



Correctional Service  
Canada

Service correctionnel  
Canada

# Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program in Canadian Federal Prisons



SAFETY, RESPECT  
AND DIGNITY  
FOR ALL

LA SÉCURITÉ,  
LA DIGNITÉ  
ET LE RESPECT  
POUR TOUS

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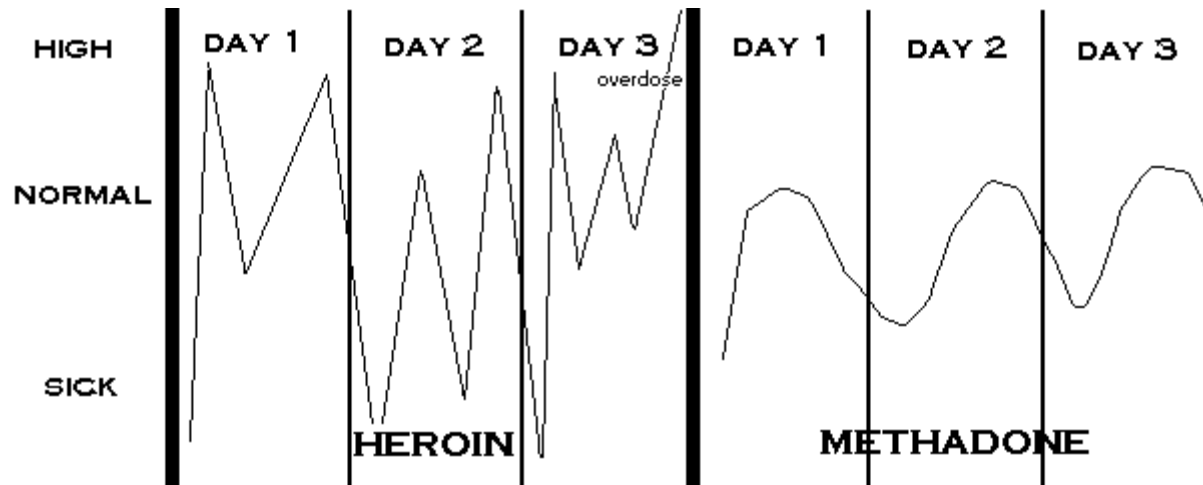


# What is MMT and how does it work?

- Methadone is a long-acting, synthetic, opiate medication that is identified as a safe and efficacious treatment for opiate withdrawal and dependence.
- Methadone has a longer effect on the opiate receptors in the brain than other opiates and only has to be taken once a day to manage withdrawal symptoms and cravings.
- Methadone prevents opiate withdrawal symptoms, reduces cravings for opiates, and blocks the euphoric effects of shorter acting opiates.
- Instead of experiencing a constant cycle of highs and lows, opiate dependent individuals on methadone will experience mood stability and an improved level of functioning.



# Heroin and Methadone





# CSC's MMT Policy and Practice - Policy

- The Methadone Maintenance program has been available since December 1997;
  - CSC only maintained MMT for incoming offenders who were already on Methadone and initiated MMT only for those offenders that met the "Exceptional Circumstance Criteria".
- As of 2002, CSC now has a program that is comparable to community standards (Phase 2).
  - the program evolved to include all offenders who met the following criteria:
    1. a diagnosis of dependence to opiates (DSM-IV), where the route of choice is intravenous or a well-documented history of opiate addiction indicating a high risk of relapse;
    2. a past history of treatment failures and evidence of a small likelihood of benefit from non-methadone treatment; and
    3. a formal agreement by the offender to the terms and conditions of Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program.
- As of December 2008, Suboxone (Buprenorphine + Naloxone) is available as an alternative to Methadone
  - the program is now referred to as Opioid Substitution Treatment (OST)
  - Suboxone can be prescribed to maintain an offender currently on Suboxone or for those that have exceptional circumstances and can not be maintained on Methadone.



# CSC's MMT Policy and Practice

## - Practice

- CSC's MMT program uses a multidisciplinary team approach (MIT) that includes a parole officer, correctional program officer, nurse, physician, pharmacist, a methadone coordinator and the offender.
- This team is responsible for ensuring that a seamless and responsive program is delivered to the offender.
- Upon receiving an offender's request to enter into MMT, the members of the MIT gather and synthesize historical information.
- A formal agreement is signed by the offender agreeing to work with the team members and an individualized treatment plan is created for each offender.
- Regular meetings of the team members and the offender ensure that the offender's progress is continually monitored.



# Previous Research

- Limited research on the effectiveness of MMT programs in correctional settings, but current findings have found that institutional MMT is associated with...
  - Reduced recidivism rates (re-incarceration, readmission, reoffence)
  - Lower rates of (post-release) mortality
  - Increased treatment entry in the community
  - Reductions in injecting risk behaviour
  - Reduced Hepatitis C infection
  - Reductions in illicit drug use in prison and involvement in the prison drug trade
  - Lower amount of time spent in involuntary segregation
  - Fewer serious drug related institutional charges



# Current Studies

Three studies are in progress:

1. Description of MMT participants
  - Compare MMT participants to the general offender population where data available
2. Impact of MMT participation on Institutional behaviour
  - Uses a pre-post design
  - Comparison group of opiate addicted offenders not in the MMT
3. Impact of MMT participation on Post release outcome
  - Comparison group of opiate addicted offenders not in the MMT



# Methodology

## Study 1- Subjects

### MMT Group

- Offenders involved in MMT between January 1, 2003 to December 31, 2008;
- N = 2,416, including
  - 213 women, 1677 men
  - 462 Aboriginal offenders, 1954 non-Aboriginal offenders
  - with an average age at admission of 34 years and an average age at MMT initiation of 36 years

### Comparison Group

- Offenders admitted to federal institutions between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2008
- N = 30,958 , including
  - 2,203 women, 29,281 men
  - 5676 Aboriginal offenders, 25,264 non-Aboriginal offenders
  - with an average age at admission of 34 years of age



# Study 1

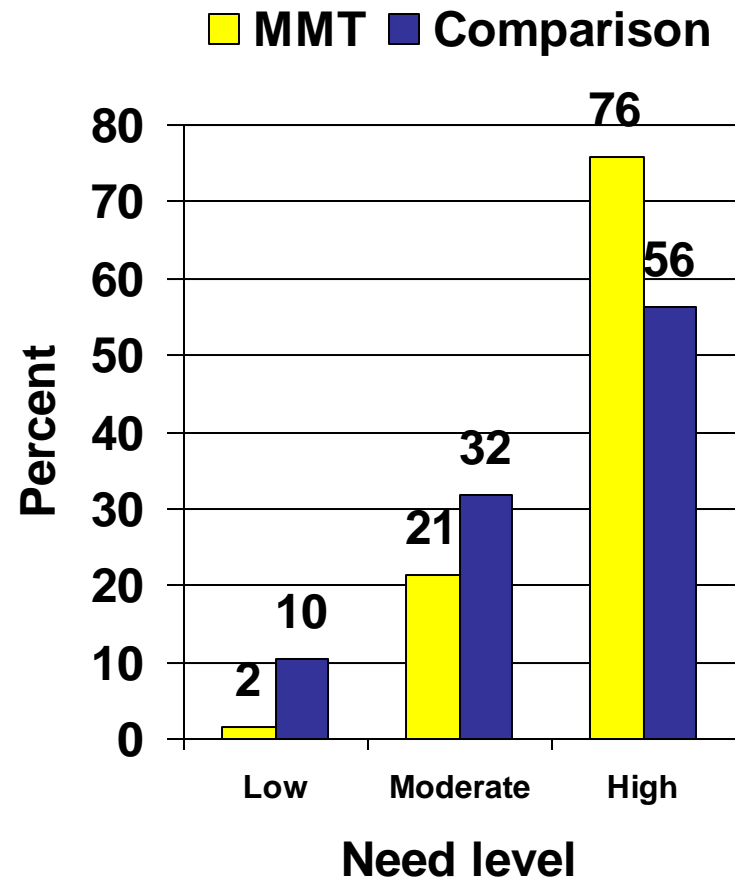
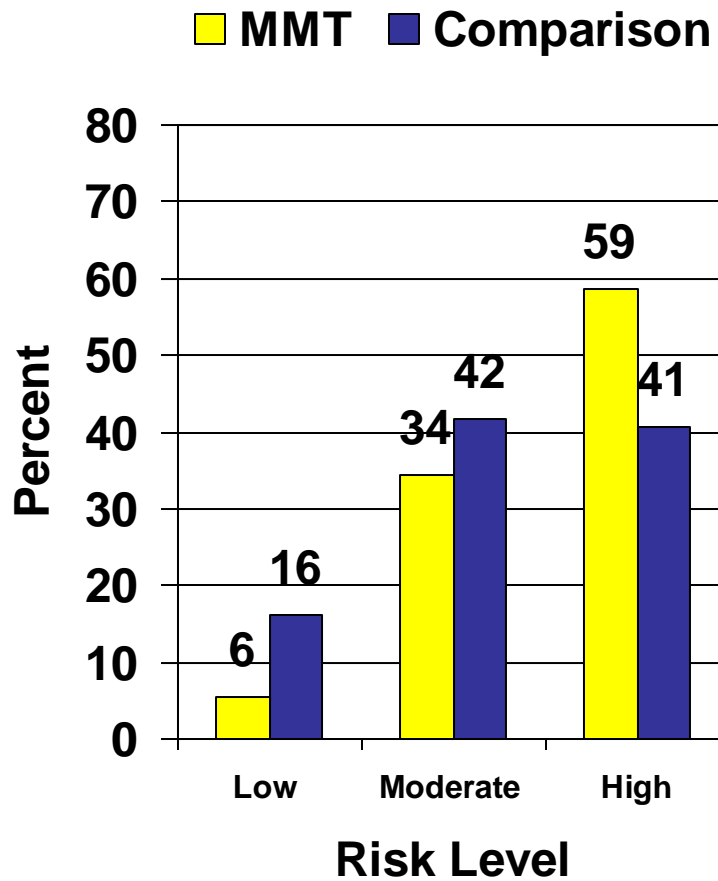
## Selected Results

- Women represent 9% of MMT participants compared to 7% of the comparison group
- 19% of the MMT participants were Aboriginal compared to 18% of the comparison group
- MMT participants and the comparison group were approximately the same age at the time of admission – 34 years
- MMT participants differed from the comparison group on key factors related to reoffending, such as
  - criminogenic risk,
  - level of need,
  - severity of drug abuse problem, etc.



# Study 1

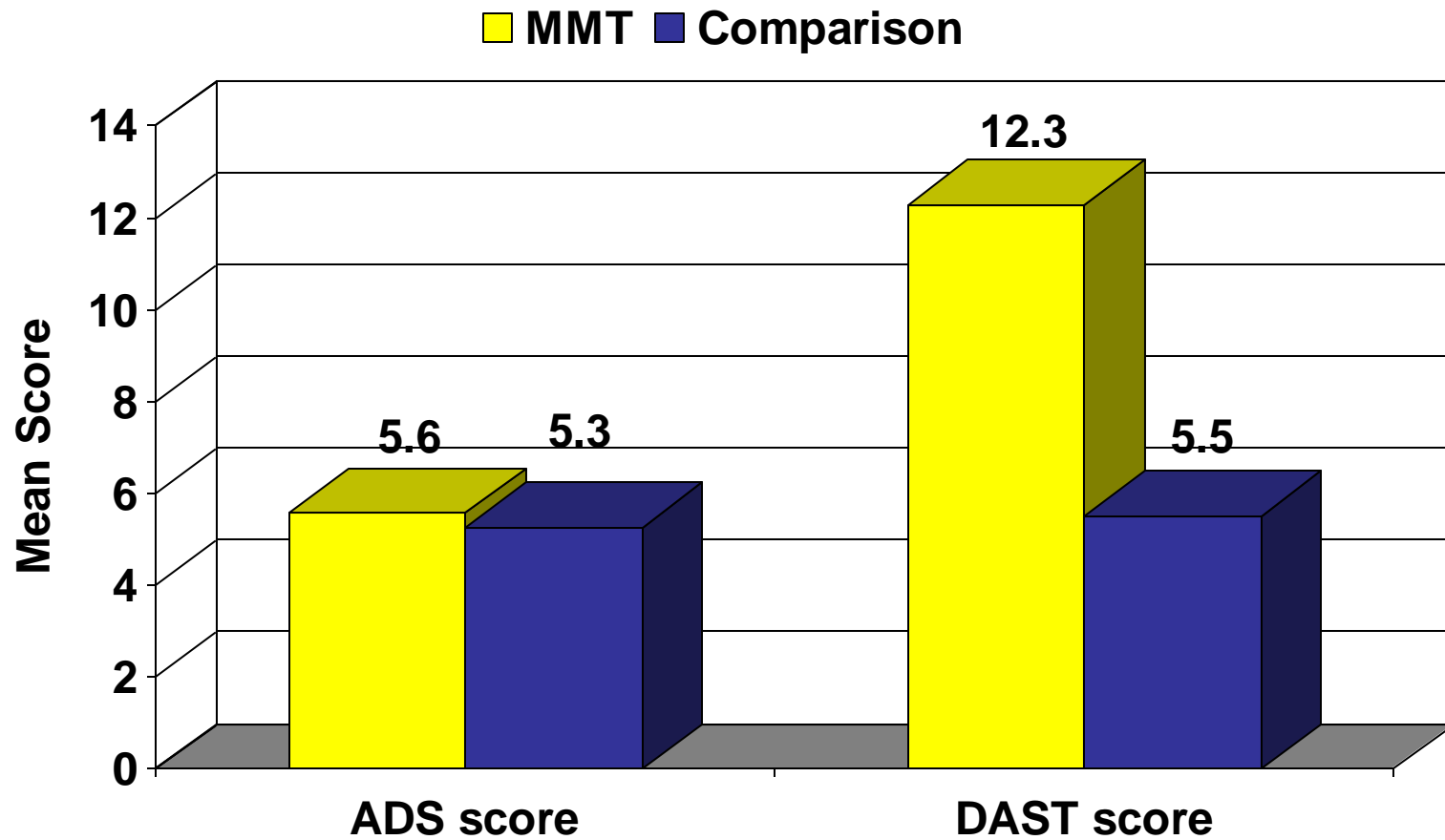
## Selected Findings: Risk and Need





# Study 1

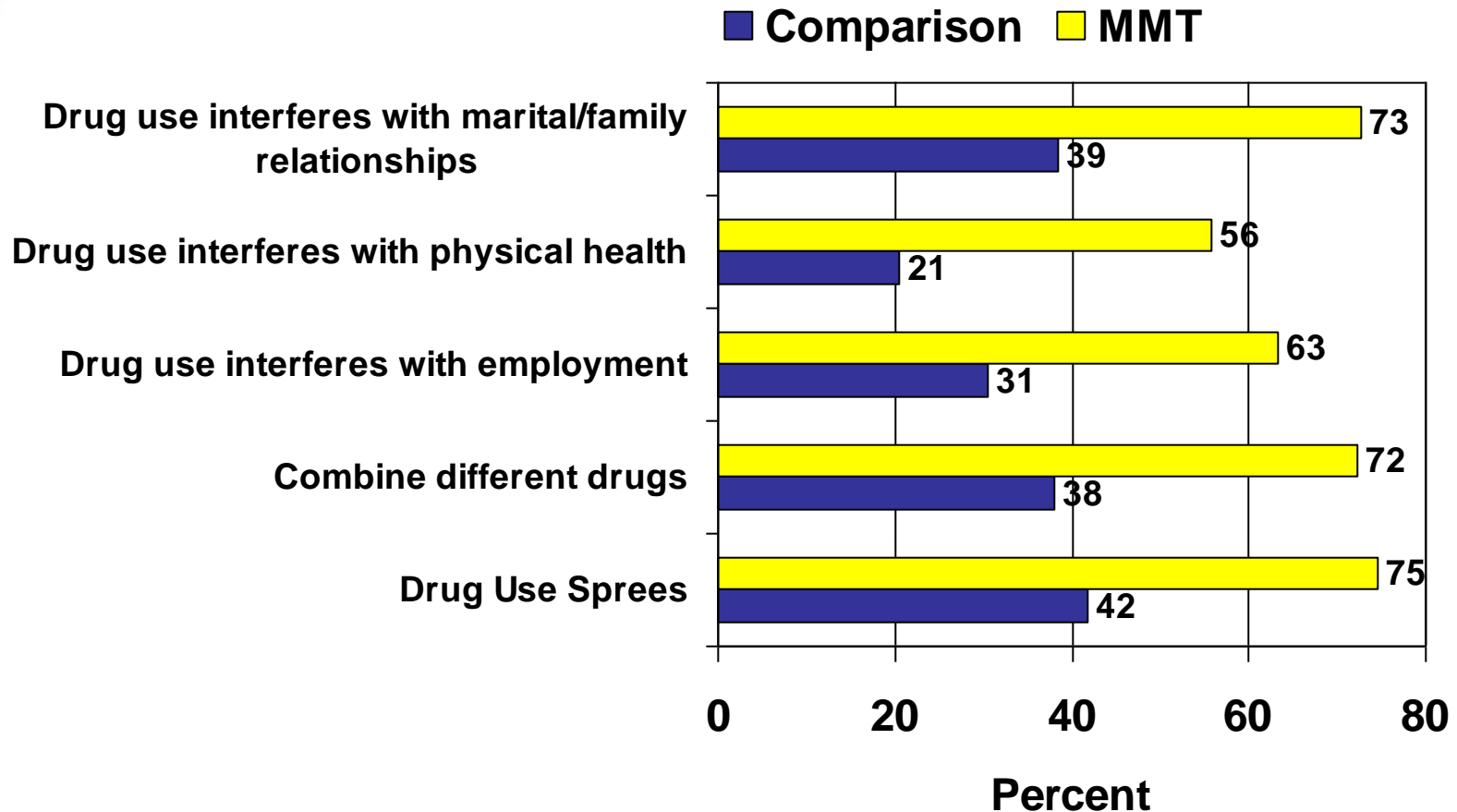
## Selected Results: Alcohol and Drug abuse severity





# Study 1

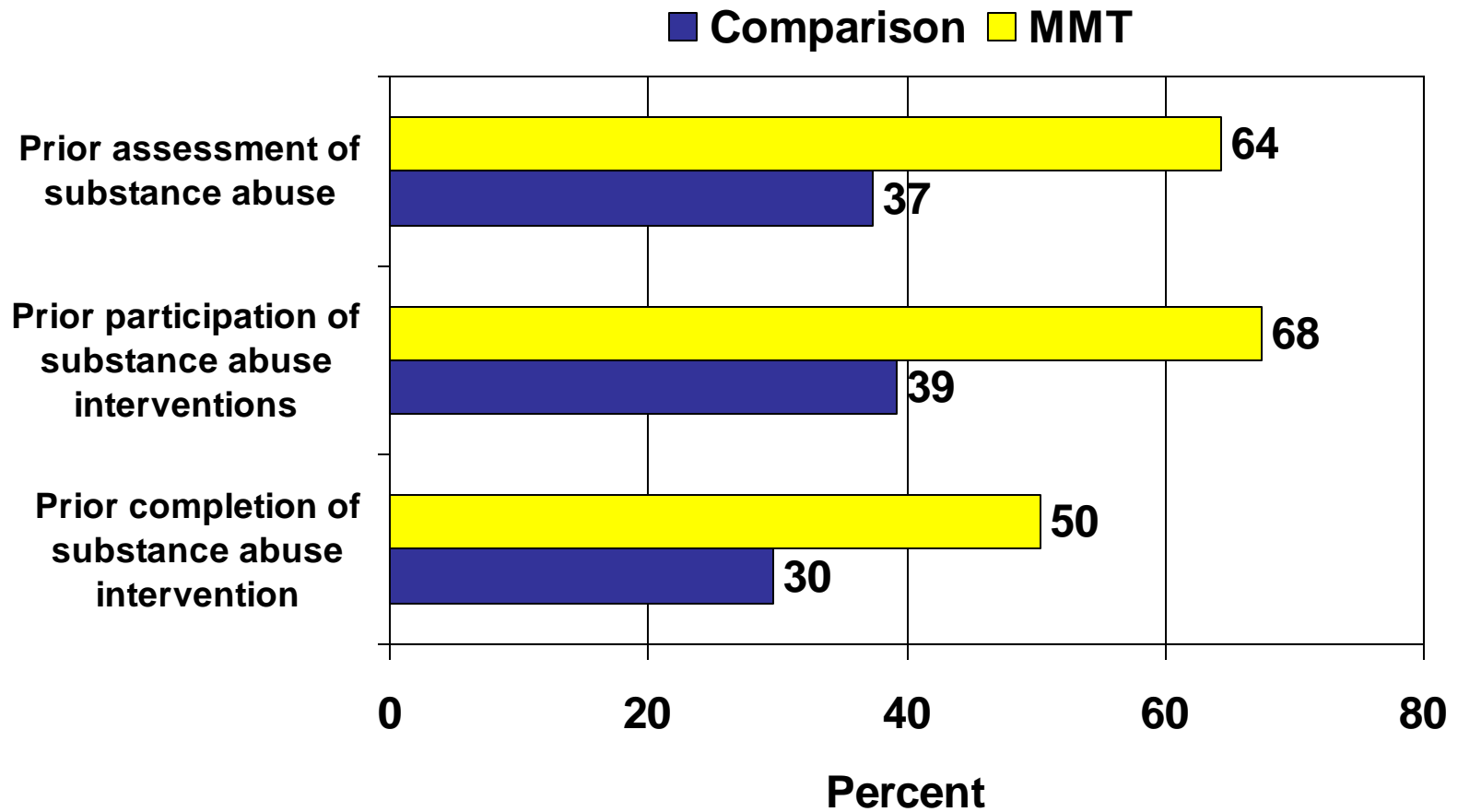
## Selected Results: Drug abuse indicators





# Study 1

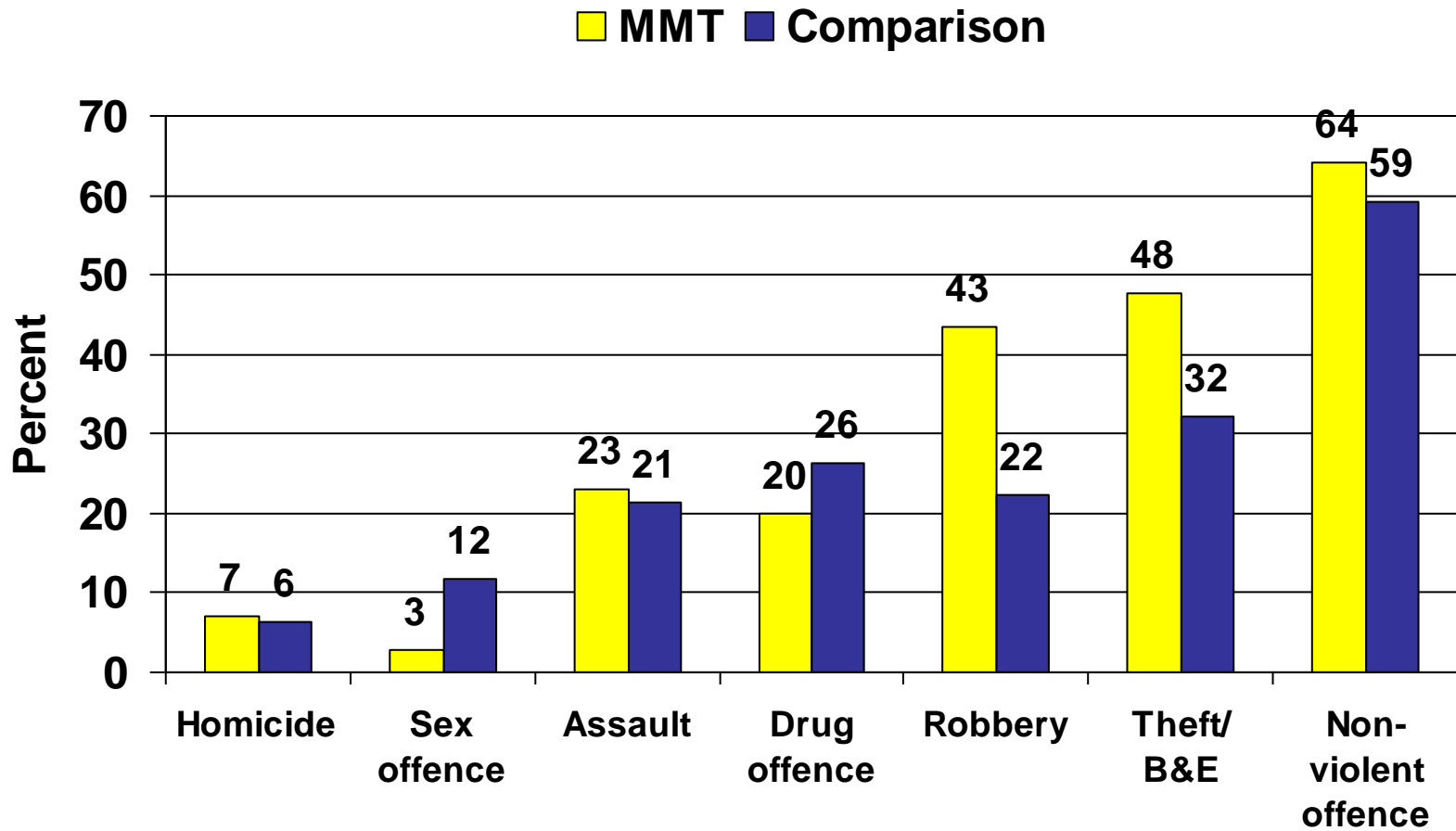
## Selected Results: Prior Drug abuse interventions





# Study 1

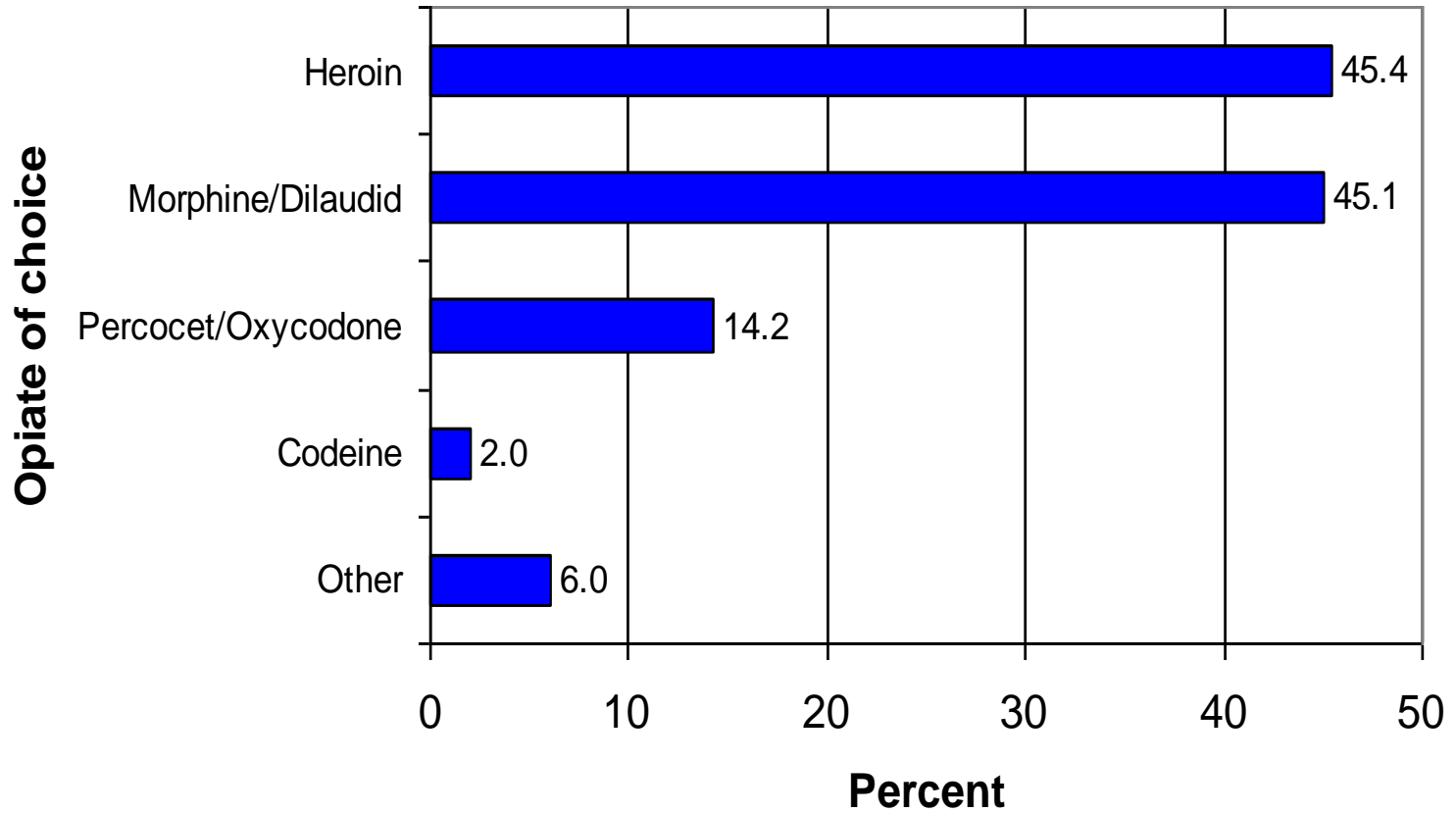
## Selected Results – Criminal history





# Study 1

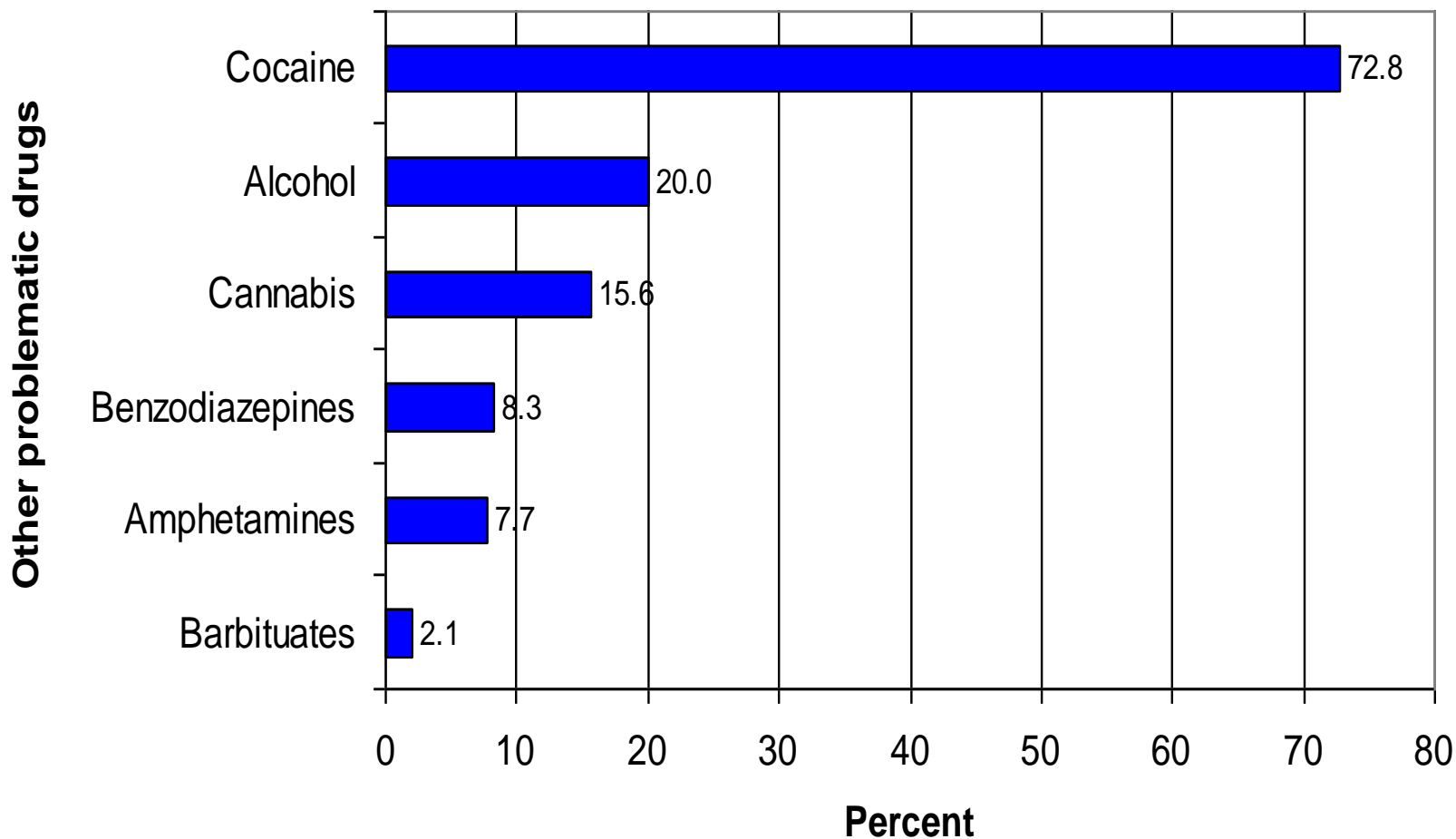
## Selected Results – Opiate of choice





# Study 1

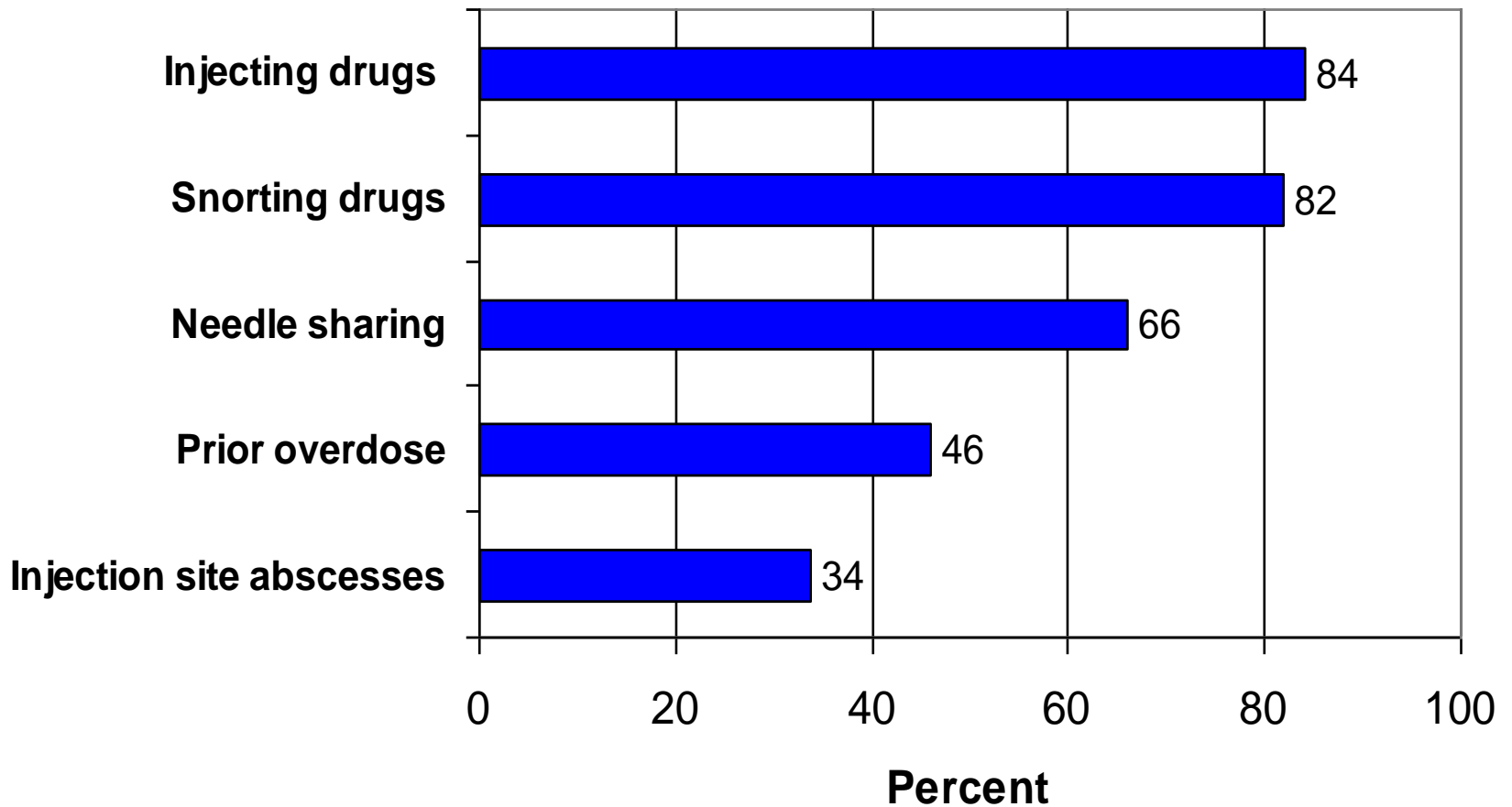
## Selected Results – Other problematic drugs





# Study 1

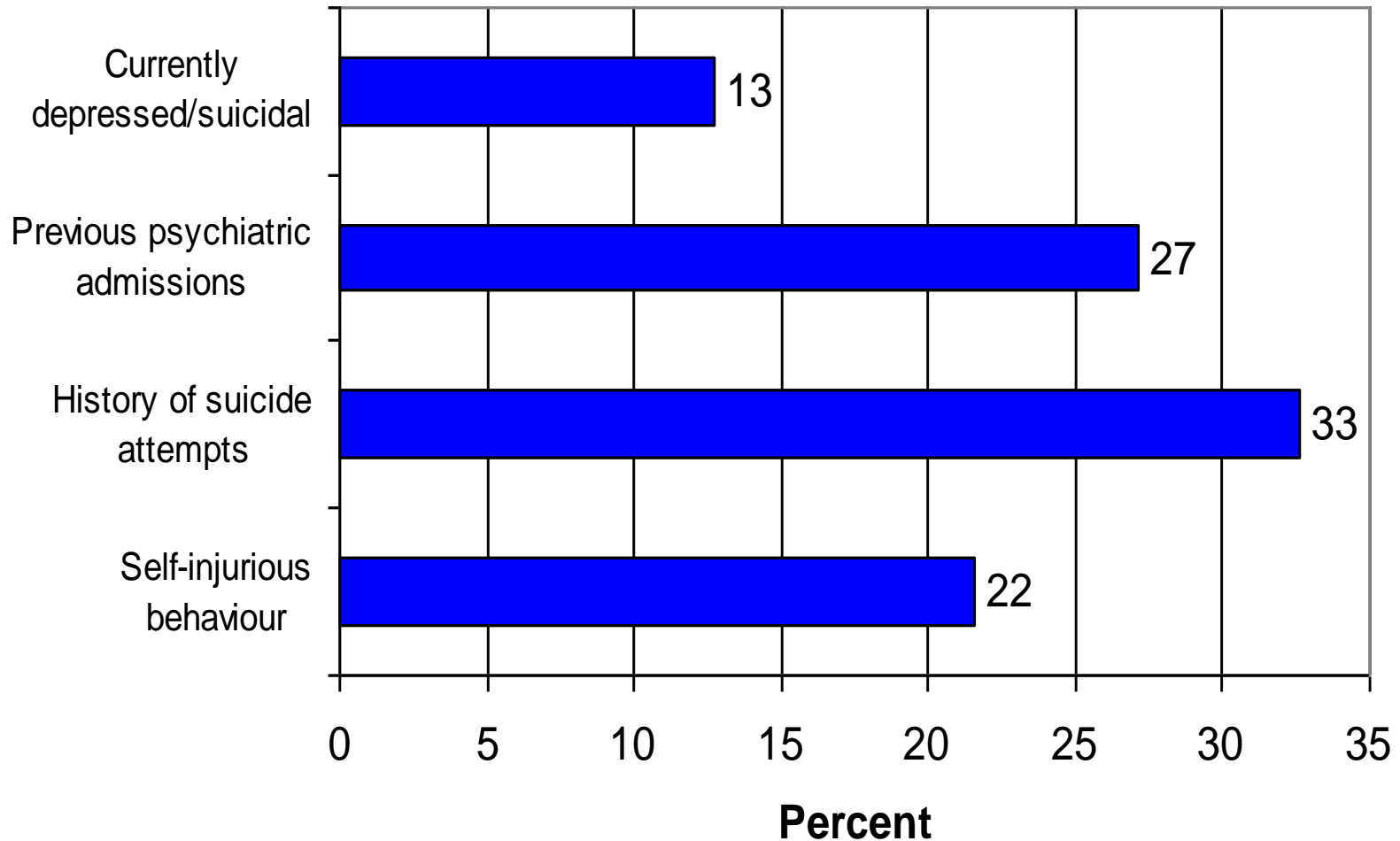
## Selected Results – Medical Health History





# Study 1

## Selected Results – Emotional Health History





# Next Steps – Methodology Study 2 & 3 Subjects

2. Impact of MMTP participation on Institutional behaviour
  - Uses a pre-post design
  - Comparison group of opiate addicted offenders not in the MMTP
3. Impact of MMTP participation on Post release outcome
  - Comparison group of opiate addicted offenders not in the MMTP

## Subjects

- MMT Group same as Study 1
- Comparison Group
  - Individuals meeting either of the following criteria:
    - Tested positive (random or reasonable grounds urinalysis) for Opiate metabolites
      - Who are not taking prescribed Opiates at the time of the positive urinalysis test
    - Offenders who identified opiates as drug of choice on the Computerized Assessment of Substance Abuse (CASA )
  - Who did not participate in MMT AND
  - Who have a history of abusing Opiates (according to file information)



# Next Steps – Methodology

## Study 2 & 3 Outcome measures

- Outcome measures
  - Pre- to post-MMT - Institutional behaviour
    - Disciplinary charges
    - Urinalysis results
    - Correctional Program participation (including drop-out)
    - Participation in employment and education
    - Transfers (to higher or lower security)
  - Post-release outcome following MMT participation
    - Readmission
    - New offence
    - New violent offence

