

The New Orleans Syringe Access Program (NOSAP)

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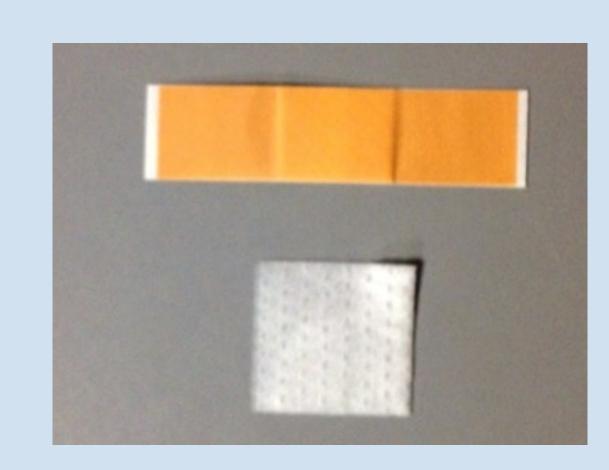
CrescentCare Health and NO/AIDS Taskforce



Introduction

The New Orleans Syringe Access Program (NOSAP) is the only legal syringe access program in the state of Louisiana. NOSAP is operated by NO/AIDS Task Force, a community based organization which primarily serves persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. NO/AIDS Task Force is a division of CrescentCare Health, a federally qualified health center. NOSAP is partially funded by small grants from The Elton John AIDS Foundation through the Syringe Access Fund, the Comer Foundation, MAC AIDS Fund, and through in-kind resources (staff, space) and general funds from NO/AIDS and donations from the community. NOSAP provides new syringes, clean injection supplies, harm reduction information, condoms, rapid HIV testing, rapid Hepatitis C (HCV) testing (when available), referrals to drug rehabilitation and detoxification programs, referrals and linkage to medical care, and referrals to other services in order to decrease the transmission of HIV, HCV, and to mitigate other health risks linked to injection drug use (IDU). NOSAP serves a unique and vital function in New Orleans and surrounding parishes. NOSAP is currently only able to operate for 2 hours a week, every Friday afternoon from 2:30pm -4:30pm.







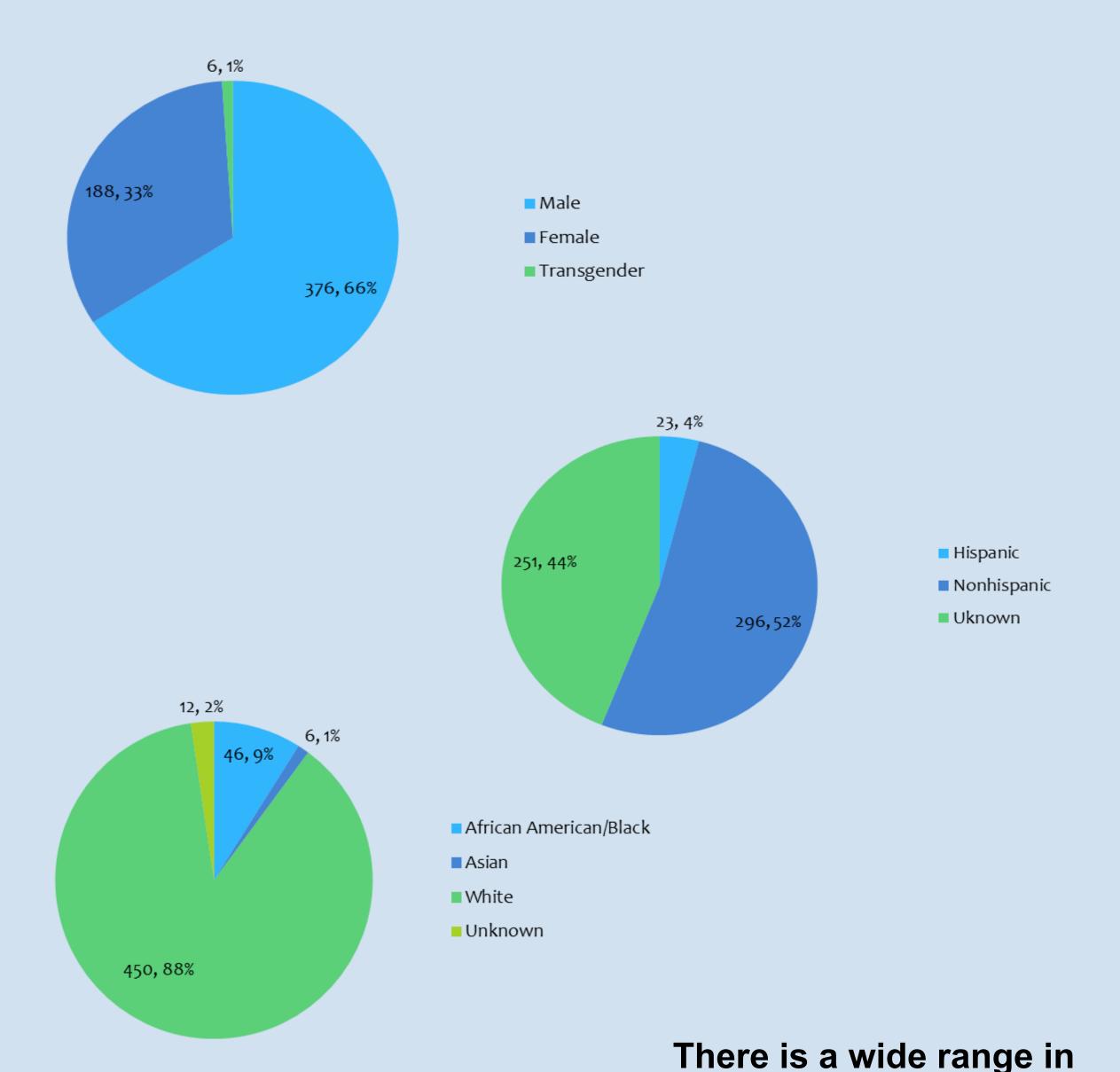


Methods

In January 2014, NOSAP instituted a new rule that each client, both new and returning, must complete an intake sheet once a year. This was enacted so that NOSAP can develop more in depth data on the IDU population the program is serving. Data was collected from January 2014 to December 2014. The number of clients seen each week, syringes disposed, and syringes collected are also tracked to see if the program was growing in number of clients served and syringes dispersed and collected. This data was compared to our limited 2013 data.

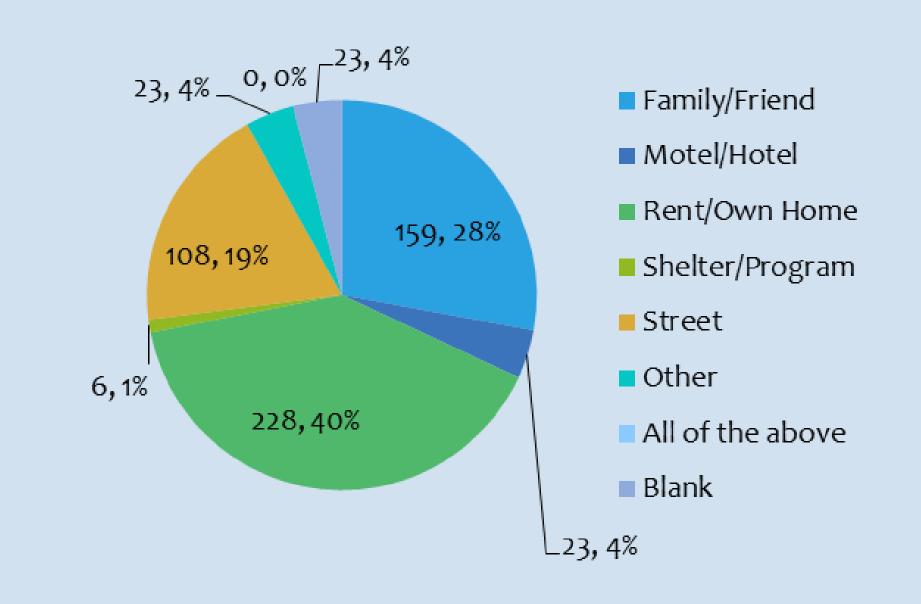
Results

Five hundred seventy individuals completed the intake sheet. Regarding **gender**, 376 (66%) of clients were male, 188 (33%) of clients were female, 6 (1%) were transgender (male-to-female), and 2% left the form blank. For **ethnicity**, only 23 (4%) listed that they are Hispanic or Latino, 296 listed that they were not Hispanic, and 251 left it blank. For **race**, 450 (79%) of the clients listed white, 46 (8%) were black, 29 (5%) listed unknown or other, and 6 (1%) listed Asian, 6 (1%) listed did not know, and 34 (6%) were left blank.

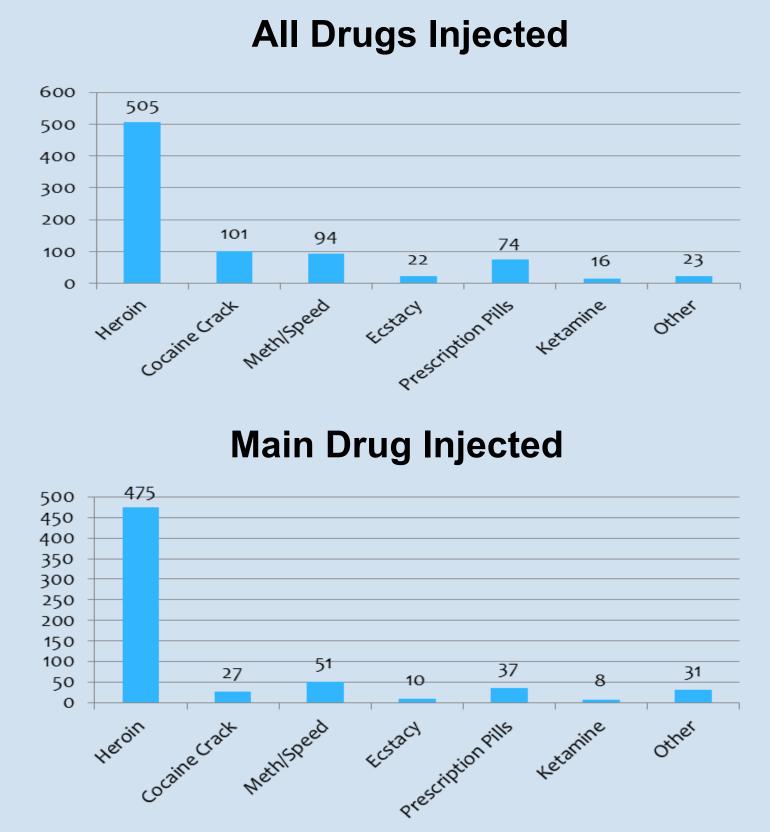


age of the clients. The youngest NOSAP has seen is 18, and the oldest is 66. The mode for age is 28, and the average is approximately 32. The median was 30.

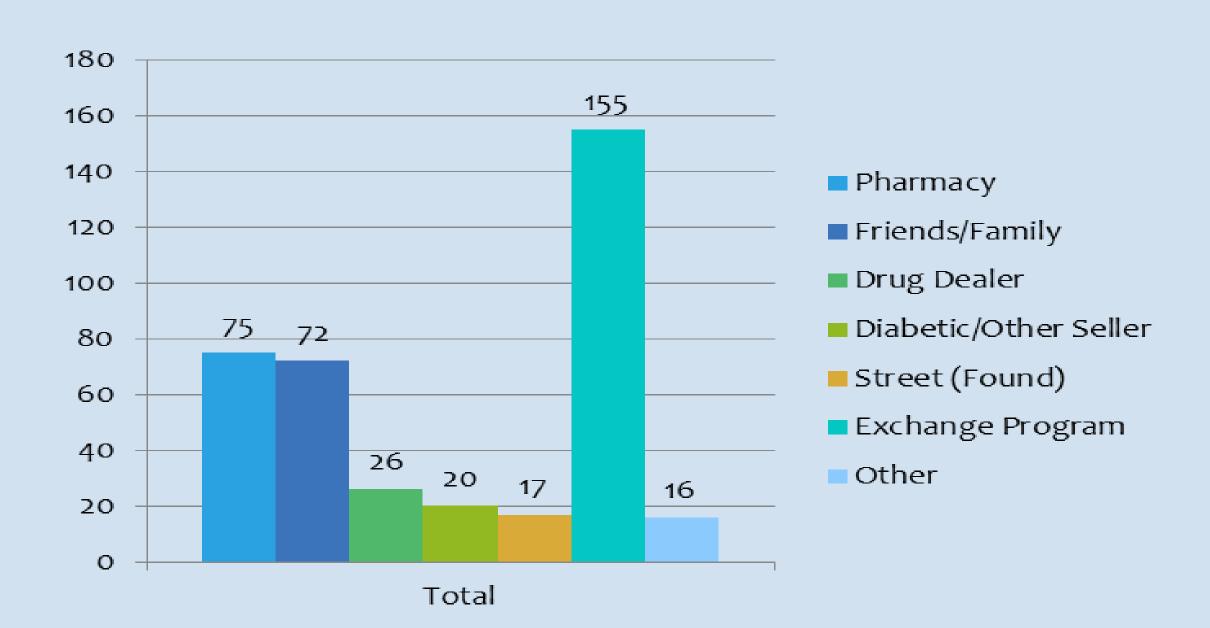
For **housing status**, two hundred twenty-eight (40%) stated that he or she rent/own a home. One hundred sixty (28 %) live with family or a friend. One hundred eight (19%) live on the street. Twenty-three (4%) live in a motel or hotel. Twenty-nine (4%) listed other. Twenty-nine (4%) left it blank. Eleven (2%) listed a shelter as their residence. Housing status by zip code in the New Orleans Metro are was also been determined.



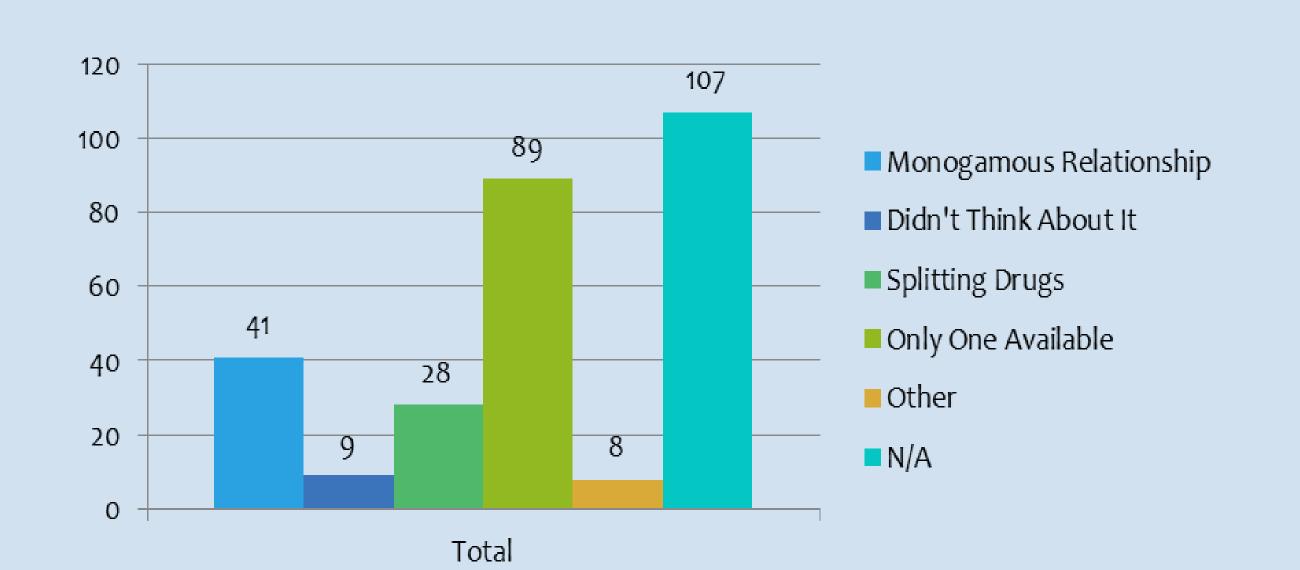
Clients also listed drug(s) that each inject. Five hundred five people listed heroin. One hundred one listed Cocaine/Crack. Ninety-four listed meth/speed. Seventy-four listed prescription pills. Twenty-three people listed other. Twenty-two listed ecstasy. Sixteen listed ketamine. Clients also listed their primary drug of choice. This was overwhelmingly heroin with 475 people. It was followed by 51 people that use Meth. Thirty-seven people listed prescription pills as their most used drug. This was followed by 31 with other, 27 with cocaine/crack, 10 with ecstasy, 8 with ketamine.



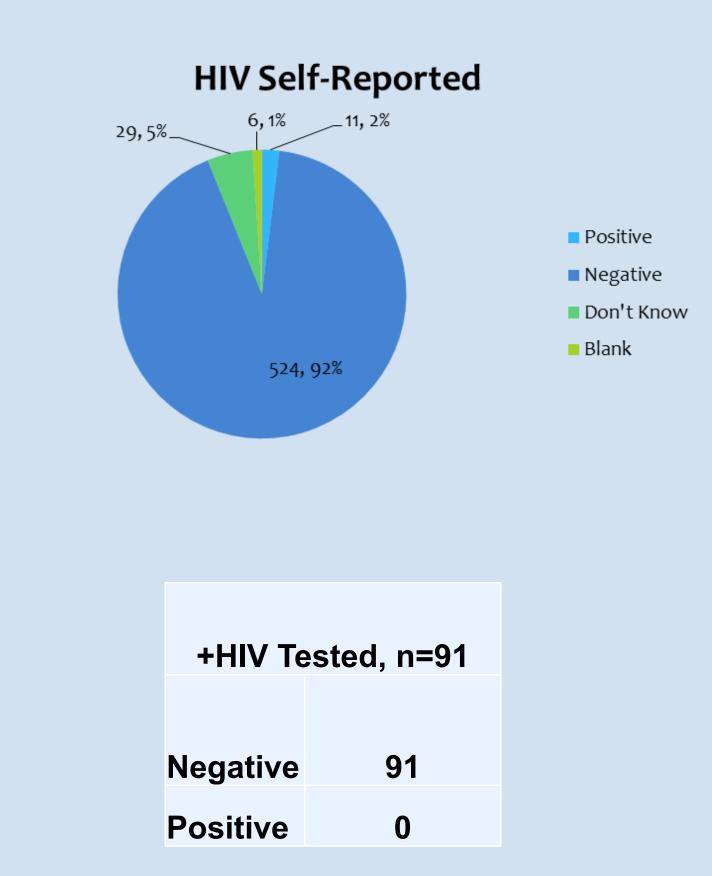
When asked where they obtain syringes, 155 stated from NOSAP. Seventy-five buy them at local pharmacies. Seventy-two get them from family and/or friends. Twenty-six buy them from their drug dealer. Twenty get them from being diabetic/another seller. Seventeen find them on the street. Sixteen listed that they obtain them from elsewhere (other).



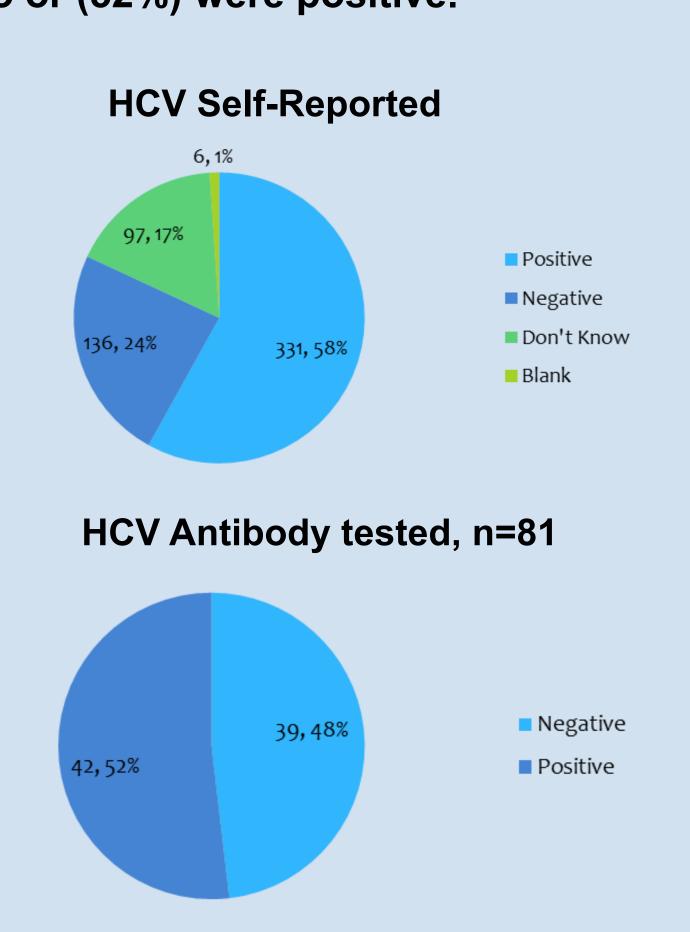
When asked about why clients shared syringes in the last six months, most people listed not applicable followed by it was the only one available.



Clients were also asked if they were HIV-positive. Five hundred twenty-four (92%) claimed to not be infected with HIV. Twenty-nine (5%) stated that they did not know. 11 (2%) listed that they were HIV-positive. 6 (1%) left this section blank. Of the ninety-one people tested for HIV at NOSAP in 2014, 0% tested positive.



For **self-reported HCV** infection, 331 (58%) stated that they were positive. One hundred thirty-six (24%) stated they were negative. Ninety-seven (17%) stated that they did not know, and 6 (1%) left this section blank. Of the 81 people **tested** at NOSAP for HCV, forty-two or (52%) were positive.



Conclusions

From 2013 to 2014, NOSAP has seen a substantial increase in the number of clients that utilize the program each week. The average number of clients seen weekly in 2013 was 72. In 2014, this number increased to approximately 82 individuals each week. This is a 12 percent increase from the previous year.

From January 2013 to December 2013, the program has more than doubled the number of syringes distributed and disposed each month. In 2013, the weekly average of disposed syringes was 2,583.5, and the weekly distributed syringes were 2,682.5. In 2014, that increased to a weekly average of 5,733.8 syringes disposed and 5,828.1 distributed. The agency hopes to further expand the reach of the program and integrate other services.