

Executive Summary

The IDRS comprises a sentinel sample of people aged 18 years or older who injected illicit drugs ≥ 6 days in the preceding six months and resided in Hobart, Tasmania. Participants were recruited via advertisements in needle and syringe programs as well as via peer referral. The results are not representative of all people who use illicit drugs, nor of use in the general population. **Data were collected in June and July 2025. Interviews from 2020 were delivered face-to-face as well as via telephone; 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 IDRS sample recruited from Hobart, Tasmania (TAS) in 2025 (N=95) was consistent with the Hobart profile in previous years. Gender proportions remained stable between 2024 and 2025, with 65% identifying as male (67% in 2024), with a median age of 45 years (45 years in 2024). Three fifths (58%) held post-school qualifications including trade/technical and university (66% in 2024). Eighty-five per cent of the sample were unemployed at the time of interview (88% in 2024), and the vast majority (97%) had received a government pension/allowance or benefit in the month prior to interview (97% in 2024).

Accommodation remained stable relative to 2024, with 69% residing in their own home (including renting) (64% in 2024). Eighteen per cent of participants reported having no fixed address (17% in 2024), with 7% reporting residing in a boarding house/hostel ($n \leq 5$ in 2024). The median income per week increased significantly to \$540 (\$448 in 2024; $p=0.007$).

Participant drug of choice remained stable between 2024 and 2025, with 56% of the participants nominating methamphetamine as

their drug of choice in 2025 (52% in 2024), followed by heroin (15%; 11% in 2024) and cannabis (9%; 12% in 2024). Methamphetamine was also the drug injected most often in the past month (87%; 77% in 2024). Four fifths (80%) of the sample reported weekly or more frequent use of any methamphetamine (76% in 2024), followed by non-prescribed cannabis (59%; 68% in 2024).

Heroin

The per cent reporting recent heroin use has remained relatively stable and low since the commencement of monitoring, with 16% of the Hobart sample reporting recent use in 2025, stable relative to 2024 (12%). Frequency of use remained stable at a median of 10 days in 2025 (3 days in 2024). All participants (100%) reported injecting heroin as the route of administration in 2024 and 2025. The price, perceived purity and availability remained stable between 2024 and 2025.

Methamphetamine

Recent use of any methamphetamine has trended upwards over the past few years with almost nine in ten participants reporting recent use since 2021. In 2025, 95% of participants reported recent use of any methamphetamine (91% in 2024), the highest percentage reporting recent use since monitoring commenced. This mostly comprised of methamphetamine crystal use (97%; 98% in 2024). The median price for one point of crystal was \$50 (\$50 in 2024). Perceived purity of crystal remained stable, with 33% reporting purity to be 'medium' (23% in 2024). Perceived availability of crystal also remained stable, with 98% reporting 'easy' or 'very easy' obtainment.

Cocaine

Recent use of cocaine remained stable at 13% (18% in 2024). Frequency of use remained low and stable at a median of four days (1 day in 2024). Four fifths (83%) of those who had used cocaine in the six months preceding interview reported using powder cocaine.

Cannabis and Related Products

The per cent of participants reporting recent use of non-prescribed cannabis and/or cannabinoid-related products, while overall slowly declining since the early 2000s, remained stable between 2024 and 2025 (68%; 74% in 2024). Three fifths (62%) of participants who had recently used any non-prescribed cannabis reported daily use, stable relative to 2024 (67%). Hydroponic cannabis remained the form most commonly used (83%; 92% in 2024), followed by bush cannabis (50%; 49% in 2024). Smoking remained the most common route of administration and significantly increased in 2025 (95%; 80% in 2024; $p=0.010$), while inhaling/vaping significantly decreased ($n\leq 5$; 31% in 2024; $p<0.001$). The largest per cent of the sample reported that the perceived potency of both hydroponic and bush cannabis was 'high' (55% and 50% of those who responded, respectively) and 'very easy' to obtain (55% and 55% of those who responded, respectively), stable relative to 2024.

Pharmaceutical Opioids

Recent non-prescribed use of pharmaceutical opioids has generally declined over the course of monitoring. In 2025, non-prescribed use remained stable with 22% reporting recent use of morphine (26% in 2024), 16% using methadone (10% in 2024), 7% using buprenorphine tablet (8% in 2024), 11% using buprenorphine-naloxone (10% in 2024), 13% using oxycodone (21% in 2024), 11% using codeine ($n\leq 5$ in 2024), and few participants ($n\leq 5$) using fentanyl ($n\leq 5$ in 2024).

Other Drugs

Few participants ($n\leq 5$) reported recent use of an NPS in 2025, stable relative to 7% in 2024. One tenth (11%) reported recent use of any non-prescribed pharmaceutical stimulant (18% in 2024). In 2025, use of any non-prescribed benzodiazepines (27%; 27% in 2024), pregabalin (19%; 20% in 2024) and GHB (11%; 11% in 2024) remained stable.

The majority (86%) of the sample reported recent tobacco use (93% in 2024). There was a significant increase of participants reporting recent use of illicit tobacco, with 56% reporting recent use in 2025 (18% in 2024; $p<0.001$). Recent use of alcohol (52%; 54% in 2024) and illicit e-cigarettes (15%; 19% in 2024) remained stable. Few participants ($n\leq 5$) reported recent use of nicotine pouches (7% in 2024).

Drug-Related Harms & Other Behaviours

Polysubstance use and bingeing

Three fifths (60%) of participants reported use of two or more drugs on the day preceding interview. Almost three fifths (59%) of the Hobart sample had binged on one or more drugs for 48 hours or more in the six months preceding interview.

Injecting behaviours and equipment

In 2025, participants reported injecting on a median of 24 occasions in the month prior to interview, a significant increase from 15 occasions in 2024 ($p=0.010$). Few participants ($n\leq 5$) reported receptive sharing and 7% reported distributive sharing of a needle or syringe in the past month (6% and 9% in 2024, respectively). One fifth (22%) of the Hobart sample reported that they had re-used their own needles in the past month (25% in 2024). Almost one fifth (17%) of the Hobart sample reported having difficulty accessing needles in the past month, stable relative to 15% in 2024.

Twenty-eight per cent reported experiencing injection-related problems in the past month (30% in 2024), most commonly infection or abscess (16%) or nerve damage (15%).

Overdose, naloxone and drug checking

Fourteen per cent of the Hobart sample reported overdosing on any drug in the preceding year, stable relative to 22% in 2024. Six per cent reported a non-fatal simulant overdose (13% in 2024). Few participants ($n\leq 5$) reported a non-fatal opioid overdose in 2025.

In 2025, the majority (89%) of the Hobart sample reported awareness of naloxone, a significant increase from 75% in 2024 ($p=0.015$). Forty-five per cent reported obtaining naloxone in the past year, stable relative to 32% in 2024.

Twenty-seven per cent reported that they or someone else had tested the content and/or purity of their illicit drugs in Australia in the past year (18% in 2024).

Dependence, drug treatment and HCV

In 2025, 30% of male participants obtained an AUDIT-C score of ≥ 4 , and 36% of female participants obtained a score of ≥ 3 , indicative of hazardous alcohol use.

Two fifths (39%) of participants who reported recent opioid use and 67% of those reporting recent methamphetamine use scored at a level indicating possible dependence on the Severity of Dependence Scale (SDS; 5/4+ respectively).

One third (31%) reported receiving any drug treatment in 2025, stable from 2024 (24%).

Fifty-four per cent reported having received a hepatitis C virus (HCV) antibody test in the past year, a significant increase from 35% in 2024 ($p=0.013$). One third (31%) reported receiving an RNA test (28% in 2024) in the past year. Few participants ($n\leq 5$) reported having a current HCV infection in 2024 and 2025.

Sexual activity, mental health and health service access

Almost half (47%) of the Hobart sample reported engaging in sexual activity in the past four weeks (36% in 2024), and one quarter (23%) reported having a sexual health check-up in the previous six months (19% in 2024).

Self-reported mental health problems remained stable in 2025 (64%; 60% in 2024), with depression (67%) and anxiety (53%) most commonly reported. K10 score remained stable between 2024 and 2025, with 37% of

participants scoring 30+ (34% in 2024), indicative of 'very high' psychological distress.

Eighty-six per cent of the Hobart sample reported accessing any health service for alcohol and/or drug support in the six months preceding interview (80% in 2024).

Driving, contact with police and modes of purchasing drugs

Eighty-two per cent of those who had recently driven reported driving within three hours of consuming an illicit or non-prescribed drug, stable relative to 2024 (66%). Few participants ($n\leq 5$) reported driving while over the perceived legal limit of alcohol in both 2024 and 2025.

One third (34%) reported engaging in 'any' crime in the past month in 2025 (44% in 2024). Twenty-eight per cent reported being arrested in the past year (31% in 2024), and 26% reported a drug-related encounter with police which did not result in arrest (24% 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 (82%, 84% in 2024).