



FACT Sheet

United States Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration

DAWN (Drug Abuse Warning Network)

Project DAWN (Drug Abuse Warning Network) is a federal program initiated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to identify and evaluate the scope and extent of drug abuse in the United States. DAWN, jointly funded with the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) includes over 900 different facilities which supply data to the program. The original design and development of the program was conceived by the scientific staff of the Office of Science and Technology in the Drug Enforcement Administration. Since its inception in June 1972, the Project DAWN contract has been negotiated on six separate occasions. Each separate negotiation usually involved some modification in the areas of (1) SMSA coverage, (2) number and types of participating facilities, and (3) time collecting intervals associated with Project DAWN, I, II, III, IV, V, VI, and VIII. (See chart, DAWN Systems Statistics, below)

The Purposes of DAWN

DAWN has been designed to:

1. Identify drugs currently abused.
2. Determine existing patterns of abuse in a selected sample of SMSA's (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas).

DAWN SYSTEM STATISTICS

<i>Correlation between designated DAWN-Phase citation and time interval of data collection period.</i>	
<u>Designation</u>	<u>Time Interval</u>
DAWN I	September 1972 - March 1973
DAWN II	April 1973 - March 1974
DAWN III	April 1974 - April 1975
DAWN IV	May 1975 - April 1976
DAWN V	May 1976 - April 1977
DAWN VI	May 1977 - April 1978
DAWN VII	May 1978 - April 1979

3. Monitor systemwide abuse trends including the detection of new abuse entities and new polydrug combinations.
4. Provide current data for the assessment of the relative hazards to health, both physiological and psychological, and relative abuse potential for drug substances.
5. Provide data needed for rational control and scheduling of drugs of abuse.

Information Collected

DAWN, which has been in existence since July 1972, and in essentially its current format since July 1973, derives its information from episode reports provided by selected hospital emergency rooms, medical examiners and crisis centers. A reporter in each participating facility completes a report for each drug abuse contact seen by the facility.

The reasons for contact are medical or psychological in nature (hospital emergency rooms and crisis centers), or deaths of the individual (medical examiners). The information provided by DAWN is limited to drug abuse cases which are treated, medically or psychologically, in a participating hospital or crisis center. Even in a standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) in which all hospital emergency rooms participate, the only abuse cases reported by DAWN are those in which the abuser or someone in contact with the abuser perceives a problem requiring assistance from a reporting modality. All drug abuse related deaths, however, which occur in a county with a participating medical examiner/coroner will be included in DAWN data.

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were adopted:

1. *Drug Abuse* was defined as the non-medical use of a substance for any of the