

The CBHSQ Report

Data Spotlight

July 18, 2013



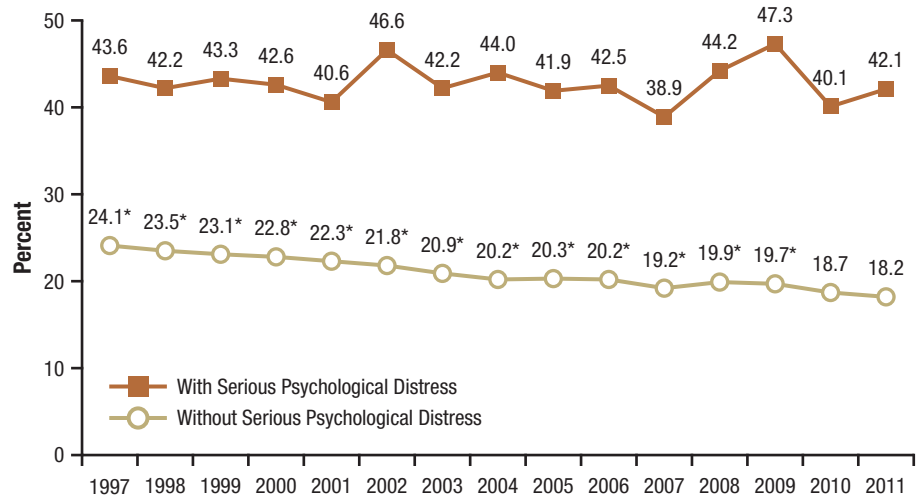
Smoking Rate among Adults with Serious Psychological Distress Remains High

Cigarette use continues to be the leading preventable cause of death in the United States.¹ Recent data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) have shown that the smoking rate is much higher among persons with mental illness than among those who do not have mental illness.² NSDUH data also show that serious psychological distress (SPD) is associated with serious mental illness (SMI).^{3,4}

Although NSDUH provides several indicators of mental illness, these indicators are available only for recent years. However, past month SPD has been tracked in the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) since 1997. In the figure below, the NHIS results show that current smoking among adults without SPD decreased steadily between 1997 and 2011 (from 24.1 to 18.2 percent).⁵ In contrast, current smoking among adults with SPD did not decline during this period (43.6 percent in 1997 and 42.1 percent in 2011). Mental health providers may want to assess whether their patients need help to quit smoking. Quitting may be hard for persons with SPD. There are special programs to help persons with mental health issues quit smoking. For resources, please visit: <http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/health-wellness/tobacco-cessation>.

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2004). *The health consequences of smoking: A report of the Surgeon General*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
2. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2013, February 5). *The NSDUH Report: Smoking and mental illness*. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
3. SPD is defined as having a score of 13 or higher on the Kessler 6 (K6) scale during the past 30 days.
4. SMI measured in NSDUH is defined as having a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder other than a developmental or substance use disorder that met the criteria found in the fourth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)* and resulted in serious functional impairment. See American Psychological Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. According to the 2011 NSDUH, 44.5 percent of adults with past month SPD had past year SMI. In addition, 88.9 percent of adults with past month SPD are estimated to have had any mental illness, with or without serious functional impairment, in the past year.
5. Current smokers are defined as respondents who had smoked 100 or more cigarettes in their lifetime and who smoked cigarettes every day or some days at the time of their interview.

Current Smoking among Adults Aged 18 or Older, by Past Month Serious Psychological Distress Status: NHIS, 1997 to 2011



* Difference between estimate and estimate for 2011 is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Source: The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is an annual survey sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The NHIS is a continuous nationally representative sample survey that collects data using personal household interviews through an interviewer-administered computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) system.

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