Cannabis Use and Outcomes: Howard County

UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND SCHOOL of PHARMACY
Maryland State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW)
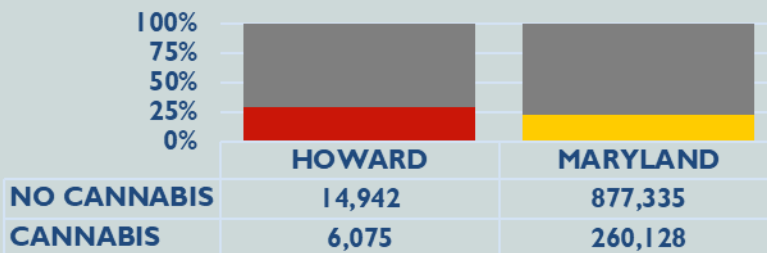
The Maryland Health Services and Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) serves as the source of data for all charts. The data consists of approximately 625,000 inpatient discharges and 5.5 million emergency department and ambulatory hospital based clinic visits annually. Data used for these analyses are 'event level', meaning individual identifiers are unavailable and it is possible for the same person to be responsible for more than one event. Jurisdiction refers to the patient's residence; thus, it does not necessarily correspond to the jurisdiction in which the event took place. Also, the data only capture events involving hospitalizations or ED visits and likely underestimates the frequency of all alcohol– and drug– related events among residents. Finally, analyses reflect events involving utilized diagnostic codes and should not be interpreted as the primary or sole reason for the event. Alcohol- and drug- related hospitalizations were defined as events with ICD-10-CM diagnostic codes for abuse, dependence, and/or poisonings involving cannabis, alcohol, heroin, opioids, marijuana, cocaine, prescribed psychotherapeutic agents, and hallucinogens.

SUMMARY- Among Howard County residents:

- Nearly thirty percent (28.9%) of alcohol– and/or drug– related events involved cannabis.
- Adults 35 and older were involved in a greater proportion of cannabis-related events over time.
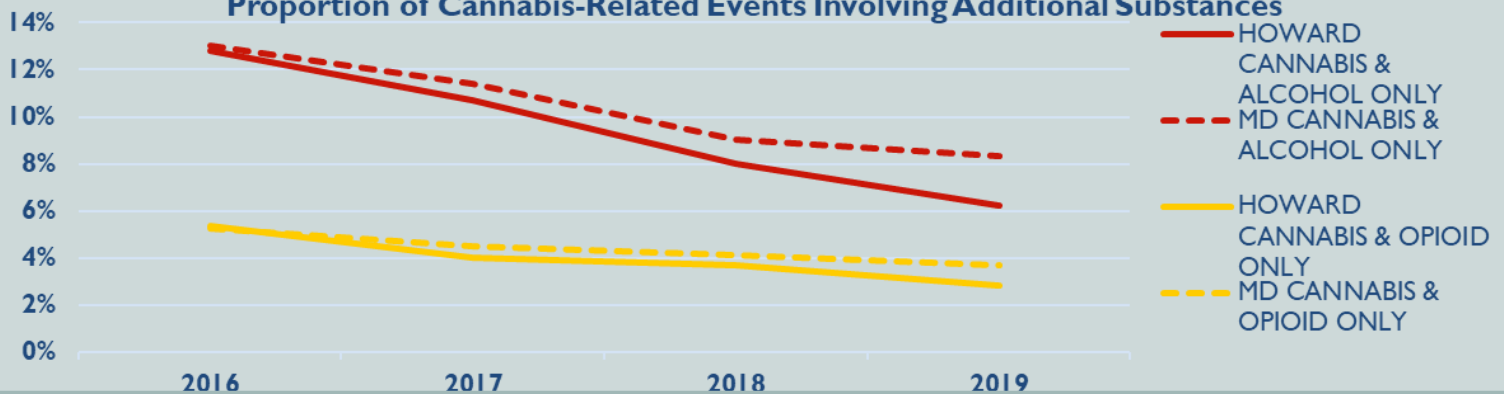- Mental health conditions were observed in over three-quarters (77.2%) of cannabis-related events.

Cannabis–Related Hospitalizations

Proportion of Alcohol- and/or Drug- Related Events Involving Cannabis, 2016-2019

	HOWARD	MARYLAND
NO CANNABIS	14,942	877,335
CANNABIS	6,075	260,128

Between 2016 and 2019, 1,137,463 hospital events involved alcohol and/or drugs in Maryland; of these, 260,128 (22.9%) were cannabis-related. In Howard County, 21,017 hospital events involved alcohol and/or drugs, though a smaller proportion of events were cannabis-related (28.9% (n=6,075)). No significant differences in the annual proportion of events involving cannabis were observed at the state– or county– level.
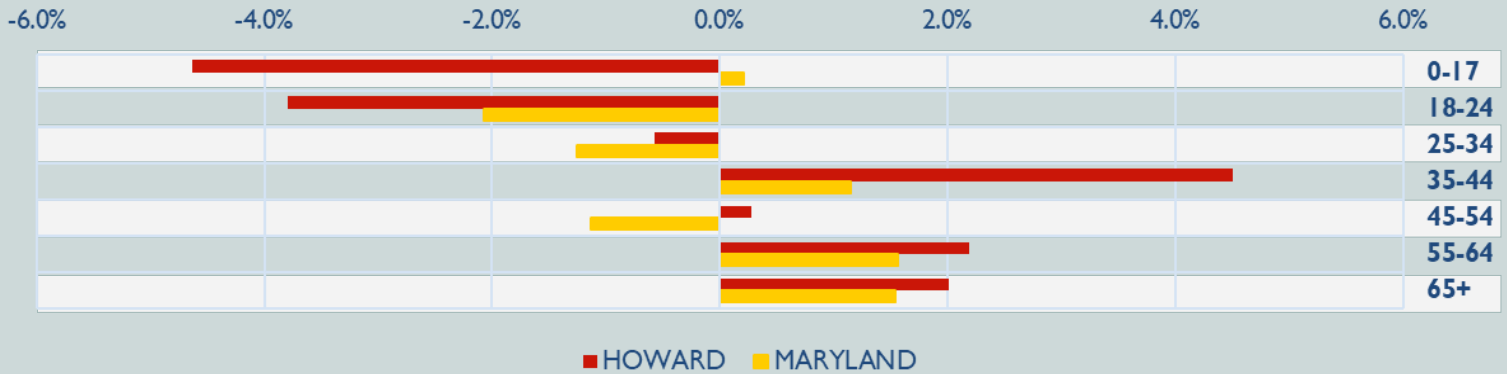
Proportion of Cannabis-Related Events Involving Additional Substances

Legend:
- HOWARD CANNABIS & ALCOHOL ONLY
- MD CANNABIS & ALCOHOL ONLY
- HOWARD CANNABIS & OPIOID ONLY
- MD CANNABIS & OPIOID ONLY

Cannabis was the only substance involved in around seventy percent of cannabis-related events in Howard. This proportion grew from 62.6% in 2016 to 75.5% in 2019. Of cannabis-related events involving another substance, alcohol and opioids were the most common substances reported though the proportion of events involving either decreased over this time. Cannabis-related events involving only alcohol decreased from 12.8% in 2016 to 6.2% in 2019; those involving only opioids decreased from 5.4% in 2016 to 2.8% in 2019. Similar trends were observed at the state-level.
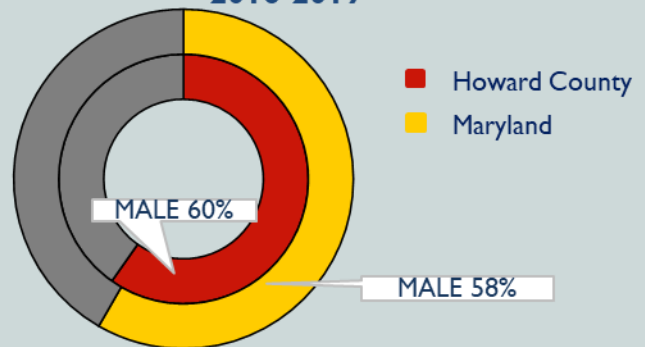
Between 2016 and 2019, the proportion of cannabis-related events occurring among aged 35-44 and 55+ adults in Howard increased. In 2019, events among those aged 35-44 accounted for 4.5% more of all cannabis-related events than in 2016; while those 55+ accounted for 2.0% more. Individuals aged 18-24 and 25-34 accounted for the majority of cannabis-related events in 2019 (24.2% and 33.7%, respectively). Events among those 0-17 years old decreased the most from 2016 to 2019 (-4.6%). Similar trends were observed among these specific age groups at the state-level except aged 0-17 and 45-54.

Difference in Proportion of Cannabis-Related Events by Age Group, 2016-2019
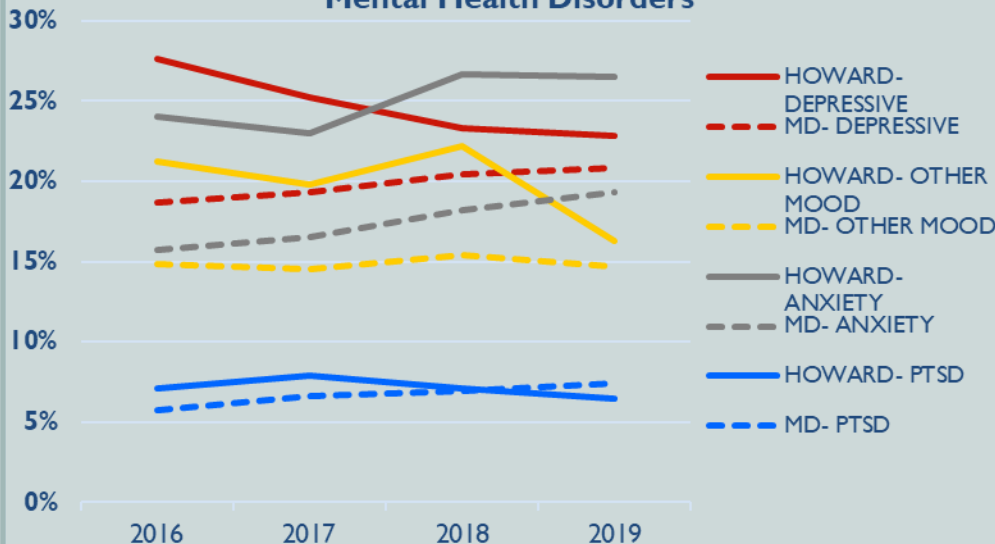

■ HOWARD   ■ MARYLAND

Males accounted for the majority of cannabis-related events in both Howard(59.8%) and Maryland (58.3%) from 2016 to 2019. However, the proportion of cannabis-related events involving males in Howard county decreased from 64.6% in 2016 to 56.6% in 2019. A similar shift was observed at the state-level (60.5% to 57.1%, respectively).

Proportion of Cannabis-Related Events by Sex, 2016-2019

■ Howard County
■ Maryland

MALE 60%
MALE 58%

Cannabis-Related Hospitalizations Involving Mental Health Conditions

Proportion of Cannabis-Related Events Involving Mental Health Disorders

—— HOWARD- DEPRESSIVE
---- MD- DEPRESSIVE
—— HOWARD- OTHER MOOD
---- MD- OTHER MOOD
—— HOWARD- ANXIETY
---- MD- ANXIETY
—— HOWARD- PTSD
---- MD- PTSD

Mental health conditions were the most common diagnoses observed among cannabis-related hospitalizations at the state– and county– levels. Nearly eighty percent of cannabis-related events in Howard involved a mental health diagnosis (77.2%). Cannabis-related events in Howard more frequently involved mental health conditions as compared to events statewide. Depressive disorders (22.9%) and anxiety (26.5%) were the most common conditions reported in 2019. Anxiety had the largest difference when compared to events statewide (19.4%).