

Prescription Medication Abuse Nearly Equals Alcohol Abuse Among Unemployed During COVID-19 Pandemic

Forty Percent of Symptomatic Prescription Drug Abusers Fall Into Moderate or High -Risk Addiction Profiles

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The prevalence of prescription medication abusers is similar to that of symptomatic alcohol abusers, yet these respondents reflected a somewhat lower proportion of moderate and high-risk profiles.”

Dr. Richard E. Hunter

Strategic Partners today announced additional results of a substance and alcohol abuse study among unemployed individuals during COVID-19. Rampant [unemployment](#) in the United States brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous detrimental effect on the financial well-being of millions of Americans and their families. Personal concerns about these financial disruptions and social isolation as a precaution against the pandemic have heightened stress particularly among vulnerable groups like the unemployed. High stress situations are known triggers for maladaptive coping behaviors like use/overuse of alcohol, prescriptions medications, and street drugs. This study of 600 unemployed individuals found substantial

increases in all three categories of mood-altering substances. Using adapted addiction symptom measurement items from the most recent Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-5), the researchers established comparative addiction risk profiles for each substance abuse category.

The misuse of prescription medications is defined either in the form of taking medications not prescribed to a person or taking medications more frequently than prescribed. Richard E. Hunter, Ph.D., the study’s primary author noted, “The prevalence of prescription medication abusers is similar to the number of symptomatic alcohol abusers, yet these respondents reflected a somewhat lower proportion of moderate and high-risk profiles.”

Further, the results of the study offer preliminary insights into substance abuse patterns across two and even all three of the substance abuse categories.

Authentic Strategic Partners, LLC. is a public relations consultancy with offices in Chesterfield,

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