Serious Psychological Distress among Montanan Adults

4% of Montana adults reported experiencing serious psychological distress (SPD)† in 2012 and 2016. SPD estimates the prevalence of serious mental illness in the general population. In Montana, SPD was more prevalent among adults who reported being younger, having less educational attainment, having lower income, being unemployed, or being unable to work. Furthermore, American Indian/Alaskan Native adults also reported a higher prevalence of SPD than white, non-Hispanic adults. (Figure)

56% of the estimated 24,982 Montana adults experiencing SPD also reported currently taking medicine or receiving treatment from a doctor or other health professional for a mental health condition or emotional problem. A 2017 directory of 70 mental health facilities in Montana is available through SAMHSA, with listings provided by county.

In Montana, adults who reported experiencing SPD were more likely to report having been diagnosed with asthma or arthritis and more likely to be a current cigarette smoker or current smokeless tobacco user than adults who reported not experiencing SPD. Furthermore, adults who reported SPD were also more likely to report fair or poor general health, poor physical health, and more days in which their usual daily activities were limited by poor health.

For a full report see Surveillance Reports – 2018 – Serious Psychological Distress on the Montana BRFSS webpage.

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*Serious Psychological Distress is defined as a score of 13 or higher on the Kessler 6 (K6) scale, which measures a person’s feeling of nervousness, hopelessness, restlessness or fidgeting, depression, effort, and self-worth.

Data Source: 2012 and 2016 Montana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

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