



**SOUTH DAKOTA  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

# Public stigma towards substance use disorder (SUD): Pilot survey study in South Dakota

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## INTRODUCTION

- Public stigma impedes access and utilization of SUD treatment and support services<sup>1,2</sup>
- Understanding SUD as a chronic disease of the brain is correlated with the reduction of multiple stigmatizing beliefs<sup>3,4</sup>

## OBJECTIVES

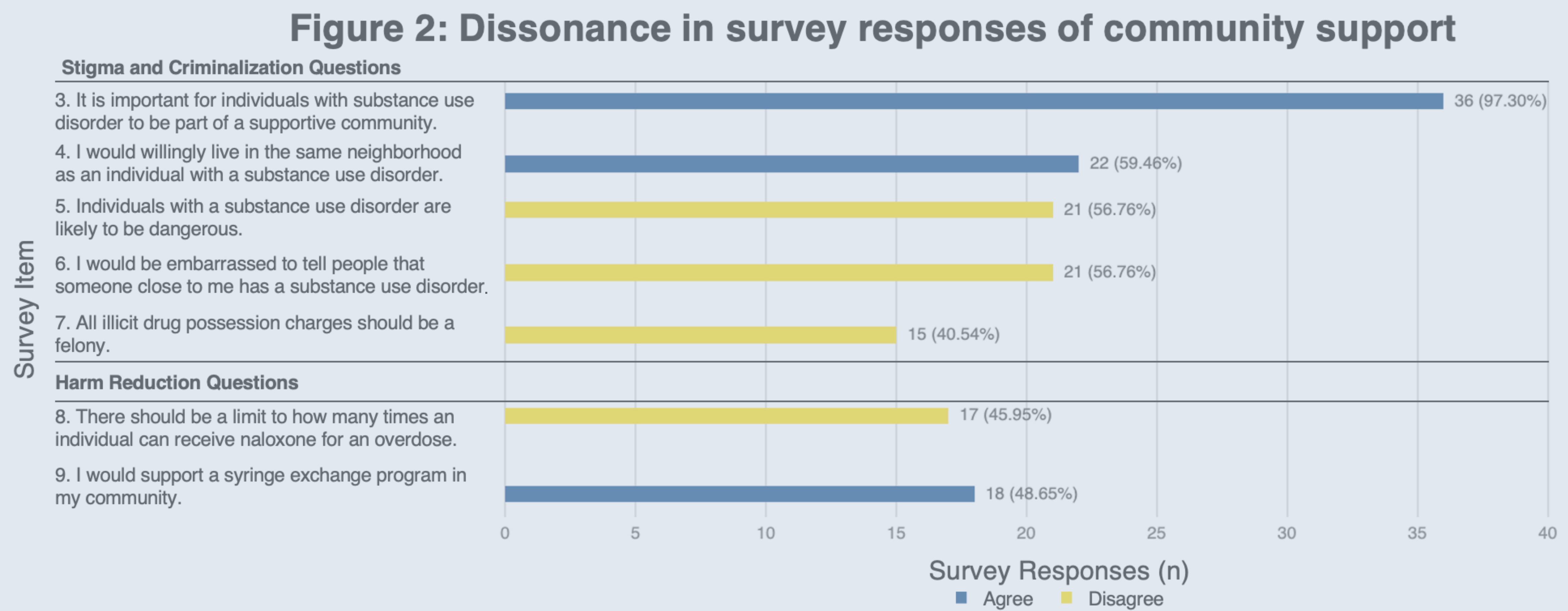
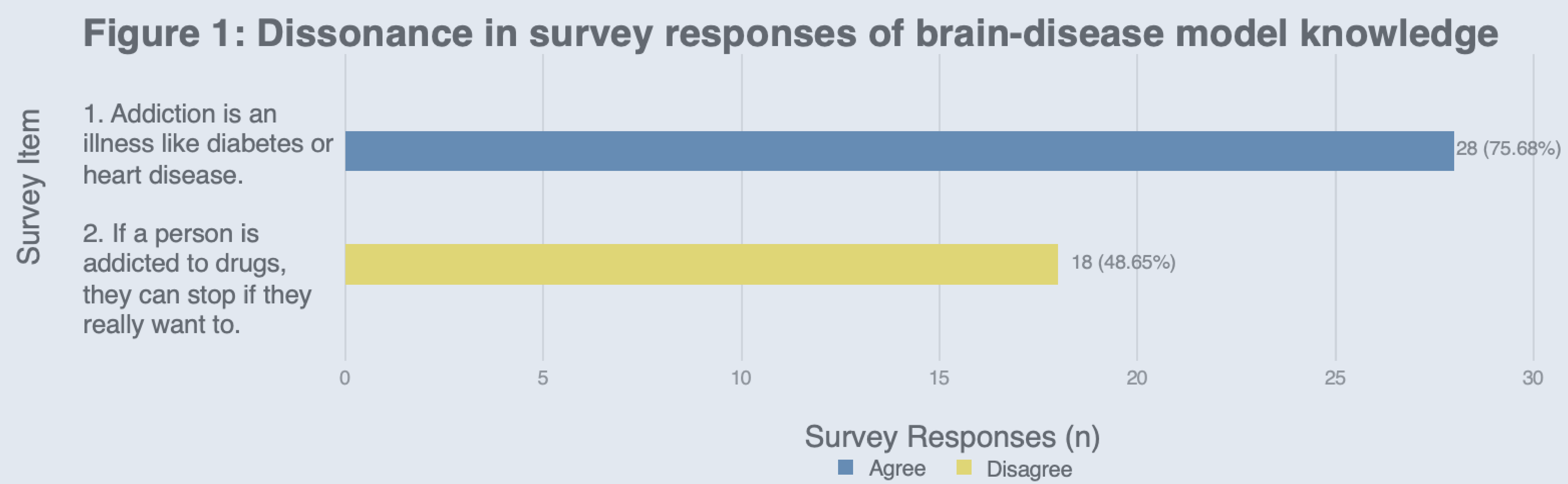
- Identify public stigma of SUD across SD as part of SDSU's START-SD and START-SD-PSS programs
- Focus future research for the development an anti-stigma campaign

## METHODS

- Data was gathered using a 22-item questionnaire adapted from a previous public stigma survey<sup>3</sup>
- Participants were recruited via convenience sampling for an online survey
- Descriptive statistics were utilized to evaluate results

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of survey respondents**

Number of responses (n)	37 respondents		Hispanic or Latino	2.78%
South Dakota counties	12 out of 66 counties		Education	GED or higher: 100.00%
Age (Average)	34.89 years		Employment Status	Full time (40 hours/week): 67.57%
Gender	Male: 52.78%	Female: 47.22%	Family Income	\$75,000+/year: 48.65%
Race	White: 91.89%	AI/AN: 2.70%	Family member or close friend with a SUD	50.00%



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## IMPLICATIONS

- The results show that the brain-disease model is well-represented in South Dakota (Figure 1)
- The patterns of dissonance indicate a lack of understanding among the public regarding:
  - Disease treatment (Figure 1)
  - Community support (Figure 2)
    - Stigma and criminalization
    - Harm reduction
- Anti-stigma work is needed to increase public knowledge and understanding of SUD
- Community-based education and social interaction methods have shown to improve community support and reduce public stigma<sup>5,6,7</sup>
- Focusing public anti-stigma messaging to increase knowledge and informed understanding of SUD as a chronic illness will prospectively reduce stigmatizing ideologies regarding SUD and increase the acknowledgement of evidence-based treatment as a necessity to facilitate the recovery process of SUD<sup>2,3,4,6,8,9</sup>
- Illicit substance policy reform and harm reduction policy development are also needed to reinforce community support

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