

Key Findings for Adult Participants

Number of participants: 1 131 (757 men; 374 women)

Social Determinants

- The median age of participants was 35 years.
- 14.3% reported they had been placed in care at some time before age 16.
- Nearly one in five participants reported that either or both their parents had been incarcerated during their childhood.
- Few participants (0.7%) had never been to school but 72.1% had left school by the end of year 10.
- 11.5% had some difficulties with reading and writing with a further 2.6% indicating they could not read or write at all.
- In the thirty days prior to incarceration only 46.8% of participants were employed; 38.8% were unemployed and 13.3% were unable to work.
- 9.7% were homeless or in unsettled accommodation prior to incarceration while the Australian Bureau of Statistics reports the rate in the community at 0.5%.

Offending Behaviour

- Almost one third (32.5%) had been detained as a juvenile. A higher proportion of men (33.4%) reported this than women (20%).
- 60.3% had been incarcerated in an adult facility prior to their current sentence. A smaller proportion of women (52.6%) reported this than men (60.9%).
- 77.2% were currently serving a sentence and 22.8% were on remand.

Health Status

- 30.6% of participants rated their health as 'very good' or 'excellent'. A smaller proportion of women (26.3%) reported this than men (30.9%).

- The top five health problems reported were back problems (23.5%), hepatitis C (20.7%), asthma (20.6%), allergies (19.4%), hypertension (15.6%). These rates are much higher in comparison to the wider community.
- There was a higher prevalence of most conditions among females compared to males.
- 24.3% had never been diagnosed with a medical condition.
- 92.2% of women had previously undergone a Pap smear test, with 72.8% of these women having had their last test within two years before being interviewed.
- Only 37.6% of men reported having received information concerning how to examine their testicles for abnormalities. Of those who had received this information, 54.9% reported carrying out an examination monthly or more frequently.

Access to Healthcare

- 17.5% of participants said that they had not accessed healthcare services in prison or had only done so on entering custody.
- 53.8% said that they would access healthcare services for any health problem that concerned them.
- In prison, participants were most likely to have seen a nurse (82%) or a general practitioner (56%).

Smoking, Alcohol and Other Drugs

- The vast majority of participants (85.7%) reported that they were smokers. In accordance with NSW Government policy, smoking was banned at all sites in August 2015.
- 82.1% of smokers felt they were addicted to smoking however the majority (69.4%) reported that they did not intend to smoke once they were released back into the community.

- There were a large number of participants who reported drinking at levels considered hazardous. 67.1% of men and 63.3% of women scored above 8 (indicative of hazardous drinking).
- 13% had been diagnosed with an alcohol use disorder.
- Almost all participants (85.7%) reported having misused drugs other than alcohol. A slightly higher proportion of men (85.8%) reported this compared to women (84.7%).
- Cannabis was the most common drug ever used (81.7%), followed by methamphetamine (66.8%), amphetamines (57.4%), and cocaine (50.5%). While direct comparison to previous surveys is not possible in this report, it is nonetheless interesting to compare the use of ice (crystalline methamphetamine) in 2015 with result from 2001, when only 11% reported having used it, through 2009 when 42% had used it. Methodological enhancements cannot explain a rise in use exceeding 24%.
- 63.2% of methamphetamine users reported having used on a daily or almost daily basis prior to incarceration. In addition, 57% of cannabis users, 28.7% of amphetamine users and 21.7% of cocaine users reported daily or almost daily use.
- The most common diagnoses were: Depression (38.1%) and anxiety (24.9%). Clear differences between sexes were observed for each of these. While 61.2% of women had been diagnosed with depression, 36.4% of men had and while 51% of women had been diagnosed with anxiety, 23% of men had.
- Almost one third (30.5%) of participants reported having contemplated suicide at some stage in their lives. A higher proportion of women (43.3%) reported this compared to men (29.6%). More than two thirds (67.7%) of these individuals had experienced suicidal ideation within the 12 months prior to being interviewed.
- 17.8% of all participants had attempted suicide at least once. This included 17% of men and 28.6% of women.
- 11.8% reported having engaged in self-harm behaviours. A higher proportion of women (24.6%) reported this compared to men (10.9%).

Mental Health

- 49.2% of participants had received some form of psychiatric care prior to their current period of incarceration. A higher proportion of women (54.9%) reported this compared to men (48.8%).
- 62.9% of participants had received at least one mental health diagnosis including 48.1% of those who reported no previous contact with a mental health clinician.

Key Findings for Male Participants

Number of male participants: 757 (343 Aboriginal men; 414 non-Aboriginal men)

Social Demographics

- Median age for male participants was 35 years (34 years for females). This is consistent data presented in the latest NSW Inmate Census produced by Corrective Services NSW.
- 14.3% reported they had been placed in care at some time before age 16 compared to a considerably higher proportion of females (23.9%).
- Only 15.7% of men reported that they had completed secondary school (women, 18.4%). In addition, almost one third of men (31.9%) attended four or more high schools during the course of their secondary education.
- 48.2% of men were employed in the 30 day period prior to coming into custody (women, 26.1%). 37.8% were unemployed with a further 12.9% reporting that they were unable to work during this period.
- 71% of men reported that they lived in their own home (34.5%) or private rental accommodation (36.5%) in the 30 days prior to incarceration. This was a higher proportion than for women (55.9%). A total of 6% of men had no fixed accommodation during this period.
- Less than half of men (45.1%) had children compared to 54.5% of women. Men were also less likely to report having dependent children living (35.3%) with them immediately prior to their incarceration compared to women (41%).

Offending Behaviour

- Approximately one third of male participants reported having been detained as a juvenile (33.4%), a higher proportion than for women (20%).
- 60.9% had been incarcerated as an adult prior to their current term of incarceration (women, 52.6%).
- On average men were sentenced to 8.06 years in prison compared to 5.75 years for women. Half of male participants were serving a sentence of three years or less.

Health Status

- 30.9% of men reported their health as “very good”, or “excellent” at the time they were interviewed. This was slightly higher than the proportion of women (26.3%). A slightly higher proportion of men also reported that their health was poor (9.4%) compared to women (8.9%).
- Men were most likely to report having been diagnosed with back problems (23.1%) followed by hepatitis C (20.4%), asthma (19.5%), allergies (18.3%), and hypertension (15.7%). Only 2% of men reported they had been diagnosed with a problem of the prostate.
- Only 37.6% of men reported having received information concerning how to examine their testicles for abnormalities. Of those who had received this information, 54.9% reported carrying out an examination monthly or more frequently.
- 17.2% of men reported a disability of some kind which impaired their ability to participate unimpeded in daily life activities and interactions (women, 23.7%).

Access to Healthcare

- 5% of men reported that they had never accessed healthcare services while incarcerated with an additional 12.3% indicating the only contact they had with healthcare providers was during their reception into custody.
- 54% said they would access healthcare for any health problem that concerned them (women, 50.8%) while 42.7% said they would only do so if their health problem was serious or if their health was so bad they felt they could not go on (women, 43.1%).
- Men who had accessed healthcare in prison were more likely to report that they had seen a nurse (81.8%) than a general practitioner (55.6%).

Mental Illness and Suicide

- 48.8% of men reported having received some form of psychiatric care prior to being incarcerated (women, 54.9%).
- 46.9% of men reported their mental health as “very good” or “excellent” (women, 26.2%).
- Nonetheless, 62.9% of men had previously received a diagnosis for a mental health condition (women, 77.8%).
- The most commonly reported mental health diagnosis received by men was for depression (36.4%). This was followed by anxiety (23%). Drug abuse or dependence (19.6%), psychosis (17.5%), and alcohol abuse or dependence (12.7%).
- Men were more likely (31%) to report severe anxiety compared to women (25.2%) but were less likely (8.4%) to report severe depression than women (13.8%).
- 29.6% of men reported having contemplated suicide at some time in their life (women 43.3%).
- 17% of men had attempted suicide at least once (women, 28.6%).
- 60.2% of all male participants reported that they were intoxicated (i.e. ‘drunk, high, or stoned’) at the time they committed the offence for which they were currently incarcerated (women, 55.9%).
- 85.8% of men had used illegal substances recreationally, or misused prescription or over the counter medications.
- Men most commonly reported using cannabis (82.5%). This was followed by methamphetamine (66.5%), amphetamines (58.1%), cocaine (51.4%), and ecstasy (51.1%). More than half of males who reported having used methamphetamine and cannabis reported using these substances daily or almost daily (59.5% and 55.1% respectively).
- 47.1% of men reported that they had engaged in illicit drug use while in prison (women, 32.3%).
- 41.8% of men reported having injected drugs (women, 48.8%).
- 80.7% of men considered themselves smokers (women, 89.2%). 39.2% of men who identified themselves as current smokers indicated that they intended to smoke once they were released.

Drugs and Alcohol

- The survey assessed the use of alcohol using the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT).
- Results indicated that 68.8% of men reported having consumed alcohol in the 12 months prior to being incarcerated (women, 48%).
- The median AUDIT score among men who had consumed alcohol was 12 out of a possible 40. WHO suggests that a score of 8 or more is indicative of drinking behaviour which can be deemed ‘hazardous’ or likely to result in physical and mental harm.
- Under this classification, 67.1% of men who had consumed alcohol drank at hazardous levels compared to 63.3% of women.

Key Findings for Female Participants

Number of female participants: 374 (157 Aboriginal women; 217 non-Aboriginal women)

Social Demographics

- Median age for female participants was 34 years (35 years for males). This is consistent with data presented in the latest NSW Inmate Census produced by Corrective Services NSW.
- 23.9% reported they had been placed in care at some time before age 16 compared to a considerably higher proportion of men (14.3%).
- Only 18.4% of women reported that they had completed secondary school (men, 15.7%). In addition, more than one in three women (39.1%) attended four or more high schools during the course of their secondary education.
- 26.1% of women were employed in the 30 day period prior to coming into custody (men, 48.2%). More than half were unemployed (52%) with a further 20.7% reporting that they were unable to work during this period.
- 55.9% of women reported that they lived in their own home (28%) or private rental accommodation (27.9%) in the 30 days prior to incarceration. This was a lower proportion than for men (71%). A total of 10.4% of women had no fixed accommodation during this period.
- More than half of women (54.5%) had children compared to 45.1% of men. Women were also more likely to report having dependent children living (41%) with them immediately prior to their incarceration compared to men (35.3%).

Offending Behaviour

- 20% of female participants reported having been detained as a juvenile, a lower proportion than for men (33.9%).
- 52.6% had been incarcerated as an adult prior to their current term of incarceration (men, 60.9%).
- On average women were sentenced to 5.75 years in prison compared to 8.06 years for men. Half of female participants were serving a sentence of two years or less.

Health Status

- More than one quarter (26.3%) of women reported their health as “very good”, or “excellent” at the time they were interviewed. This was slightly lower than the proportion of men (30.9%). A slightly lower proportion of women also reported that their health was poor (8.9%) compared to men (9.4%).
- Women were most likely to report having been diagnosed with asthma (36%) followed by allergies (33.6%), hepatitis C (24.2%), arthritis (17.5%), and hypertension (13.7%).
- Almost all women (92.2%) reported having had a Pap smear test in their lifetime. 72.8% of these women had undergone a test within two year prior to being interviewed. More than one in four of (27.2%) were overdue for their next test at the time of interview.
- 79.4% of women reported they knew how to undertake breast self-examination. 51.5% of these women undertook an examination on a monthly basis or more often.
- 85.5% of women reported having been pregnant at least once.
- 23.7% of women reported a disability of some kind which impaired their ability to participate unimpeded in daily life activities and interactions (men, 17.2%).

Access to Healthcare

- 5.7% of women reported that they had never accessed healthcare services while incarcerated with an additional 13.8% indicating the only contact they had had with healthcare providers was during their reception into custody.
- 50.8% said they would access healthcare for any health problem that concerned them (men, 54%) while 43.1% said they would only do so if their health problem was serious or if their health was so bad they felt they could not go on (men, 42.7%).

- Women who had accessed healthcare in prison were more likely to report that they had seen a nurse (84.8%) than a general practitioner (62.6%).

Mental Illness and Suicide

- 54.9% of women reported having received some form of psychiatric care prior to being incarcerated (men, 48.8%).
- Only 26.2% of women reported their mental health as “very good” or “excellent” compared to 46.9% of men.
- 77.8% of women had previously received a diagnosis for a mental health condition (men, 62.9%).
- The most commonly reported mental health diagnosis received by women was for depression (61.2%). This was followed by anxiety (51%), drug abuse or dependence (30%), posttraumatic stress disorder (20.9%), and bipolar disorder (16.5%).
- Women were less likely (25.2%) to report severe anxiety compared to men (31%) but were more likely (13.8%) to report severe depression than men (8.4%).
- 43.3% of women reported having contemplated suicide at some time in their life (men 29.6%).
- More than one in four women (28.6%) had attempted suicide at least once (men, 17%).

Drugs and Alcohol

- The survey assessed the use of alcohol using the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT).
- Results indicated that 48% of women reported having consumed alcohol in the 12 months prior to being incarcerated (men, 68.8%).
- The median AUDIT score among women who had consumed alcohol was 12 out of a possible 40. WHO suggests that a score of 8 or more is indicative of drinking behaviour which can be deemed ‘hazardous’ or likely to result in physical and mental harm.
- Under this classification, 63.3% of women who had consumed alcohol drank at hazardous levels compared to 67.1% of men.

- 55.9% of all female participants reported that they were intoxicated (i.e. ‘drunk, high, or stoned’) at the time they committed the offence for which they were currently incarcerated (men, 60.2%).
- 82.7% of women had used illegal substances recreationally, or misused prescription or over the counter medications.
- Women most commonly reported using cannabis (70.4%). This was followed by methamphetamine (70.2%), amphetamines (49%), cocaine (37.3%), and methadone or buprenorphine (35%). A large proportion of women who reported having used methamphetamine and cannabis reported using these substances daily or almost daily (70.5% and 61.6% respectively).
- 32.3% of women reported that they had engaged in illicit drug use while in prison (men, 47.1%).
- 48.8% of women reported having injected drugs (men, 41.8%).
- 89.2% of women considered themselves smokers (men, 80.7%). 58.4% of women who identified themselves as current smokers indicated that they intended to smoke once they were released.

Key Findings for Aboriginal Participants

Number of participants: 500 (343 men; 157 women)

Social Demographics

- Aboriginal participants were less likely to be raised by biological parents (39.1%), but more likely to be raised by extended family (28.1%).
- Aboriginal participants were more likely to have spent time in care (23.5%), have been placed in care at a younger age than non-Aboriginal participants (7 years compared to 11), and to have spent more time overall in care (7 years compared to 3).
- Aboriginal participants were likely to leave school without completing year 10 (56.2% compared to 32.5% of non-Aboriginal participants), and less likely to have completed their secondary education (6.2% compared to 24% of non-Aboriginal participants).
- Aboriginal participants were more likely to have never had employment (8.3% compared to 1.9% of non-Aboriginal people), more likely to have been unemployed before custody (55% compared to 33.3%), and to have spent more years unemployed (3 years compared to 2 years).

Offending Behaviour

- Aboriginal participants were likely to have spent time in juvenile detention than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (56.2% compared to 27.5%). However, the age of first detention was similar for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants (median age 14 years for both groups).
- Aboriginal participants were more likely to have been in custody on a previous occasion (78.2% of Aboriginal participants compared to 53.8% of non-Aboriginal participants), and more likely to have been in custody on three or more occasions previously (65.4% of Aboriginal participants compared to 36.4% of non-Aboriginal participants).

Health Status

- Aboriginal participants were slightly more likely than non-Aboriginal participants to assess their physical health as 'good', 'very good', or 'excellent' (76.5% compared to 71.8%).
- Aboriginal men were more likely than non-Aboriginal men to report ever having being diagnosed with hepatitis C (24.4% compared to 19.3%) and Asthma (24.4% compared to 18.1%).
- Aboriginal women were more likely than non-Aboriginal women to have received a diagnosis for chest pain or angina (12.7% compared to 8.1%), hypertension (14.5% compared to 13.4%), hepatitis A (1.2% compared to 0%), hepatitis C (33.3% compared to 19.1%), and asthma (44.8% compared to 31.1%).
- Female Aboriginal participants were less likely to report having ever examined their breasts for lumps (65.9% compared to 74.2%), but amongst those who had ever self-examined their breasts, Aboriginal women were more likely to report doing so monthly or more often (63.9% compared to 42.9%).

Access to Healthcare

- Aboriginal participants reported visiting the clinic as frequently as non-Aboriginal participants. For example, 38.5% of Aboriginal participants reported visiting a clinic in the week prior to being interviewed compared to 37.5% of non-Aboriginal participants.
- Aboriginal participants were more likely to report that they would never visit the clinic for a new health problem, although this group remained a small minority (4.7% compared to 2.2%).

- Aboriginal participants were as likely to report seeing a range of medical practitioners in custody or the community in the last 12 months. Aboriginal men tended to report the lowest utilisation (General practitioner, 55.6%; nurse 79.9%) and Aboriginal women tended to report the highest (General practitioner, 62.6%; nurse 85.8%), but differences were small.

Aboriginal Health

- 90.1% of Aboriginal men and 80.9% of Aboriginal women reported identifying with a particular Aboriginal people or country, including 78.3% of men and 73.6% of women from within NSW.
- Aboriginal men (42.3%) were more likely than Aboriginal women (34.9%) to report living on their traditional country before incarceration.
- Almost all Aboriginal participants reported feeling accepted by other Aboriginal people, and being proud of their Aboriginality (92.6% of men and 94.3% of women).
- Most Aboriginal participants reported that most or all of their peers knew they were Aboriginal (90.6% of men and 84.9% of women), but only around half said that most or all people meeting them for the first time knew they were Aboriginal.
- A majority of Aboriginal participants said they were satisfied with their knowledge of their Aboriginal culture (58.2% of men and 56.7% of women) and that it was important for them to be recognised as Aboriginal (56.6% of men and 64.1% of women).
- Around a quarter of Aboriginal participants reported speaking at least a few words of an Aboriginal language, including 4.6% of men and 5% of women who spoke one well.

Mental Illness and Suicide

- The majority of participants reported having been diagnosed with a mental illness by a clinician. A higher proportion of Aboriginal participants (men 66.3%; women, 80.5%) had a diagnosis compared to non-Aboriginal participants (men 60.7%; women 76.2%).

- Aboriginal participants reported higher instances of schizophrenia (16.5%), psychosis (8.3%), alcohol abuse or dependence (14.6%), and posttraumatic stress disorder (8.5%) than non-Aboriginal participants.
- Rates of bipolar disorder and anxiety were lower among Aboriginal participants.
- Aboriginal participants were diagnosed at a younger age (males, 20 years; females 21 years).
- Aboriginal women were less likely to have been admitted to a psychiatric unit than non-Aboriginal women.
- A slightly higher proportion of Aboriginal participants (men, 30.6%; women 42.1%) reported a history of suicidal ideation compared to non-Aboriginal participants (men, 29.3%; women 42.1%).
- A smaller proportion of Aboriginal participants reported contemplating suicide while incarcerated.
- Aboriginal women (26.2%) were less likely than non-Aboriginal women to have attempted suicide but a higher proportion of Aboriginal men (20.6%) had made at least one attempt in comparison with non-Aboriginal men.

Drugs and Alcohol

- Aboriginal participants (79%) were more likely to report using alcohol at hazardous levels compared to non-Aboriginal people (63.3%), using the World Health Organisation's Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test.
- A score of 8 or above on this test indicates hazardous drinking. The median score for Aboriginal men was 14 and 19.5 for Aboriginal women.
- Aboriginal participants were more likely to report that they were drunk, or otherwise intoxicated, at the time of their offence than non-Aboriginal participants but were less likely to report committing an offence in order to obtain alcohol or drugs (68.2% compared to 57.7%).
- Other substances most commonly misused by Aboriginal participants included: methamphetamine (77%), cannabis (75.7%), heroin (50.7%), amphetamines (46.1%), and buprenorphine (34.2%).

Key Findings for Older Participants

Number of older participants: 153

Social Demographics

- According to Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network policy, a patient is classified as 'older' if they are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and aged 45 years or more, or if they are non-Aboriginal and aged 55 years or more. This classification is consistent with assumptions made in the empirical literature.
- 19.7% of older participants described themselves as married or in a de facto relationship compared to 29.1% of younger inmates. In addition, 38.5% reported they had never been married (younger participants, 59.9%).
- 72.7% reported that they were living in their own home or private rental accommodation in the six months prior to being incarcerated (younger participants, 60.8%). An additional 4.5% reported they had no fixed accommodation during this period (younger participants, 5.2%).
- 22.8% of older participants had completed secondary education (younger participants, 60.8%). Of these, 65.9% had completed some form of post-secondary qualification (younger participants, 55.7%).
- Just over one third (34.1%) of older participants were employed full time in the 30 days prior to coming into custody (younger participants, 21.6%). A further 17.9% were unemployed (younger participants, 49.7%) while 46.1% reported that they were unable to work (younger participants, 16.4%).
- 26.8% of older inmates had children compared to 58.8% of younger inmates.
- In the month prior to being interviewed, 41.5% of older inmates had received at least one visit from a family member or a friend (younger inmates, 50.5%).

History of Incarceration

- 53.7% of older inmates had been incarcerated prior to their current term (younger participants, 63.6%).

- The median age at which older participants were first incarcerated in an adult facility was 44 years compared to 21 years for younger participants.
- Over the course of their lifetime, older participants had spent a median time of 11.5 years in adult prisons (younger participants, 5 years).

Health Status

- 21.3% of older participants reported their health as "very good", or "excellent" at the time they were interviewed. This was lower than the proportion of younger participants (30.4%). Whereas almost one in five older participants (19.7%) described their health as poor, only 7.5% of younger participants reported this.
- Older participants were most likely to report having been diagnosed with hypertension (42.3%) followed by back problems (35%), asthma (30.9%), arthritis (33.3%), and hepatitis C (20.3%).
- More than one in four older participants (27.6%) reported having a disability that impacted their ability to participate in routine daily life compared to 18.4% of younger participants. Of these, 73.5% reported that their disability impacted their physical mobility.
- A smaller proportion of older participants (22.1%) reported suffering an injury in the 12 months prior to being interviewed compared to younger participants (30.2%), however a greater proportion of older participants (61.5%) attributed the cause of their injury to an accident than younger participants (57.3%) and only 15.4% described the cause as an assault (younger participants, 27.8%).

Access to Healthcare

- 50.4% of older participants reported they had accessed prison healthcare services in the week prior to being interviewed (younger participants, 36.4%).

- Almost two thirds of older participants (63%) indicated they would seek healthcare in prison for any health problem that concerned them (younger participants, 55.3%) while 33.3% reported they would only visit the clinic if their health problem was serious or their health was so bad they felt they could not go on (younger participants, 40.7%).
- Older participants who had accessed healthcare in prison were more likely to report that they had seen a nurse (91.1%) than a general practitioner (82.9%). 81.1% of younger participants who had accessed healthcare in prison had seen a nurse and 54.6% had seen a general practitioner.

Mental Illness and Suicide

- 66.7% of older participants reported they had received psychiatric care at some time in their life (younger participants, 54.8%).
- 37% of older participants rated their mental health as “very good” or “excellent” compared to 35% of younger participants.
- Two thirds of older participants (66.6%) had received a mental health diagnosis previously (younger participants, 73.8%).
- Depression was the most common mental health diagnosis (59.3%). This was followed by anxiety (29.6%), alcohol abuse or dependence (25.9%), drug abuse or dependence (22.2%), and posttraumatic stress disorder (11.1%).
- 33.3% of older participants reported symptoms consistent with severe depression (younger participants, 16.4%).
- 11.1% of older participants reported symptoms consistent with severe anxiety (younger participants, 17.9%).
- A slightly higher proportion of older participants (46.2%) reported that they had contemplated suicide at some point in the lives compared to younger participants (42.6%), however while 50% of these participants had attempted suicide at least once, 65.9% of younger participants who had contemplated suicide had made at least one attempt.

Drugs and Alcohol

- The survey assessed the use of alcohol using the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT).
- Results indicated that 65% of older participants reported having consumed alcohol in the 12 months prior to being incarcerated (younger participants, 61.9%).
- The median AUDIT score among older participants who had consumed alcohol was 13 out of a possible 40. WHO suggests that a score of 8 or more is indicative of drinking behaviour which can be deemed ‘hazardous’ or likely to result in physical and mental harm.
- Under this classification, 64.7% of older participants who had consumed alcohol drank at hazardous levels compared to 72.3% of younger participants.
- 60.9% of all older participants reported that they were intoxicated (i.e. ‘drunk, high, or stoned’) at the time they committed the offence for which they were currently incarcerated (younger, 63.9%).
- 70.4% of older participants had used illegal substances recreationally, or misused prescription or over the counter medications (younger, 88.4%).
- Older participants most commonly reported using cannabis (76.2%). This was followed by amphetamines (47.6%), cocaine (42.9%), heroin (28.6%), and methamphetamine (28.6%).
- The use of methamphetamine constitutes a noteworthy distinction between older and younger participants. While only 28.6% of older participants reported having used this substance, 72% of younger inmates had.
- 25.2% of older participants reported that they had engaged in illicit drug use while in prison (younger participants, 44.2%).
- 75.4% of younger participants considered themselves smokers (younger participants, 90.5%). 43.8% of older participants who identified themselves as current smokers indicated that they intended to smoke once they were released.