

U.S. Addiction Workforce Capacity for Wound Care in the Age of Xylazine

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Introduction

- The U.S. is facing an ongoing public health crisis with growing morbidity & mortality from an evolving adulterated illicit drug supply.
- People who use drugs (PWUD) exposed to xylazine-contaminated drugs experience ulcerating wounds that can heal with longitudinal medically-directed wound care.
- If left untreated, wounds can progress and place PWUD at risk of infection, hospitalization, limb loss, or death.

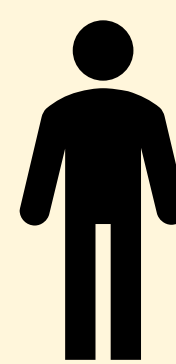
Methods



Emailed national listserv of addiction professionals with diverse roles & practices (N=11,207)

Inclusion criteria:

- 18+
- Interact with PWUD in clinical and/or harm reduction setting

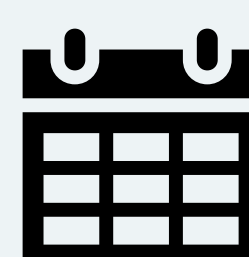


26-item anonymous online survey

- Demographics
- Prior wound training
- Experience caring for xylazine wounds
- Capacity for xylazine testing & wound care



- Understand the wound care capacity of professionals working with PWUD
- Identify knowledge gaps related to xylazine wounds & care

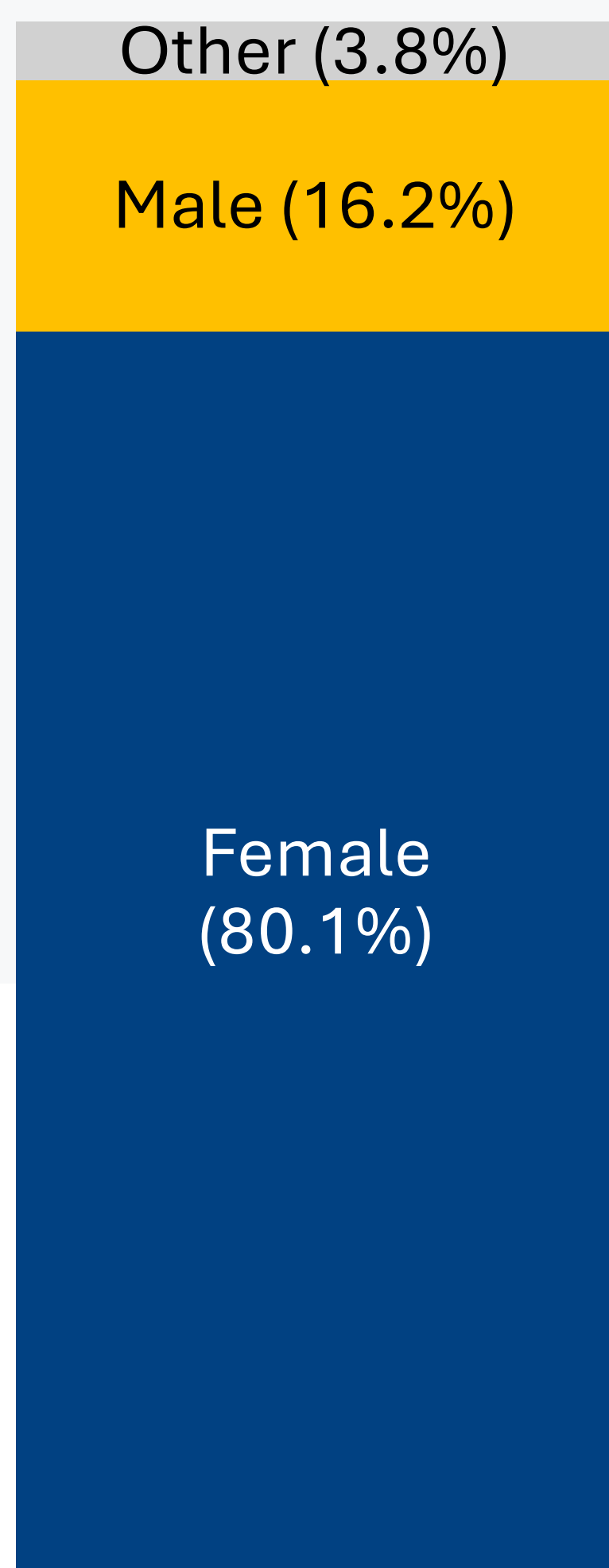


Data collected over 4 weeks (Aug-Sept 2023)

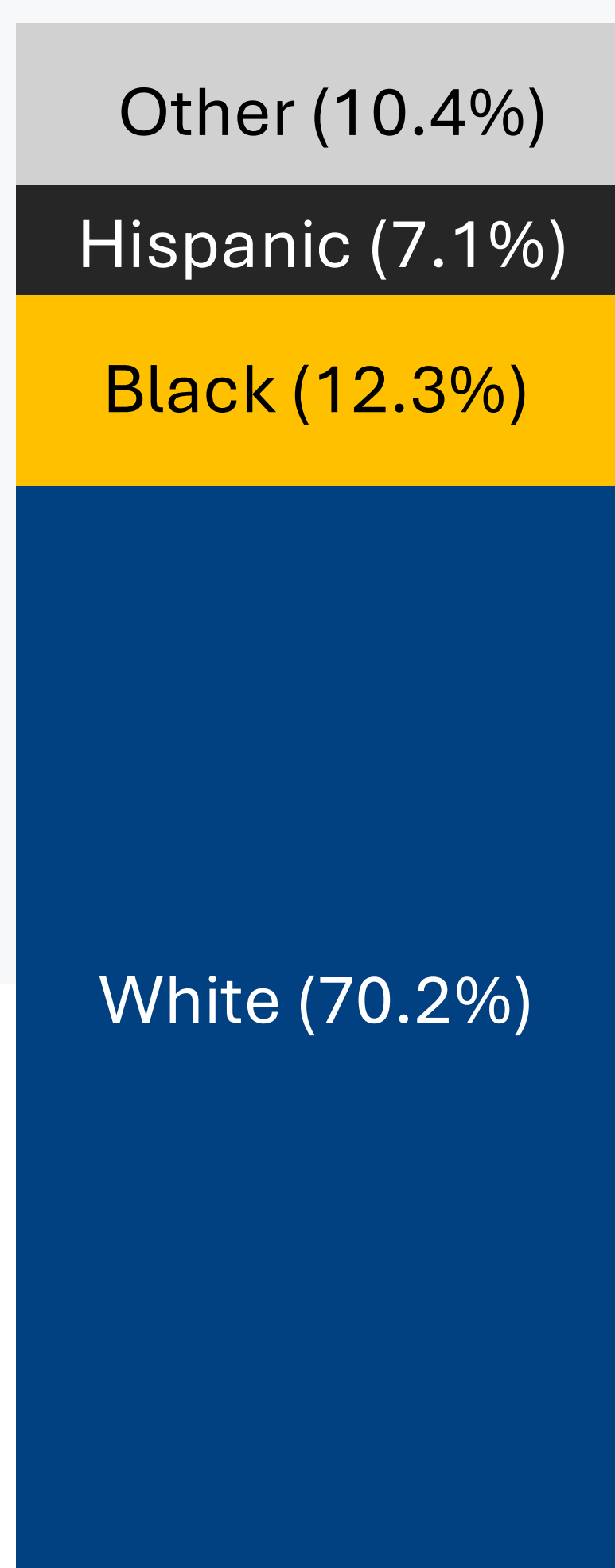
Results

Participant Characteristics

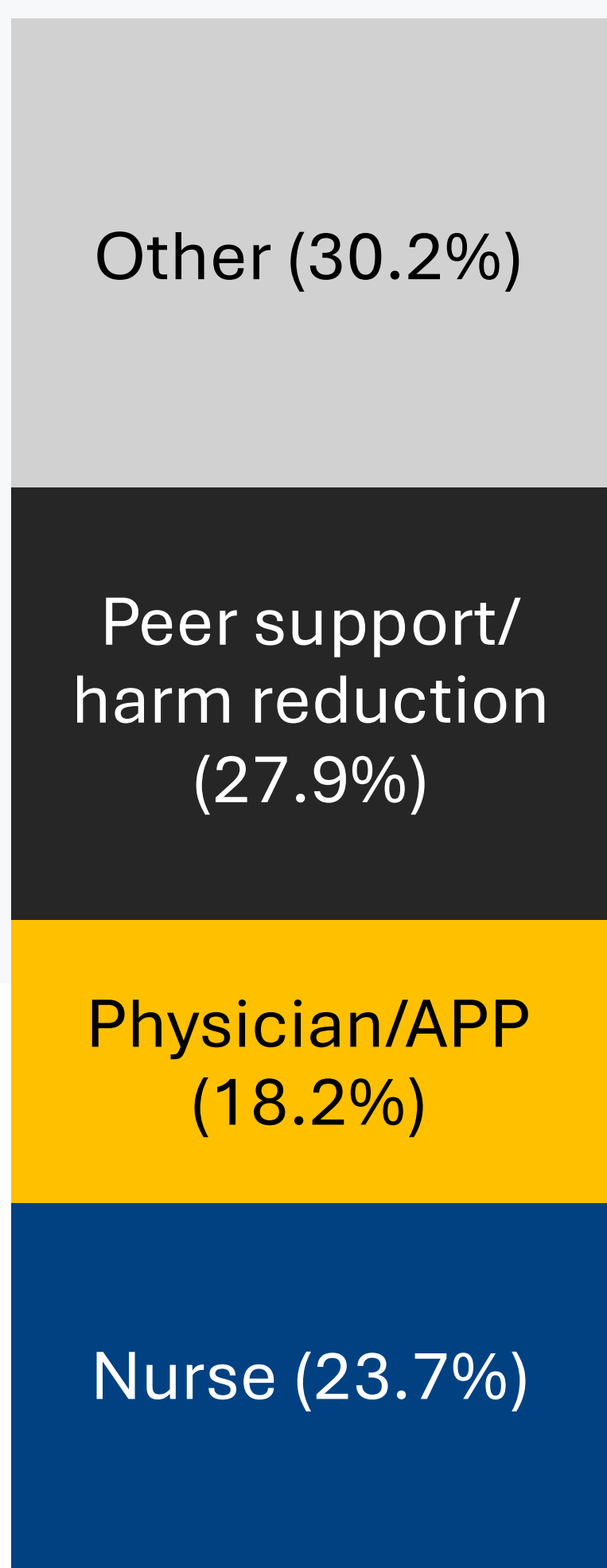
N = 1280 (12.8% response rate)



Gender



Race/Ethnicity



Professional Role

Participant Experience

Cared for PWUD with xylazine-related harms



99%

Cared for xylazine wounds



44%

Prior wound care training



43%

Service Capacity

Referrals for wound care



56%

Onsite wound care



20%

Xylazine testing



23%

Conclusion

1 Many addiction professionals encounter & care for PWUD with xylazine wounds

2 <50% with any formal wound care training

3 Most rely on off-site referrals

Urgent need to:

- Expand wound care training to professionals
- Increase wound care services for PWUD impacted by xylazine wounds