

The TEDS Report

Data Spotlight

January 7, 2014



Twenty-one Percent of Veterans in Substance Abuse Treatment Were Homeless

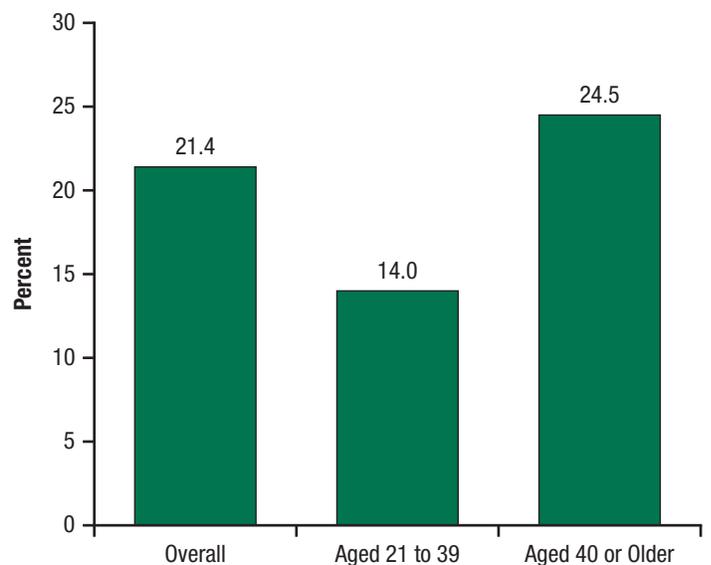
U.S. military veterans are a large portion of homeless adults.¹ There is a possibility that the number of homeless veterans may grow as the total number of veterans increases due to recent military conflicts.¹ One challenge faced by many homeless veterans is substance abuse. About 70 percent of homeless veterans have a substance abuse problem.²

The Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) is a database of substance abuse treatment admissions. The admissions in TEDS who are veterans represent those who have chosen to seek treatment in community-based, non-Veterans Affairs facilities. In 2011, both veteran status and living arrangements were reported for about 1.3 million admissions aged 21 or older. Of these admissions, 52,427 (3.9 percent) were veterans. About one fifth of veterans in treatment (21.4 percent) were homeless. There was a higher percentage of homelessness among older veterans in treatment than among younger veterans in treatment (24.5 vs. 14.0 percent).

Homelessness among substance-abusing veterans can be a barrier to treatment.³ Targeting homeless veterans in need of treatment so that they can receive support through outreach services, case management, and housing assistance can improve their chances of entering treatment and experiencing positive treatment outcomes.³ For more information, see the following SAMHSA resources for veterans:

- Homelessness Resource Center (<http://homeless.samhsa.gov/Channel/Veterans-423.aspx>)
- *Behavioral Health Issues among Afghanistan and Iraq U.S. War Veterans* (<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA12-4670/SMA12-4670.pdf>)

Homelessness among Veterans in Substance Abuse Treatment, by Age Group: 2011



1. Perl, L. (2013). *Veterans and homelessness* (Congressional Research Service Report for Congress). Retrieved from <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34024.pdf>

2. Cunningham, M., Henry, M., & Lyons, W. (2007). *Vital mission: Ending homelessness among veterans*. Retrieved from http://homeless.samhsa.gov/ResourceFiles/file_Vital_Mission_Final.pdf

3. Winn, J. L., Shealy, S. E., Kropp, G. J., Felkins-Dohm, D., Gonzales-Nolas, C., & Francis, E. (2013). Housing assistance and case management: Improving access to substance use disorder treatment for homeless veterans. *Psychological Services, 10*(2), 233-240.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), 2011, based on data received through October 15, 2012. TEDS is a compilation of data on the demographic characteristics and substance abuse problems of admissions to substance abuse treatment facilities in the United States, primarily facilities that receive public funding. TEDS is one component of the Behavioral Health Services Information System (BHSIS), an integrated data system maintained by the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, SAMHSA. For more information on TEDS, see <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/DASIS.aspx#TEDS>.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. The **Data Spotlight** may be copied without permission. Citation of the source is appreciated. Find this report and those on similar topics online at <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/>.

