

Improving Federal Drug-Related Data Systems

ONDCP supports improvements to enhance the policy relevance of federal drug-related data systems. The Data Subcommittee has supported the following innovations:

- In 2005, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) will be implementing the planning process to effect substantial changes to the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program. These changes will enable the production of nationally representative estimates of drug use prevalence among the arrestee population, while continuing to provide representative data at the local level. Originally, NIJ had planned to continue the existing ADAM program uninterrupted while the new program was being designed and implemented. However, due to FY 2004 and FY 2005 budget reductions in funding for NIJ, there were insufficient funds to continue ADAM. NIJ anticipates implementation of a redesigned pilot program by the end of 2005.
- SAMHSA's Office of Applied Studies (OAS) is currently undertaking a redesign of the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) system, in efforts to maintain alignment with the health care delivery system. DAWN is an important source of national and local data on substance abuse derived from information on visits to hospital emergency departments (EDs) and drug-related deaths identified by medical examiners (MEs). DAWN collects data on the demographic characteristics of substance abusers and the specific drugs involved in each drug-related ED visit or death. The new design began initial phase-in in 2003 with the following: 1) expanding the sample of emergency departments to include 45 metropolitan areas, 2) establishing a sentinel hospital system for early reporting, 3) changing the criteria for identifying a DAWN case, and 4) converting from paper to electronic forms. The effort is continuing in 2004.
- ONDCP and the Department of Justice are leading an interagency effort to update drug availability estimates—from source countries through availability in the United States—for cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine. The first round of estimates was published in 2003. Results from this project are providing critical measures enabling assessment of the Nation's supply-reduction programs. The next round of estimates is expected to be published in the Spring of 2005.