Methamphetamine Misuse/Abuse and Consequences

**Prevalence**

- Meth use increased with age, peaking at age 26-34, and then decreased
- 225,000 initiates in the past year

**Health Conditions**

- Meth use is associated with many adverse health outcomes

**Availability**

- Domestic meth seizures greatly increased from 1986-2013
- Price per pound: 2012: $8,000-$11,000, 2016: $2,400-$3,000

**Healthcare Utilization**

- Meth-related hospitalizations and ED visits in LAC increased from 2008-2014

**Economic Costs**

- Meth-related hospital spending in LAC consistently increased from 2008-2014

**Impaired Driving**

- Meth-related fatal crashes in LAC and its percent of all fatal drug crashes increased from 2011-2014
- Meth-related fatal crashes, LAC, 2001-2014: 71%

**Deaths**

- Meth overdose-related deaths, LAC, 2000-2014: 475% 2000 to 2014

**Treatment Admissions**

- Meth use before/during sex among clients with primary meth problem, LAC, 2015: Yes (59%) No (41%)

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For treatment in LAC, call (888)742-7900 during normal business hours, or call 211. For additional support, visit Meth Anonymous. For more information regarding this brief, please contact Tina Kim, Ph.D. at tkim@ph.lacounty.gov.
Methamphetamine Misuse/Abuse and Consequences

Most of the meth available in the US is produced in Mexico and smuggled across the Southern Border. According to the 2015 National Drug Threat Survey (NDTS)\(^2\), 87% of state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies reported that high purity and potency meth can be easily obtained at any time in the Southwest region, which is higher than that reported in all other regions of the US. Furthermore, according to the Los Angeles Regional Criminal Information Clearinghouse (LA CLEAR), in LAC, wholesale prices per pound for meth (ice) has decreased from $8,000-$11,000 in 2012 to $2,400-$3,000 in 2016.

According to the Drug Enforcement Agency, domestic meth seizures increased 1,159% from 234 kilograms in 1986 to 2,946 kilograms in 2014\(^4\).

Healthcare Utilization

According to the California Department of Public Health\(^7\), hospital discharge records list any methamphetamine-related diagnosis or external cause of injury (meth-related) in LAC increased by 178% from 5,347 in 2008 to 14,615 in 2014. The number of meth-related ED visits in LAC increased by 295% from 3,545 in 2008 to 14,008 in 2014. Meth-related hospitalizations and ED visits occurred mostly among males, Whites and Latinos, and those aged 18-44 years.

Economic Costs

According to the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) Inpatient Discharge Data\(^18\), the rate (per 100,000 population) of primary meth admissions increased 475% from 28 in 2000 to 161 in 2014. The percent of all underreport drug overdose deaths that listed meth poisoning as a cause of death increased from 5% in 2000 to 22% in 2014.

Impaired Driving

According to the Fatality Analysis Reporting System\(^19\), the number of fatal traffic crashes in LAC involving a person testing positive for meth increased 120% from 25 in 2011 to 55 in 2014.

In 2015, 59% of clients who reported meth as the primary drug problem had used meth before or during sex in the past year\(^20\).

Compared to clients who reported another primary drug problems, primary meth clients had higher rates of diagnosed chlamydia (3.5% vs. 1.2%), gonorrhea (1.6% vs. 0.7%), syphilis (0.9% vs. 0.3%), and any sexually transmitted disease overall (6.9% vs. 3.0%).

Deaths

According to death certificate data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention\(^20\), the number of deaths in LAC listing meth poisoning as a cause of death and drug overdose as the underlying cause of death (meth-related) increased 475% from 28 in 2000 to 161 in 2014.

The percent of all underreport drug overdose deaths that listed meth poisoning as a cause of death increased from 5% in 2000 to 22% in 2014.

Treatment Admissions

According to the Los Angeles County Participant Reporting System\(^2\), Latino (62%) clients accounted for the largest proportion of admissions to publicly funded substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs in LAC with meth as the primary drug problem (primary meth admissions), followed by White (25%), Black (8%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (2%) clients in 2015.

The rate (per 100,000 population) of primary meth admissions was highest among Latino clients (142.9), followed by Black (105.0), White (98.1), and Asian/Pacific Islander (17.7) clients in 2015.