

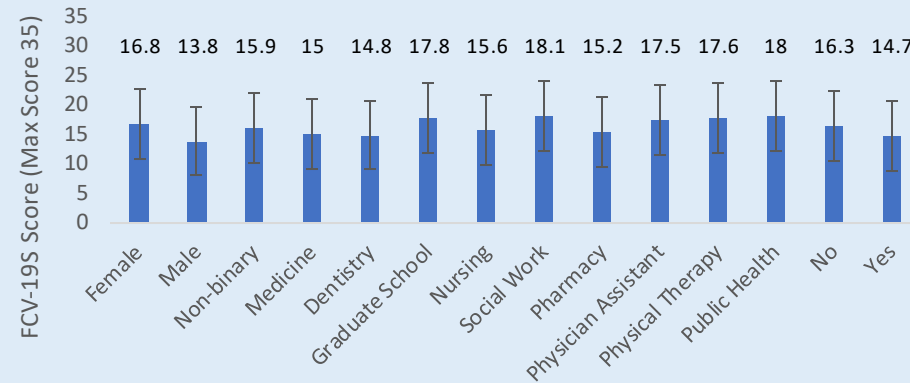
Mental Health and Substance Use in Colorado Healthcare and Graduate Students during COVID-19: A Mixed Methods Investigation

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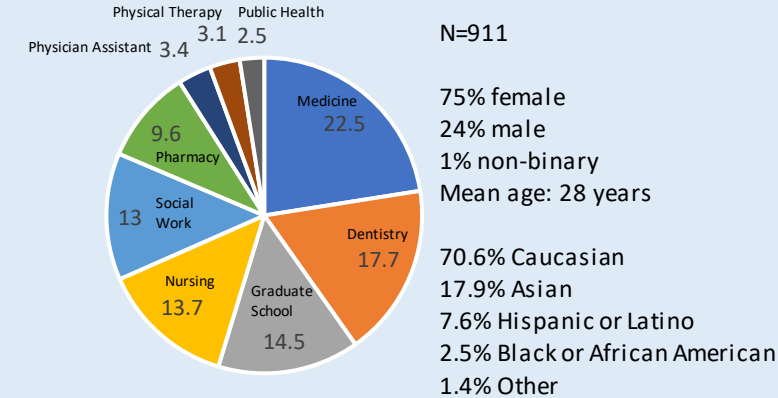
BACKGROUND

- The COVID-19 pandemic impacted mental health by exacerbating anxiety, fear, and substance use worldwide.
- Several studies have demonstrated increased substance use and worsened mental health in students abroad.
- This prompted investigation on the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on graduate and healthcare students in the United States.

Mean FCV-19S Score by Gender Identity, School Program, and Experience Treating COVID-19 Patients



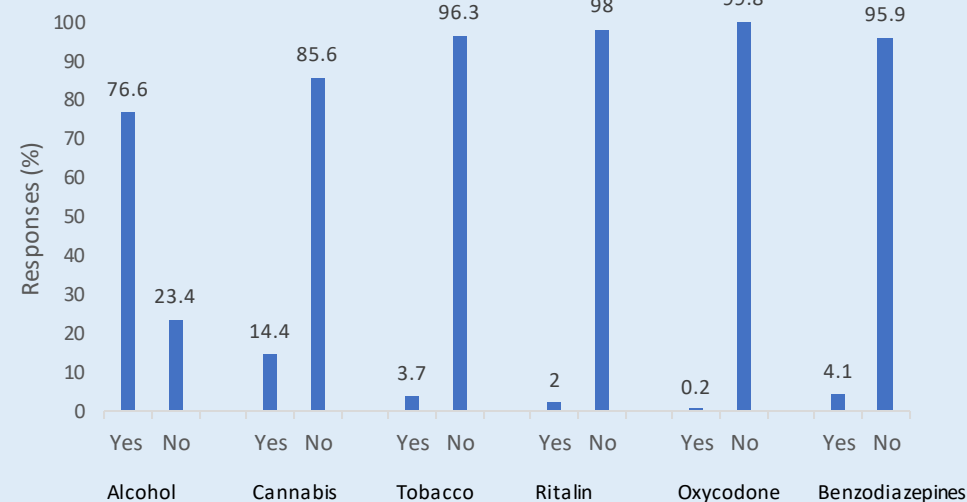
Survey Respondent Demographics



METHODS

- An online survey was distributed to Colorado healthcare and graduate students to assess changes in mental health and substance use during the COVID-19 pandemic from June 2020 to February 2021.
- We used an augmented Fear of COVID-19 Scale (FCV-19S), a 7-item questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores corresponding to greater fear.
- The quantitative data was analyzed via descriptive statistics.
- The qualitative data was analyzed via ATLAS.ti software to uncover themes in students' free responses.

Q: Because of COVID-19, during the last 3 months, have you used any of the following substances more than usual?



RESULTS

- Higher FCV-19S scores were significantly associated with higher levels of depression, exhaustion, loneliness, and anger.
- Higher FCV-19S scores were significantly associated with increased levels of alcohol use, binge drinking, and cannabis use.
- Qualitative analysis revealed three common student concerns: worries regarding the length of the pandemic, its social impact, and educational/financial impact.