

## Executive Summary

The Adelaide, South Australia (SA) EDRS comprises a sentinel sample of people who regularly use ecstasy and/or other illicit stimulants, recruited via social media and word-of mouth in Adelaide, SA. The results are not representative of all people who use illicit drugs, nor of use in the general population.

**Data were collected in 2025 from April-May. Interviews from 2020 onwards were delivered face-to-face as well as via telephone, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission; all interviews prior to 2020 were conducted face-to-face. This methodological change should be factored into all comparisons of data from the 2020-2025 samples, relative to previous years.**

### Sample Characteristics

The 2025 EDRS sample (N=100) recruited from Adelaide, South Australia (SA) was similar to the sample in 2024 and in previous years. Gender remained stable between 2024 and 2025, with 51% identifying as male (44% in 2024), and participants had a median age of 28 years (23 years in 2024). Participants reported having completed a mean of 11 years of school in 2025 (range: 8-12), stable relative to 2024 (12 years; range: 8-12). One third (32%) of the sample reported full-time employment (34% in 2024) and one quarter (27%) reported part time/casual employment (39% in 2024). Accommodation remained stable, with two fifths (41%) residing in a rental house/flat (37% in 2024) and almost one third (30%) living with their parents/in their family house (39% in 2024) at the time of interview. Drug of choice and drug used most often remained stable between 2024 and 2025, with almost one quarter (23%) nominating cannabis as their drug of choice (22% in 2024), and 27% nominating alcohol as the drug used most

often in the month preceding interview (22% in 2024).

### Non-Prescribed Ecstasy

Recent use of any non-prescribed ecstasy remained stable in 2025 (91%), relative to 2024 (93%), as did frequency of use (9 days in 2025; 7 days in 2024). Ecstasy capsules remained the most commonly used form of non-prescribed ecstasy (63%), followed by pills (43%). Recent use of ecstasy crystal significantly decreased from 50% in 2024 to 33% in 2025 ( $p=0.015$ ), though median frequency of use significantly increased from four days in 2024 to six days in 2025 ( $p=0.022$ ). Consistent with previous years, ecstasy powder continued to be the least commonly used form (28%). The price, perceived purity and perceived availability of non-prescribed ecstasy pills, capsules, crystal and powder remained stable in 2025, relative to 2024.

### Methamphetamine

One third (35%) of the Adelaide sample reported recent use of any methamphetamine in 2025, stable relative to 2024 (26%). Recent use of all forms of methamphetamine remained stable, with crystal remaining the most commonly used form in 2025 (31%; 23% in 2024), followed by powder (7%; 8% in 2024) and base ( $n\leq 5$ ; 6% in 2024). The price, perceived purity and perceived availability of methamphetamine powder and crystal remained stable in 2025, relative to 2024.

### Non-Prescribed Pharmaceutical Stimulants

The per cent of participants reporting any recent non-prescribed pharmaceutical stimulant (e.g., dexamphetamine, methylphenidate, modafinil) use has steadily increased since the commencement of monitoring, from 15% in 2007 to 50% in 2024, although a significant decrease was observed in 2025 (31%;  $p=0.008$ ). Frequency of use

remained stable, as did the price and perceived availability of non-prescribed pharmaceutical stimulants.

### Cocaine

Recent use of cocaine has doubled over the years of monitoring, although has stabilised in more recent years. In 2025, three quarters (76%) of the Adelaide sample reported any recent use (77% in 2024). Frequency of use remained stable at a median of 5 days (6 days in 2024), and few participants ( $n \leq 5$ ) reported weekly or more frequent use (13% in 2024). Price, perceived purity and perceived availability for cocaine remained stable between 2024 and 2025.

### Cannabis and/or Cannabinoid-Related Products

Recent use of non-prescribed cannabis and/or cannabinoid-related products remained stable in 2025 (67%), relative to 2024 (73%). Among those who had recently used non-prescribed cannabis and/or cannabinoid-related products, 55% reported weekly use (61% in 2024) and one fifth (21%) reported daily use (18% in 2024). Hydroponic cannabis was the most commonly used form of non-prescribed cannabis in 2025 (69%; 63% in 2024), followed by bush cannabis (48%; 64% in 2024). The price, perceived potency and perceived availability of hydroponic and bush cannabis remained stable in 2025 relative to 2024.

### Non-Prescribed Ketamine, LSD and DMT

Whilst recent use of LSD (28% in 2025 and 2024, respectively) and DMT (16%; 10% in 2024) remained stable in 2025, recent use of non-prescribed ketamine significantly decreased, relative to 2024 (34%; 49% in 2024;  $p=0.048$ ). Median frequency of use remained low and stable for all three substances, ranging between one and three days in the six months

preceding interview. Price, perceived purity and perceived availability for ketamine and LSD remained stable between 2024 and 2025.

### New Psychoactive Substances (NPS)

Eleven per cent of the sample reported recent use of any NPS, excluding plant-based NPS, stable relative to 2024 (15%). In 2025, drugs that 'mimic' psychedelic drugs were the most commonly used NPS class (6% in 2024), although few participants ( $n \leq 5$ ) reported use of any individual NPS.

### Other Drugs

Whilst recent use of most other drugs remained stable between 2024 and 2025, use of nitrous oxide significantly decreased, from 36% in 2024 to 19% in 2025 ( $p=0.013$ ). Recent use of amyl nitrite also significantly decreased, from 43% in 2024 to 26% in 2025 ( $p=0.020$ ). Alcohol use remained high and stable (92%; 94% in 2024), as did tobacco use (65%; 75% in 2024). One quarter (25%) reported recent use of smoked or non-smoked illicit tobacco products (31% in 2024). Seventy-one percent reported using illicit e-cigarettes in 2025 (78% in 2024), the second highest percentage observed since the commencement of monitoring.

### Drug-Related Harms and Other Behaviours

#### *Polysubstance use and bingeing*

Almost four fifths (77%) of the Adelaide sample reported concurrent use of two or more drugs on the last occasion of ecstasy or related drug use (excluding tobacco and e-cigarettes).

Two fifths (39%) of participants reported bingeing on one or more drugs in the preceding six months (40% in 2024).

#### *Dependence, overdose and injecting*

Two thirds (67%) of the sample obtained a score of eight or more on the AUDIT (70% in

2024), indicative of hazardous use. Nineteen per cent of those who reported recent ecstasy use obtained an SDS score of  $\geq 3$ , while almost half (48%) of participants reporting recent methamphetamine use obtained a score of  $\geq 4$ , indicating possible dependence on these substances.

Past year non-fatal stimulant overdose remained stable in 2025 (13%; 19% in 2024), though past year non-fatal depressant overdose significantly decreased (13%; 32% in 2024;  $p=0.003$ ).

Few participants ( $n \leq 5$ ) reported past month injecting drug use ( $n \leq 5$  in 2024).

### *Drug checking and naloxone awareness*

In 2025, one fifth (21%) of participants reported that they or someone else had tested the content and/or purity of their illicit drugs in Australia in the past year (32% in 2024).

In 2025, three fifths (62%) reported that they had ever heard of naloxone (54% in 2024), of which one quarter (24%) reported obtaining naloxone in their lifetime, a significant increase from 2024 ( $n \leq 5$ ;  $p=0.001$ ).

### *Sexual activity, mental health and health service access*

Three quarters (75%) of the Adelaide sample reported engaging in sexual activity in the past four weeks (85% in 2024), of which 85% reported using alcohol and/or other drugs prior to or while engaging in sexual activity (86% in 2024). Seventeen per cent of the sample reported having a HIV test in the six months preceding interview, a significant decrease from 32% in 2024 ( $p=0.023$ ), and 28% reported a sexual health check-up (41% in 2024).

Mental health remained stable in 2025, with 57% self-reporting a mental health problem in the six months preceding interview (56% in 2024), of which anxiety (71%) and depression

(59%) were the most commonly reported problems. Twenty-eight per cent of the sample reported a score of  $\geq 30$  on the K10, indicating very high psychological distress (12% in 2024).

One third (35%) of participants reported accessing any health service for alcohol and/or drug support in the six months preceding interview (29% in 2024), most commonly from a drug and alcohol counsellor. Six per cent of the Adelaide sample reported current drug treatment engagement (10% in 2024).

### *Driving, contact with police and modes of purchasing drugs*

Among recent drivers, 15% reported driving while over the perceived legal limit of alcohol (26% in 2024), and 35% reported driving within three hours of consuming an illicit or non-prescribed drug (50% in 2024) in the six months preceding interview.

One quarter (27%) of the Adelaide sample reported any past month crime (37% in 2024), with selling drugs for cash profit and property crime being the two main forms of criminal activity in 2025 (15% and 13%, respectively). Fifteen per cent reported a drug-related encounter with police which did not result in charge or arrest (13% in 2024).

In 2025, the most popular means of arranging the purchase of illicit or non-prescribed drugs in the 12 months preceding interview was face-to-face (77%; 79% in 2024), followed by social networking or messaging applications (58%), a significant decrease from 73% in 2024 ( $p=0.041$ ). The majority (75%) continued to report obtaining illicit drugs from a friend/relative/partner/colleague, although this was a significant decrease from 90% in 2024 ( $p=0.012$ ).