

# Utah Health Status Update: *Mental Health Care*

May 1999

Utah Department of Health

Nearly one in four Americans (22%) has some form of diagnosable mental disorder during their lifetime. Mental health care has advanced greatly, yet many people with mental health disorders do not obtain care for reasons that include financial barriers including lack of insurance coverage and the stigma that is still attached to a diagnosis of mental illness.

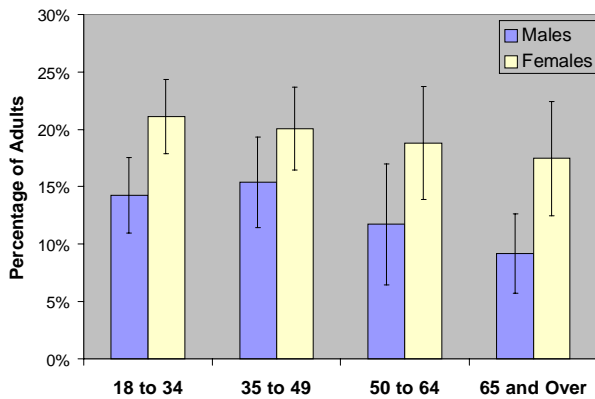
This Health Status Update reviews data from the 1996 Utah Health Status Survey on use of mental health services in Utah.

### *Mental Health Status*

- The Health Status Survey included a 12 question measure of physical and mental health status, the Medical Outcomes Study SF12 (see text box on back). Based on the SF12:
  - 17% of Utahns age 18 or over (226,600 people) had poorer than average mental health status.
  - Poorer than average mental health status was more common for women, younger people (age 18-49), people with less income, and those with less educational attainment.

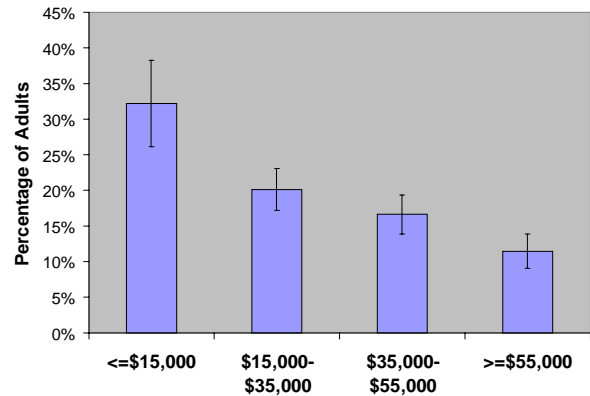
### **Poor Mental Health Status by Age and Sex**

Percentage of adults whose mental health status was poorer than average based on the Medical Outcomes Study SF12 questionnaire by age and sex, Utah 1996.



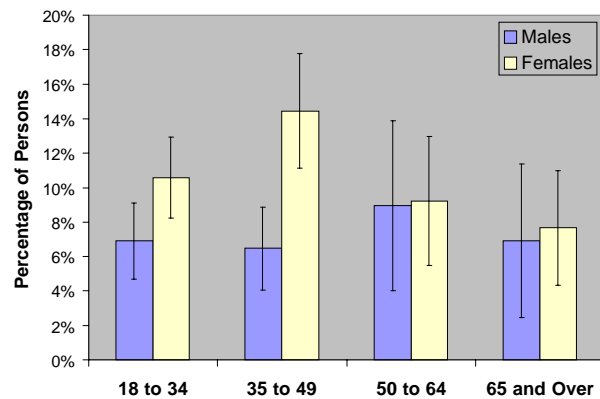
### **Poor Mental Health Status by Income**

Percentage of adults (age 18 or over) whose mental health status was poorer than average based on the Medical Outcomes Study SF12 questionnaire by annual household income, Utah 1996.



### **Sought Mental Health Care by Age and Sex**

Percentage of adults (age 18 or over) who sought mental health care in the past 12 months by age and sex, Utah 1996.



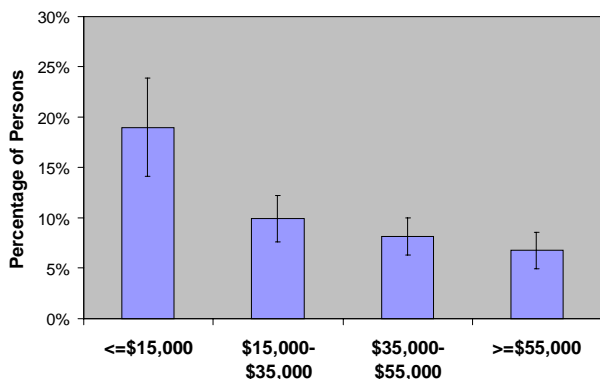
### *Use of Mental Health Care*

- 9.1% of Utahns age 18 or over (122,800 people) reported they had sought mental health care in the past 12 months.

- Groups of people who were more likely to have sought mental health care included:
  - Women (11.1% of women vs. 7.1% of men)
  - Wasatch front residents (9.7% vs. 7.4%)
  - Those without health insurance (12.3% vs. 8.6%)
  - People with lower household incomes (see figure)
  - People with poorer physical or mental health status
  - People with a chronic medical condition

## Sought Mental Health Care by Income

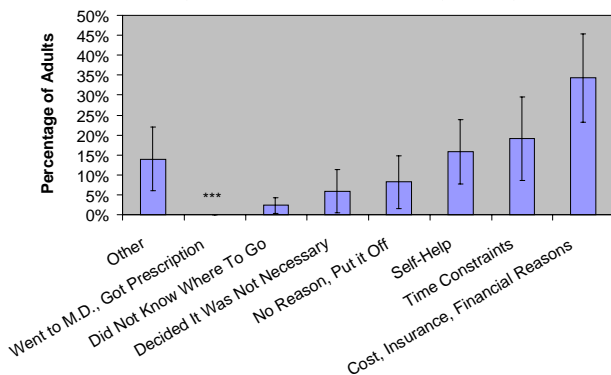
Percentage of adults (age 18 or over) who sought mental health care in the past 12 months by annual household income, Utah 1996.



- People with poorer than average mental health status were more likely to have sought mental health care (25.9% vs. 5.2%), but almost one half of those who sought mental health care had average or better than average mental health status.

## Reason for Not Seeking Mental Health Services

Reasons for not seeking mental health care among persons with below average mental health status who considered, but did not seek care, Utah, 1996.



- Of the 227,000 people with poorer than average mental health status, 37,500 considered seeking care, but did not do so. The most common reason cited by those people for not seeking care was the cost of care or lack of insurance to cover that cost.

## Medical Outcomes Study SF-12

The SF-12 (Short Form 12) was developed to assess overall mental and physical health status as part of a study of the outcomes of medical care. It includes 12 questions including overall health, ability to perform various daily activities, emotional health, pain, energy level, and feelings of depressed mood. Answers to those questions are combined (weighted) into physical and mental health scores. It has been evaluated and found to be useful in many settings.<sup>1</sup>

1. Bureau of Surveillance and Analysis. (1997). Health Status in Utah: The Medical Outcomes Study SF12 (1996 Utah Health Status Survey Report). Salt Lake City, UT: Utah Department of Health.

## May Utah Health Status Update

The complete report, *1996 Utah Health Status Survey Report: Health Care Access and Utilization*, as well as additional information about this topic are available from the Office of Public Health Data, Utah Department of Health, P O Box 142101, Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2101, (801) 538-6108, FAX (801) 536-0947, email: [phdata@doh.state.ut.us](mailto:phdata@doh.state.ut.us). Additional health data and reports can be obtained on the Internet at URL <http://hlunix.hl.state.ut.us/action2000>. Please send any comments on this report to the Office of Public Health Data.