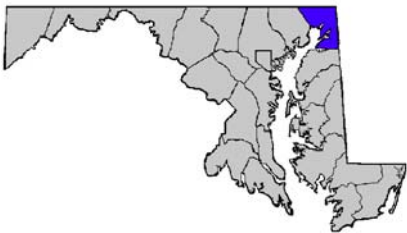
OXYCONTIN is being used as a heroin substitute. Reports indicated that some heroin addicts, ranging from 25 to 50, might turn to prescription drugs such as OxyContin and Percocet while trying to withdraw from heroin addiction. Benzodiazepines have even been mentioned as a drug used to curb the effects of heroin withdrawal. Alternatively, some who begin using prescription drugs will then turn to heroin, possibly as a more powerful alternative. Some contacts indicated that there should be more information sharing about drugs such as OxyContin for users to gain a greater understanding about drug use.

HEROIN has been affecting a younger population than in past years. This year, contacts reported that heroin is reaching a plateau following steady increases in past years. However, there seems to be an increase in the number of female heroin users and injection users. Further, in the past, heroin use has typically affected those 18-25, but recently a high number of people in the 18-21 age range have begun using.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

There is no indication of an increase in use of cocaine, but crack cocaine is used more often than powder cocaine. Crack and powder cocaine users are typically males in their early 30s. They obtain most of their supply from the Frederick area, depending on the users' location in the county. Few cases of GHB and Ketamine were mentioned.

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CECIL COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is openly used at parties; an increase in use by high school age individuals has been noted. Contacts believed that Ecstasy has been emerging into a broader population for the last several months so they say it is essential to retain the barriers and to implement prevention programs that prevent use from expanding further to the general population. Ecstasy users, primarily Caucasian, are both males and females, between 14 and 25. County contacts also reported there are cross-border issues that involve Ecstasy being purchased in Delaware and used in Cecil County.

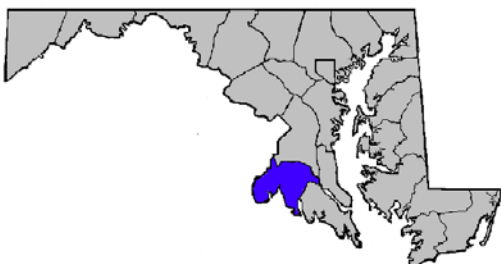
OXYCONTIN has a broad range of users, including heroin users. Contacts described users as primarily white, ranging from 14 into the 30s and 40s. OxyContin is frequently snorted; crushing the pills circumvents the time-release element of this oxycodone product. OxyContin is typically obtained through legitimate prescriptions from friends and family members. Finally, contacts reported that a number of OxyContin users also use heroin and frequently use methadone.

HEROIN is reportedly more pure. County contacts said that prior experimental heroin users have evolved to the point where detoxification and treatment are necessary. Moreover, contacts said that heroin users are getting younger; the age range is 14 to over 25. Heroin is commonly snorted, mostly at home. Most heroin dealers are from out-of-town, and only a few locals distribute. Finally, one contact stressed that the pure heroin is being snorted, and that the drug is cheaper to obtain now.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Contacts noted that there were several ounces of methamphetamine seized in 2001 but none in 2000. Seemingly both Caucasian and African Americans use cocaine. One contact observed that powder cocaine use has been declining over that past year or so, and speculated that previous cocaine users are turning to heroin. Powder cocaine seems to be coming from out of town (Philadelphia), while local dealers distribute crack.

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CHARLES COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is increasing and becoming more popular. Ecstasy use has become popular among the younger population beginning with individuals as young as 14. The average age of the Ecstasy user has changed from 16-25 to 14-20. Unlike previous Drug Scan reports, Ecstasy is no longer associated with raves only; rather, it is used more often at house parties and large social gatherings. According to contacts, it is fairly easy to purchase in the county, usually supplied by friends or acquaintances, and often purchased in conjunction with marijuana or LSD. Reports indicate that there has been an increase in use by African Americans.

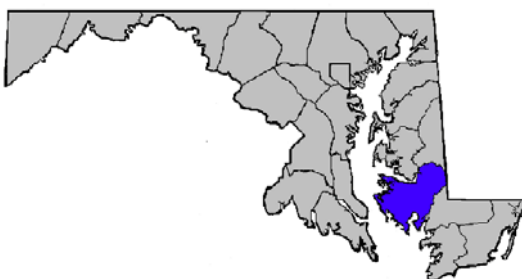
OXYCONTIN has experienced a shift in the age of the typical user. The profile of the average OxyContin user has shifted from women 25 and up to teens and young people (males and females) between 14 and 20. Users also include individuals over 25 and into the 30s. Abusers usually obtain their supplies from friends and family who have legitimate prescriptions. OxyContin is primarily used at social events and is often crushed and snorted, providing a heroin-like high.

HEROIN use is rising. Heroin use has become more popular among those over 25. Heroin is also frequently used at social events. According to contacts, there have been reports of injection use, which is common among more chronic users. Many of the younger users are snorting the drug. Mixing heroin with other drugs has not been reported, although it is used in the same social settings and by the same age group who use such drugs as Ketamine. Heroin is usually purchased from Baltimore, Washington, D.C., or Prince George's County. Police also reported an increase in heroin-related investigations.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

PCP and Ketamine are reappearing in the county. Contacts have indicated that PCP is becoming increasingly popular among people 14 to 25. PCP is smoked at social events, but there was no mention of it being used in conjunction with other drugs. Ketamine use has steadily increased over the past year. According to contacts, the age range of users is approximately 14 to 25. Like PCP, Ketamine is used at social events and is supplied by friends.

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DORCHESTER COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY seems to be the leading emerging drug. While youth age 14-25 use Ecstasy in a variety of settings, it is no longer associated with frequent rave-goers. Contacts said that it is often used in bars and in other social settings. The contacts added that Ecstasy is often sold with marijuana, LSD, and alcohol, and there are reports of simultaneous use with heroin and LSD.

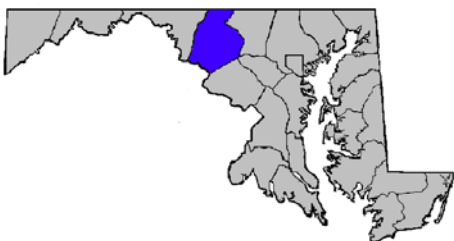
OXYCONTIN is popular among ages 14-17 and 21-28. Prescription drug use is not uncommon in the county, and OxyContin is considered an emerging drug. In past years, Ritalin, Percocet, Vicodin, and Valium were commonly abused. Currently, OxyContin is primarily used in the home. Further, many medical patients are forging prescriptions to maintain their access to the drug. OxyContin is often sold with Ritalin and other prescription drugs for \$20-\$30 per pill.

HEROIN is often mixed with cocaine. Heroin use is popular among youth age 14-17 and among adults in their 40s. The younger individuals use heroin at parties and after school, while heroin use among adults frequently occurs in the home. The most common method of ingestion of heroin among the older individuals is injection, while users between 14 and 17 are more likely to snort the drug. Heroin is often sold in conjunction with marijuana, cocaine, LSD, and methamphetamine and it is often laced with cocaine. Contacts reported that heroin use among African Americans has declined in popularity.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Contacts reported that cocaine use has also become increasingly popular among the younger population, despite an overall decrease in its use. Age range of users includes 14-17 and 35 and older. Cocaine is often used at home and in bars and is often smoked with marijuana. Adults are more inclined to use the drug at home while teens are more likely to use cocaine at social events.

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FREDERICK COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is reportedly increasing in use. Ecstasy use is most popular among lower-middle to upper-middle class white males age 14-26. Contacts said that few African Americans use the drug. Ecstasy is used on the street, in the home, or at raves and it is supplied by family and friends for as little as \$6 to around \$25 per pill. Ecstasy is usually sold along with cocaine and marijuana and is packaged in small zip lock bags.

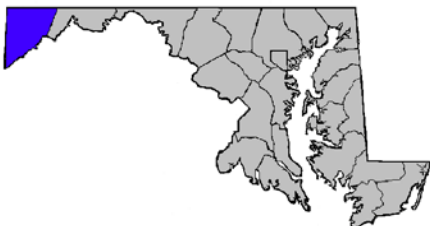
OXYCONTIN has been re-categorized from a sporadic drug of abuse to an emerging trend. The typical OxyContin user is a African American female in her mid to late 30s, although there have been reports of users as young as 14-17. Most use occurs either at home or at work. Family and friends who have a prescription for OxyContin or a connection with a pharmacy appear to be the primary sources. "Doctor shopping" is also a common practice among OxyContin users. The typical purchase price is \$10-\$40 per pill and it is often sold in conjunction with cocaine, marijuana, speed, and LSD. Many users are beginning to crush and snort OxyContin instead of taking it orally, and frequently take it simultaneously with alcohol.

HEROIN is increasing in use most commonly among Caucasians and African Americans. The typical users are teens, young adults, and older adults. There were three to four overdose deaths within the past year and all of the cases were young adults in their 20s. Injection use is the primary route of administration, but snorting is becoming increasingly popular. Heroin is usually sold with cocaine, marijuana, and Clonidine (a drug used for schizophrenia that is believed to help with withdrawal in a manner similar to methadone). Heroin is sold for \$25 per cap.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Currently, cocaine is typically used among African American males between 14 and 30. Cocaine is usually smoked on the streets or at social events and is often sold with marijuana. Ketamine use, identified among males and white females aged 14-25, is popular at social events and it is often sold at schools with Ecstasy and LSD. Many veterinarians in the county are increasing their security because Ketamine is frequently stolen from their offices.

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GARRETT COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY use is expanding to a broader population. Teenagers and young adults from 14 to 25 and up are using Ecstasy in and outside of raves. There are also more reports of its use at home parties. Contacts said that while men and women are ingesting the pills at an increasing rate from last year, there are slightly more males than females using. Users are obtaining the drug outside the county from places such as Cumberland (Allegany County) and West Virginia.

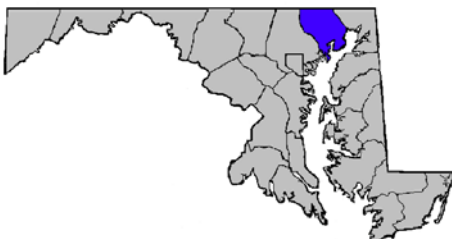
OXYCONTIN use is more likely among males. Male high school students (14-17) use OxyContin most frequently in small groups and at house parties. There is also an adult population of Percocet users 21 and older. Although there is no upper limit on the age of users, contacts have found a geriatric population of Percocet abusers.

HEROIN is available but not common. So far, heroin has not been reported to be a great problem. Nevertheless, contacts understand that adolescents have tried either snorting or injecting the drug but reported that the typical users are young adults. Depending on the location within the county, heroin can be very accessible. Contacts revealed that users commonly obtain their supply from friends or local dealers.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Ritalin abuse is reported to occur before 14 and through 17. Teens often obtain the drug from friends who have Ritalin prescriptions. Crack is more available in rural parts of the county and users will travel as far as Pennsylvania to obtain it. Though use is “sporadic,” more females are caught with crack cocaine than males. High school students 14-17 and adults 18 and up are using cocaine.

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HARFORD COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is readily available but its use continues to be experimental. There are no major changes with Ecstasy except that use is mainstream, meaning that it is not restricted to a specific locale or race/ethnic group. Users, males and females, are typically between 14 and 25. The most common supply source is Baltimore City. Contacts expressed concerns about its increased availability although they said that in some areas of the county, Ecstasy use is leveling off.

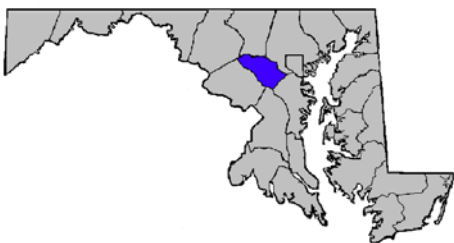
OXYCONTIN use is emerging. Most contacts concurred that OxyContin is the primary oxycodone product of abuse in the county. There are some young users but most are over 18. Some individuals snort but most take the pill orally. Contacts almost unanimously agreed that the sources for the pills are doctors who write legitimate prescriptions. However, users will resort to “doctor shopping,” a process that gains them a number of legitimate prescriptions. They, in turn, sell the pills to others for profit.

HEROIN use is one of the main drug problems. Contacts agreed that both males and females use heroin, with the typical age range for use from 14 to well over 25. Individuals begin by snorting the drug and eventually move to injecting. Baltimore City is the primary source of the heroin. Finally, contacts noted the increase in need for treatment.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Crack cocaine use continues to be a concern. Users, both males and females, are typically over 21, but it appears that more African Americans than Caucasians use crack. Crack is used at home, in abandoned buildings and at hotel parties. The regular crack suppliers are the local dealers who use kids to sell the drug.

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HOWARD COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY *seemingly has spread through the county.* The typical Ecstasy user is 14 to 25. Ecstasy is reportedly becoming more popular among females and is being used at parties, at home, and other social gatherings. Ecstasy can be purchased at school for \$5-\$30 per pill from local dealers who are usually 19-20 year old white upper-middle class young adults. It can be purchased locally and from Prince George's, Montgomery, and Frederick counties. Ecstasy is taken orally, but there are some reports of it being crushed and snorted. When crushed it is referred to as "Maui powder." Very few teens admit to using the drug in spite of it being perceived as abundant in the county. Ecstasy is sold in conjunction with LSD, marijuana, mushrooms, and Ketamine.

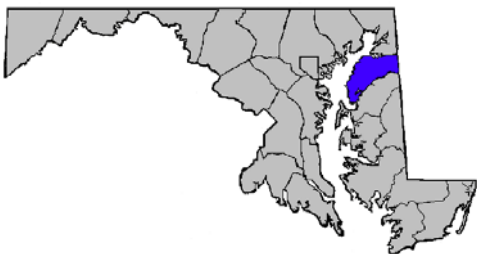
OXYCODONE *users are primarily female.* Currently, mainly white females are abusing oxycodone products, but there is also use among chronic narcotics users and adolescents. There have been reports of prescription drug rings and a great deal of prescription forgery. Many youth are stealing oxycodone products from their parents or they are taking the drug from pharmacies where they are employed. Oxycodone products were recently stolen from a number of doctor's offices causing doctors to cease storing samples in their offices. Contacts indicated that the most popular oxycodone products are OxyContin and Percocet.

HEROIN *use has become increasingly popular among teens.* Young users are more likely to snort heroin or take it orally, while chronic users are more likely to inject the drug. Heroin is usually obtained in Baltimore and sold locally for \$10-\$40 per cap. Powder cocaine, crack cocaine, and OxyContin are often sold with heroin. Finally, most young users seem to be using heroin in their homes, according to contacts.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Contacts revealed both the possibility of Ketamine emerging and the return of PCP. The typical Ketamine user is between 14 and 20 and takes the drug at home and at social events. It was reported that Ketamine users are part of the Ecstasy subculture. People usually obtain Ketamine from out-of-town dealers, where it is sold with Ecstasy and marijuana. PCP use is popular again among older drug users, but younger users are expected to begin using it as the trend spreads through the county. Cigarettes and marijuana are often laced with PCP. In addition, it has been reported that PCP is packaged in dark opaque containers, similar to a 35 mm film canisters.

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KENT COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY levels appear to be stable. Some contacts reported that Ecstasy use has decreased significantly, while other contacts said that Ecstasy is used “across the board.” They go on to describe a typical user who is white and between 14 and 25, but African Americans also use the drug. Ecstasy, mostly supplied through local dealers, is also obtained out of town, sold, and used quite often at local nightclubs.

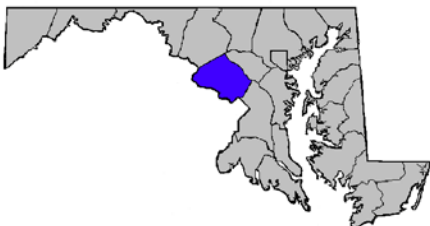
OXYCONTIN use has increased over the past year. There was an increase in the use of prescription painkillers, along with a growing number of reports of people snorting OxyContin. Users range from college age males and females to those in their mid-30s, plus a few teenage users. Some doctors now feel it is somewhat difficult to prescribe OxyContin in certain situations as pharmacies may give them a “bad rap” for it. Relationships between pharmacies and law enforcement officials are now being formed in hopes of locating and minimizing the use of false or forged prescriptions. Still, one contact mentioned that, “honestly, it’s (OxyContin) not hard to get.”

HEROIN use is questionable as reports in the area vary. Several contacts indicated that they “hardly see heroin,” while others have mentioned a slight increase in heroin use in the past six months along with an increase in the drug’s purity. Though, as one contact mentioned, “Heroin isn’t ever going to go away.” Accounts of an increase in methadone users, perhaps from treatment facilities in the Annapolis area, were reported, but these reports were not linked with heroin use in the county.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Powder and crack cocaine were mentioned by several contacts as coming from Philadelphia and New York. Use is found to be most prevalent among males and females, 20 to 30. Though an increase in the number of users has been mentioned, the rate appears to be static, consistent with population increases in the area. Sporadic use of LSD was also mentioned among sub-groups of males who prefer to make no comments about their use.

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY reports are not consistent. The Ecstasy-using population is primarily white, but African Americans use as well. Males and females 14 to over 25 use the drug. It continues to be used at raves, although there have been crackdowns that could be driving the increase in use primarily in homes and at smaller private parties. Local dealers and out-of-town dealers sell the pills for \$15 each in some places and as much as \$40 per pill in others.

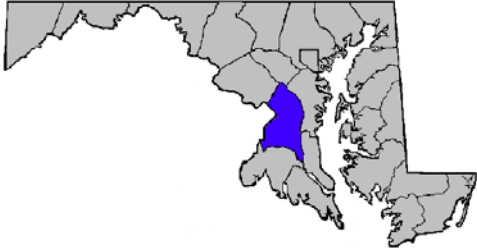
OXYCONTIN use is “more prevalent.” Contacts agreed that some people obtain prescriptions for the oxycodone products (i.e. OxyContin or Percocet) for pain, but seem to resort to habitual use. The drugs are ingested in a variety of ways, but the most common is oral. Both males and females, typically over 25, abuse oxycodone products. Because these drugs are legal, people have no fears about taking the pills anywhere. Use is also associated with heroin users.

HEROIN use was reported as stable over the past year. Contacts described heroin use by both males and females, usually over 20 and by Caucasians and African Americans. The contacts who identified heroin use, unanimously agree that injection is the primary route of administration and believe that methadone seems to be the only viable option for recovery.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Powder cocaine is becoming increasingly more of a problem, according to some contacts. One contact observed that powder cocaine is used by a broad array of race/ethnic groups, while others seemed to think that use is more limited. Regardless, the concerns are focused on the “increasing prevalence” of powder and the stabilizing of crack cocaine use. Methamphetamine is somewhat elusive, but has come to the attention of law enforcement because of drug labs discovered and seized. Use seems to be limited to mostly white males.

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PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY use is increasing among white college students and older teens ranging from 14 to 25. Medical facilities declared that they are seeing Ecstasy cases every week compared to only a few in the prior years. Contacts agreed that Ecstasy is used more by females than males, although the extent of the problem varies with population. Ecstasy, frequently used at local bars and raves, is associated with alcohol use. It is also reported that Ecstasy use had been associated with sexual assault incidents.

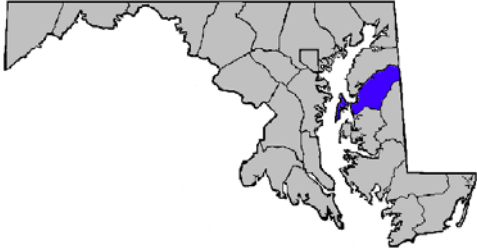
OXYCONTIN use remains low. The abuse of oxycodone products (i.e. OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan) remains low but does exist in a slightly older population (over 25). People with chronic medical conditions who have become dependent are the primary oxycodone-using population. Pills are taken orally and users have a variety of methods to obtain them. Respondents reported that people travel from one emergency room to another to obtain multiple prescriptions for the pills. They also falsify prescriptions, steal the drug, and buy it on the street.

CRACK COCAINE is still a major concern, particularly among adults over 25. Many of these adults are long-time users and do not receive treatment because of limited resources. Changes in use patterns include more young adults trying crack and women outnumbering men as users. Also, dealers are reportedly coming off the street and are making more house calls to provide crack to users.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Heroin use is reportedly stable among adults; only occasionally do young teens abuse. Male college athletes are the main GHB abusing population: the number of cases has increased almost ten-fold since 2000. Although it is not used as a party drug, GHB is sometimes called “easy lay.” Reports about PCP use are varied. Some perceived use to be increasing while others reported that use has remained low. Reports identified many PCP smokers as white, in their 40s and belonging to motorcycle gangs. PCP is also bought in liquid form.

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QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is said to be used “anywhere.” Ecstasy use has been increasing since last year. It seems to be most popular among teens and young people between 14 and 20, and the age of first use is usually between 13 and 15. Local dealers supply the drug, but contacts did not indicate whether the dealers are friends or acquaintances of the users. Other reports indicated that Ecstasy is often sold in schools because it is easy to disguise. Ecstasy is most often sold with marijuana and crack, and said to be laced with heroin, cocaine, and LSD. The typical purchase price is \$20-\$30 per pill.

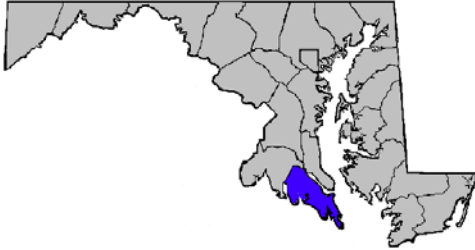
OXYCONTIN is a recent emerging phenomenon within the past year, becoming a drug of concern. White females age 24-35 appear to be the predominant users. OxyContin is being used at home and is often obtained through “doctor shopping.” Other reports indicated that youths obtain prescription drugs from family and friends, and by stealing from physicians’ offices. It has been suggested that youths who use the drug cut the pill in half to experience the effects more quickly. They also “parachute” pills, which is crushing the pill, putting it in a napkin, and swallowing it.

HEROIN is another new emerging problem. Contacts noted that heroin is primarily used by white adults aged 18 to 25 at home, on the street, at school, and at work. This is a major change from last year when older African American males were the primary users. Use is more popular among adults who might use “anywhere and everywhere.” The primary routes of administration are injection and snorting. When not available locally, heroin is supplied from Baltimore and Philadelphia where it is usually cheaper.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Contacts said that crack cocaine is a drug of concern even though there has been a slight decrease in its use. Crack cocaine is most popular among young adults 18 to 25 and its use is not gender- or race-specific. Crack cocaine is commonly smoked and used on the street or at social events. Purchases are usually made in Baltimore and Philadelphia where it is cheaper. Crack cocaine is often sold along with marijuana.

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SAINT MARY'S COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY use has increased among Hispanics populations. Users range in age from 14 to 25. Ecstasy is consumed orally with no changes noted by anyone. Contacts unanimously agreed that local markets and friends are the primary suppliers of the drug, which is consumed mostly at home. No contacts indicated the existence of raves. Reports indicated that parents of Ecstasy users were more informed and educated about treatment, thus were able to initiate treatment more often.

OXYCODONE: No contacts reported the use of oxycodone products.

HEROIN use remained relatively stable over the past year. Drug Scan 2000 contacts were concerned about the increase in heroin use, even though increased use was described as sporadic. This year, county contacts have discerned no noticeable changes in heroin use, and they noted that the supply source of heroin continues to be Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Crack cocaine was also discussed as a drug of concern. Particularly noteworthy was that some contacts are seeing an increase in use by African American males; currently users are predominately white males. Crack is smoked, and suppliers appear to be local.

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SOMERSET COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is confined to college students who use it at parties. Contacts revealed that most Ecstasy comes into the county from such larger communities as Baltimore. Interviewees revealed that use was most prevalent within the college population who introduced the drug into the area through small sales between friends. At the same time, those already involved with Ecstasy are reporting their experiences more often than in previous years, perhaps due to an increased awareness about the drug.

OXYCODONE use is isolated. Contacts have seen so little of the Oxycodone products that profiles have not been developed.

HEROIN shows a continued increase. Heroin has received additional attention over the past year, with police especially concerned with this increase. Users have been reported as mostly male (though female use has been on the rise) and younger than in previous years. Most users are under 35. Initial use of heroin is primarily via snorting with a progression to injecting. Several contacts expressed concern, however, surrounding a tablet form of heroin. With reference to juvenile populations using heroin, one contact believed a "large bust" approximately 1 to 1-1/2 years ago has curtailed use.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Crack cocaine was reported as the third leading drug, behind alcohol and marijuana. Most crack cocaine users range from 30 to 50. Conversely, powder cocaine has been reported to be on the decline in recent months. Inhalant users are primarily middle school age, with a sharp decline in use by those in high school.

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TALBOT COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is on the move. The drug has moved from raves to house parties and school dances, thus becoming more of a social drug than in the past. Contacts said white middle class teens and young adults (ages 14-20) abuse Ecstasy. Ecstasy is reportedly not a gateway drug but instead it is usually a step up from marijuana use. Ecstasy pills are consumed orally.

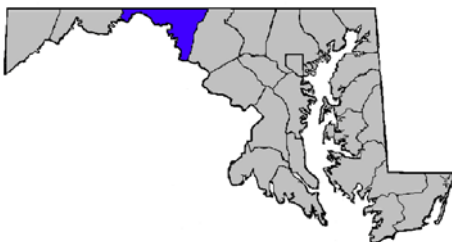
OXYCONTIN use is up among a specific population. County contacts pointed out that they noticed that white Temporary Cash Assistance recipients (both males and females) are abusing more OxyContin, though use is apparently rather sparse. One report revealed that adolescents might be obtaining oxycodone products (i.e. OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan) from dentists. The typical age of the user is 21 and over. One contact said that each pill could sell for as high as \$80.

HEROIN use is not a problem. Contacts have not found a lot of heroin use, but there has been an increase of adolescent (ages 14 to 17) mentions of heroin. A harbor in the county has been identified as a port of entry for heroin supplies for the state.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Both powder cocaine and crack cocaine were mentioned as problems. Contacts find that cocaine is used “everywhere” and the drug is typically supplied through local markets. Crack cocaine is also available in the county. While the typical age of users is 14 to 20, no specific ethnic group or race seems to dominate cocaine use.

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WASHINGTON COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is found primarily at social gatherings such as parties and nightclubs but no longer exclusively at raves. Teens are reporting that the pills are sometimes being cut with heroin, but they (the teens), are not testing positive for heroin. Another report indicated dextromethorphan (DXM) sold as Ecstasy. Ecstasy is supplied by out-of-town dealers as well as friends. Contacts implied, however, that Ecstasy might be emerging as a primary drug of choice. The typical age of the Ecstasy users is between 14 and 25.

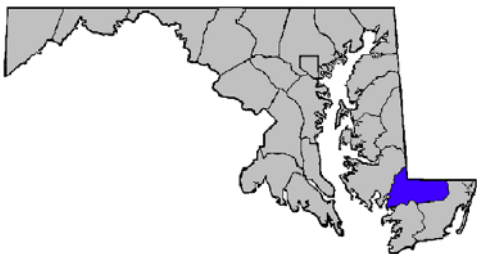
OXYCONTIN continues to be a problem. The general age of the users tends to be older than for other drugs, such as Ecstasy. Contacts found that users will often take pills that are legitimately prescribed to family members. Some people develop a physical dependence when the drug is prescribed for legitimate medical reasons. Other reports indicated that caregivers have been caught withholding the prescribed medication for the purposes of selling and/or consuming the drug.

HEROIN use has increased slightly through the year. Methadone clinics were experiencing an increase in the number of heroin admissions but there was a noticeable decline in the average age of the user – from 30 to around 24 or 25. Contacts added that Ecstasy is being cut with heroin. Another contact reported that Ecstasy might be used when the users' primary drug is not available. Finally, the number of women using both heroin and Ecstasy has been on the rise in the past year.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Crack cocaine, reported as the most popular drug behind marijuana and alcohol, seemingly is not specific to any population. Use is quite common and appears to be spreading to a younger population (18-20). The drug, whose quality is said to be good, is most likely arriving from New York. Narcotics officers are beginning to focus efforts on diminishing the availability of crack. Additionally, a slight increase in powder cocaine was mentioned, though nothing significant. Currently, LSD is usually limited to use at concerts.

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WICOMICO COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY is increasingly used by older teens and college freshmen. County contacts unanimously agreed that Ecstasy users are typically white and between 14 and 20. Contacts said that Ocean City draws youth, consequently they see more drugs consumed in the summertime when the tourist populations increase several fold. This inherently brings more drugs, such as Ecstasy, into the area. Contacts said that Ecstasy is commonly used at parties as well as at raves.

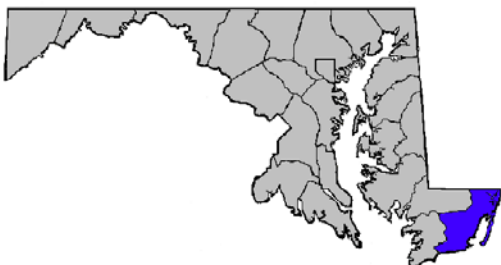
OXYCONTIN use seems to lead to heroin use. Reports also revealed that heroin users use oxycodone products (i.e. OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan) when their drug of choice is not available. Some contacts put the age of first use between 14 and 17, while others see the use of these drugs among a broader range of ages – from 14 to over 25. Sources acknowledged that most of these drugs are obtained through legal prescriptions and from family members. There was no mention of manipulation of the pills (crushing) to circumvent a time-release mechanism.

HEROIN is on the rise but not yet a primary drug. Heroin use is perceived to be either stable or rising. Perceptions varied, but the majority of the contacts acknowledged a problem with heroin to some degree. Furthermore, users, younger than 14, were noted, according to some contacts. The most common routes of administration are snorting and injection. Additionally, it is not hard to obtain – usually it comes from Baltimore and other large cities such as Philadelphia, New York, Wilmington, and as far away as Florida.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

A primary drug problem appears to be crack cocaine. Several contacts referred to crack when talking about other primary drugs of choice, such as marijuana and alcohol. Crack cocaine users are typically slightly older than marijuana users. There was not a lot of discussion about powder cocaine except for the fact that powder cocaine is sometimes put on marijuana, and then smoked in the normal manner.

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WORCESTER COUNTY

EMERGING DRUGS AND SHIFTING TRENDS

ECSTASY using populations increase in the summer months. Concerns were raised regarding a steady increase of Ecstasy use among adolescents. Though much of this increase is attributed to underage nightclubs during the summer months in Ocean City, the drug is now becoming more accessible year round. Contacts reported that teens view its use as “not a big deal” and that they can still maintain a “normal” life while using it. Some other drugs, such as LSD, are being sold on the pretense of being Ecstasy. Finally, liquid forms of the drug have been found in Ocean City.

OXYCONTIN and the heroin connection. Oxycodone products (i.e. OxyContin, Percocet, Percodan) were mentioned in relation to heroin because any of its users have a history of heroin use. Adolescent users might typically display a wider range of drug-using habits prior to using Oxycodone products. OxyContin is not very prevalent, and in many cases can be difficult to obtain, though small increases of Percodan and Percocet use were mentioned.

HEROIN – sporadic or emerging? There has been a noticeable increase in heroin use. Contacts dealing primarily with adolescents noted that few young people are using heroin, whereas adult users are concentrated in the southern portion of the county. Differences also exist between methods of ingestion between adults and adolescents. Young people generally snorting, while adults inject. Supplies of the drug appear to be from the Salisbury and Crisfield areas.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

There are reports of significant cocaine use in the adult population, while adolescent use is sporadic. The average age of users has decreased to around 16. Contacts reported that the drug is becoming more readily available than in the past. Crack cocaine is being sold in glass vials and crack dealers increasingly make both powder and crack cocaine available. The use of LSD and other hallucinogens increases sharply in the summer months; blotters are the most common route of administration.

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