

New York Leads in Using Behavioral Health for Opioid Addiction

New York clinicians used behavioral health methods to treat people with opioid abuse and dependence diagnoses more than their peers in other states, [according to new data](#) from Fair Health, a nonprofit database of 26 billion claims from private insurers.

The data come from Fair Health's latest white paper on the opioid crisis, breaking down the most common procedure codes tied to opioid abuse and dependence diagnoses by cost and utilization in each state.

[Demographic data](#) showed people ages 23 to 30 were the most common age-group with a diagnosis of opioid abuse and dependence, at 30%, followed by ages 31 to 40 at 28%. Men outnumbered women 62% to 38%, according to Fair Health's data.

The most common form of treatment in New York was methadone. The national analysis showed medication-assisted treatment using drugs, such as methadone and buprenorphine, was most common in the Northeast and less common in the South and the Midwest.

Group counseling was one of the top forms of treatment in the state, both in terms of the total money spent and the frequency with which it was used.

Three of the five procedure codes that racked up the highest cost among claims here were related to drug testing. A Kaiser Health News [investigation last year](#) reported that there was no standard for when drug testing is warranted, and certain doctors received a disproportionate amount of Medicare's spending on urine testing. —J.L.