

The 2011 Needs Assessment Planning Process

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The planning process for the 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment was intended to be a collaborative process between Ryan White Parts A and B, as well as Prevention Services at the Houston Department of Health and Human Services. A description of the process, including the workgroup bodies involved throughout, follows.

Structure of the 2008 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment

The overall process for the 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment was guided by the Joint Needs Assessment Group (NAG). The Needs Assessment Group consisted of representatives from partner organizations, consumers, service providers and other community members. In addition to overall guidance, a major role of the NAG was to review all work products generated by the following workgroups:

Epidemiology Workgroup: Reviewed epidemiological data and unmet need estimates for determining subpopulation sample sizes for the Needs Assessment. These sample sizes helped to develop a strategy for data collection. The workgroup also reviewed final products before they were forwarded to external planning bodies for approval.

Survey Workgroup: Reviewed and updated the participant survey. This workgroup also ensured that the survey addressed important data elements and measures. The workgroup reviewed final products before they were forwarded to the NAG for approval.

Data Collection Workgroup: Focused on the development and administration of the client survey and subsequent focus groups; identified locations for survey administration; developed effective strategies for participant recruitment, and; focused on reaching out-of-care survey respondents. The workgroup also reviewed final products before they were forwarded to external planning bodies for approval.

Analysis Workgroup: Assessed service gaps based on participant and provider survey responses, and; identified barriers to care using data on service utilization and provider capacity. The workgroup also reviewed the gaps analysis report and other final products before they were forwarded to external planning bodies for approval.

Structure of the 2011 Needs Assessment

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The 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment is comprised of the following elements:

- Client Survey
- Risk Behavior Items
- Focus Groups

Methodology

A total of 924 consumer surveys were collected from March 2010 to September 2010. Criteria for inclusion were a minimum age of 18, HIV or AIDS diagnosis, and residency in the Houston HSDA planning area.

Survey locations included clinics, agencies and outreach vans targeting the homeless population. Spanish surveys were administered with the help of a bilingual survey administrator or interpreter. Data collection activities were staffed by the Ryan White Planning Council Health Planner, Council Coordinator, Ryan White Part B Health Planner, one graduate student and two interpreters.

Recruitment involved provider referrals and print materials (fliers, newspaper ads) at hospitals and clinics, organizations, substance abuse treatment centers, shelters, community centers and street outreach. A \$20 gift card was provided upon completion of each survey. Surveys were self-administered and available in English and Spanish. Assistance was provided to those with reading or cognitive difficulties. Most surveys were completed between 20 to 45 minutes. Questionnaires consisted of multiple choice and Likert scale* items. Domains included access to medical and supportive services, HIV testing experiences, entry to care, HIV medications, health status, mental health, substance use, housing status and demographic characteristics.

Prevention items included on the Needs Assessment survey were recommended by the Houston Department of Health and Human Services staff, according to the definition of risk for HIV transmission developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These questions focused on behaviors that might lead a person living with HIV to transmit their infection or to be re-infected with HIV, which can complicate treatment options and therefore the well-being of that person.

*A Likert scale measures the extent to which a person agrees or disagrees with the question. The most common scale is 1 to 5. Often the scale will be 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Structure of the 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment

Survey Limitations

The following limitations should be considered when interpreting the results from the client survey:

- Sampling Method: Survey data were based on a convenience sample, and therefore may not accurately reflect the general population of PLWHAs in the Houston HSDA. A convenience sample is a group of people under study who have been assembled based on the ease of interviewing them or on accessibility to their records, etc. While this type of sampling can help produce good information about a topic, its major disadvantage is that there is no way of knowing if the group is representative of the population as a whole.
- Although methods were used to encourage a random sample (fliers posted throughout the community, newspaper ads, etc), the respondents were generally referred to the survey through a convenience sampling method.
- Literacy: There may have been differences in understanding survey items based on the literacy levels of respondents. Although survey administrators routinely offered to discretely assist respondents with literacy problems, some respondents may not have asked for assistance due to embarrassment.

Survey Sites

The following table shows survey administration sites for all 942 client surveys, by type of venue and in-care status. The types of venues will show where surveys were administered and where out-of-care PLWHA were most often identified.

Table 17: Type of Survey Venue by Care Status

Venue	In Care	Out of Care	Total
Ryan White Agency	512	8	520
Non-Ryan White Agency	105	48	153
Harris County Hospital District	241	8	249
Other	0	2	2
TOTAL	858	66	924

Structure of the 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment

Survey Respondents

There were 924 total PLWHA respondents to the 2011 Needs Assessment consumer survey.

- The majority of consumer survey respondents were men (67%). Women represented 31% of all respondents, transgender male-to-females represented 2% and transgender female-to-males represented less than 1%. Among women, 4% said they were pregnant at the time of the survey, and 1% said they did not know their pregnancy status.
- The average age of respondents was 44.69 years (sd=10.08). Virtually all respondents were above the age of 25; 44% of all respondents were between the ages of 25-44, and another 54% were above the age of 45. Only 3% were youth between the ages of 18 and 24.
- More than half of all respondents identified as Black/African American (55%), and 21% identified as White, 22% as Hispanic/Latino, and 2% as Asian, Native American or multi-racial.
- Just over half (52%) of all respondents were identified as straight or heterosexual and 46% were identified as gay or bisexual. None of the female respondents were identified as gay, bi or lesbian. Two percent of respondents were undecided or preferred not to disclose their orientation.
- More than half (57%) of respondents had a high school degree/GED or less. Thirty-two percent had some college or had a college degree, 4% had a graduate/professional degree and 6% had some technical training. One percent of respondents reported receiving no education.
- Nineteen percent of all survey respondents reported being released from jail or prison during the previous year.

Structure of the 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment

Table 18: Client Survey Respondent Demographics, 2011 Needs Assessment

Demographics					
Rural vs. Urban		Pregnant?		Sexual Orientation	
Urban	95%	Yes	4%	Straight/Het	52%
Rural	4%	Don't Know	1%	Gay/Les/Bi	46%
				Undecided/Prefer not to say	2%
County of Residence		Age			
Harris	95%	18-24	3%	Education	
Ft. Bend	2%	25-44	44%	Less than high school	19%
Montgomery	2%	45+	54%	High school degree/GED	38%
Walker	0%			Some technical training	6%
Other	1%	Race/Ethnicity		Some College	24%
		White	21%	College degree	8%
Gender		Black/African American	55%	Grad/Prof Degree	4%
Male	67%	Latino	22%	None	1%
Female	31%	Other	2%		
Transgender – MtF	2%			Recently Released?	
Transgender - FtM	0%			No	81%
				Yes	19%

Structure of the 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment

Subgroup Chart Labels and Definitions

All: All survey respondents.

InCare (no hist): Respondents who were in care at the time of the survey with no self-reported history of being out of care for 12 or more months.

OOc: Respondents who were out of care at the time of the survey, per HRSA definition. The HRSA definition is no evidence of HIV medications, viral load test or CD4 test in 12 consecutive months.

InCare (hist): Respondents who were in care at the time of the survey with a self-reported history of being out of care for 12 or more months.

MSM-Wh: White male respondents who identified as gay or bisexual. Males who identified as heterosexual but reported having sex with men were also included in this subgroup.

MSM-BI: Black male respondents who identified as gay or bisexual. Males who identified as heterosexual but reported having sex with men were also included in this subgroup.

MSM-Hisp: Hispanic male respondents who identified as gay or bisexual. Males who identified as heterosexual but reported having sex with men were also included in this subgroup.

RR: Respondents who had been released from jail or prison in the previous 12 months.

SubAbuse: Respondents with an indication of either alcohol or drug abuse, as measured by the Two-item Conjoint Screen (TICS) tool. The TICS tool was used to screen for alcohol or other substance abuse (*Brown RL et al. J Am Bd Fam Prac 2001;14:95-106.*). The two items were “In the last year, have you ever used [alcohol or substance] more than you meant to?” and “In the last year, have you felt you wanted or needed to cut down on your [alcohol or substance] use?” A positive response to either item detects abuse with 80% sensitivity.

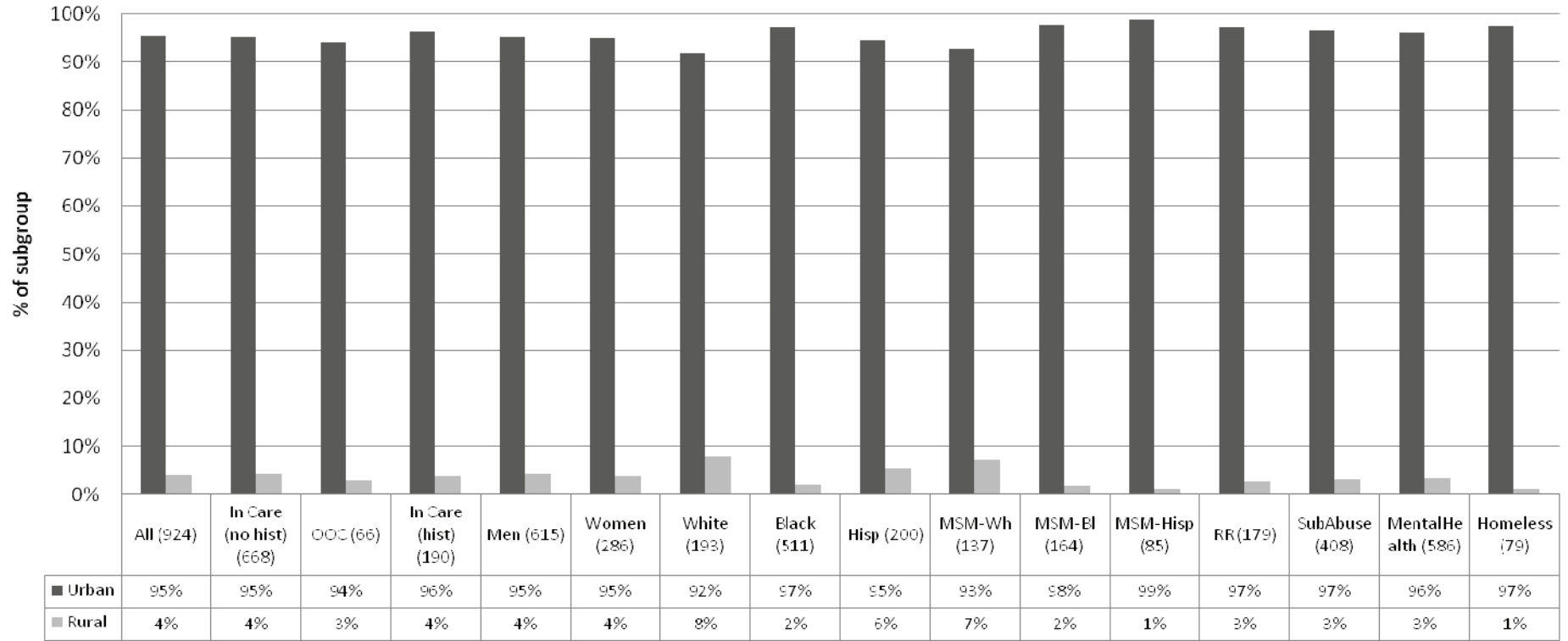
MentalHealth: Respondents who reported being troubled by at least one of the following within the previous month; anxiety or tension, hallucinations, wanting to do self-harm, trouble controlling his/her anger or psychiatric or emotional problems requiring medication.

Homeless: Respondents who reported sleeping most often in a shelter or on the street.

Rural: Respondents that resided in a rural area in the HSDA, defined as any county outside of Harris County.

Survey Respondents

Demographics: Urban vs. Rural Respondents

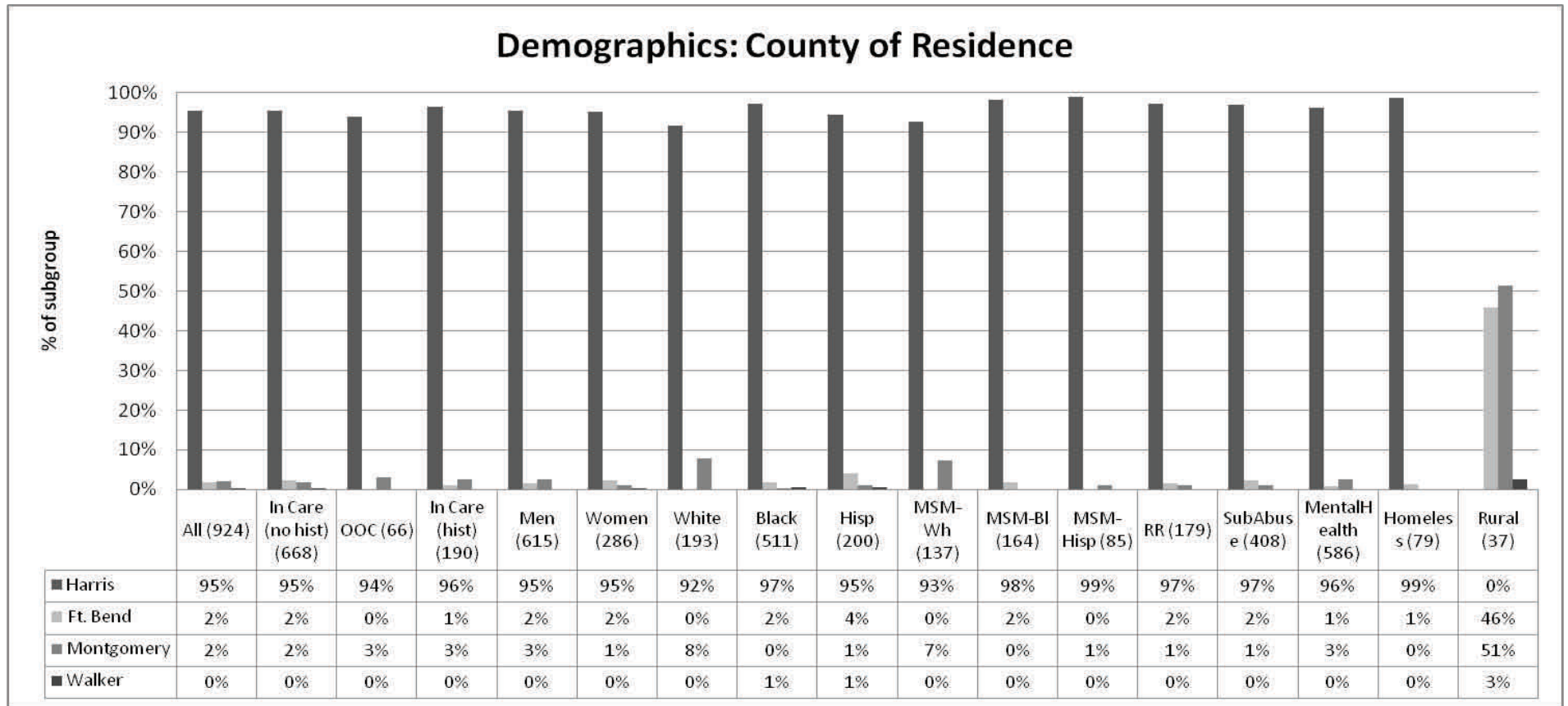


~ Subgroups not shown: Rural

The chart above shows the proportions of urban and rural residents for each subgroup.

- The borders of Harris County serve as the boundary between “urban” and “rural” areas in terms of Houston Ryan White Parts A and B planning purposes. “Rural” is defined as any portion of the 10-county HSDA located outside of Harris County. The following counties are considered rural: Fort Bend, Waller, Montgomery, Liberty, Chambers, Wharton, Colorado, Austin and Walker.
- The vast majority of the overall 924 survey respondents lived in an urban area (Harris County) at the time of the survey.

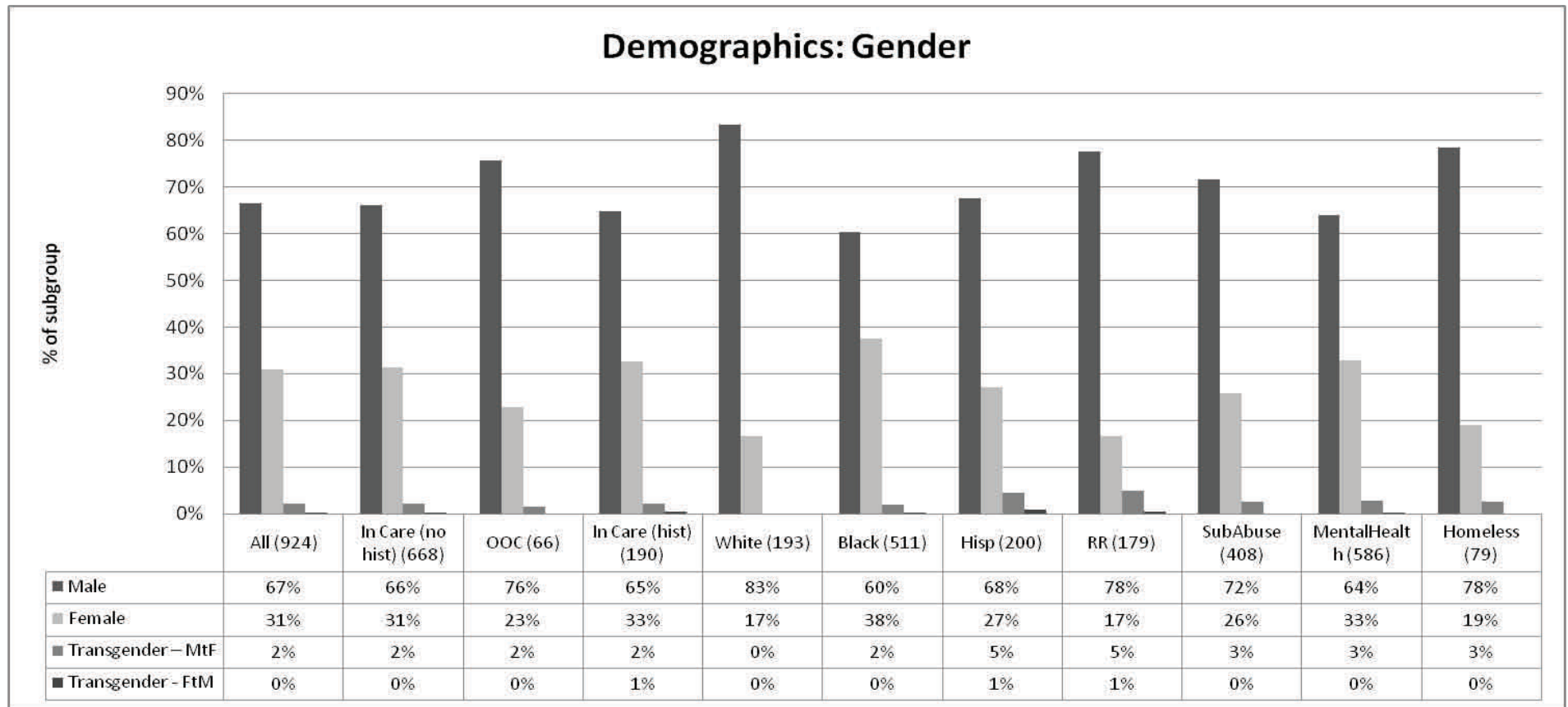
Survey Respondents - Demographics



The chart above shows the county of residence for the total survey sample and subgroups.

- By far, Harris County was the county of residence for the majority of respondents across all subgroups; 92% or more of the respondents in each subgroup were residents of Harris County.
- Montgomery County had the highest number of rural respondents, followed by Fort Bend.
- 8% of Whites and 7% of MSM-Whites were residents of Montgomery County.

Survey Respondents - Demographics

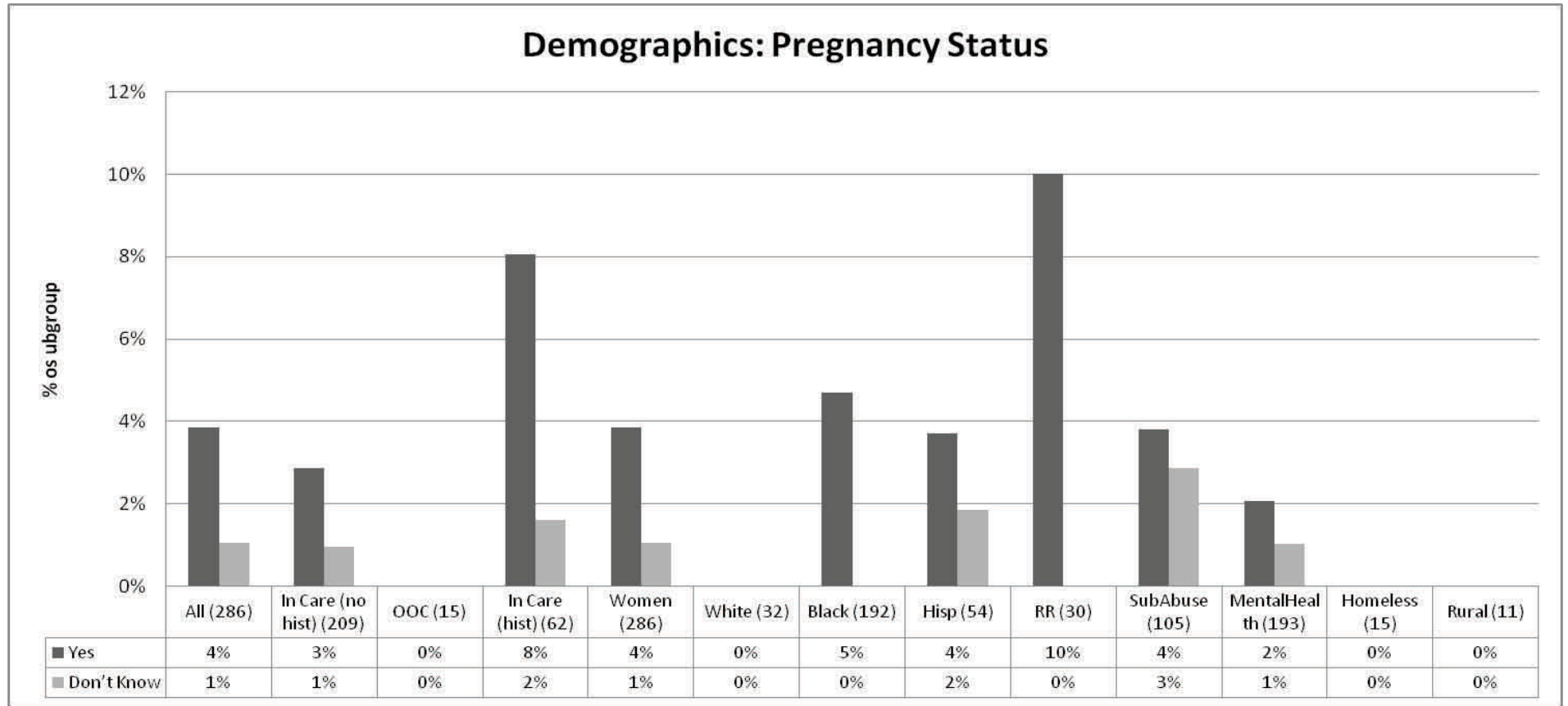


~ Subgroups not shown: Men, Women, MSM-White, MSM-Black, MSM-Hispanic, Rural.

The chart above shows the gender breakdown across selected subgroups.

- Of the total 924 survey respondents, 67% were male, 31% female, 2% transgender MTF (male to female) and <1% transgender FTM (female to male).

Survey Respondents - Demographics

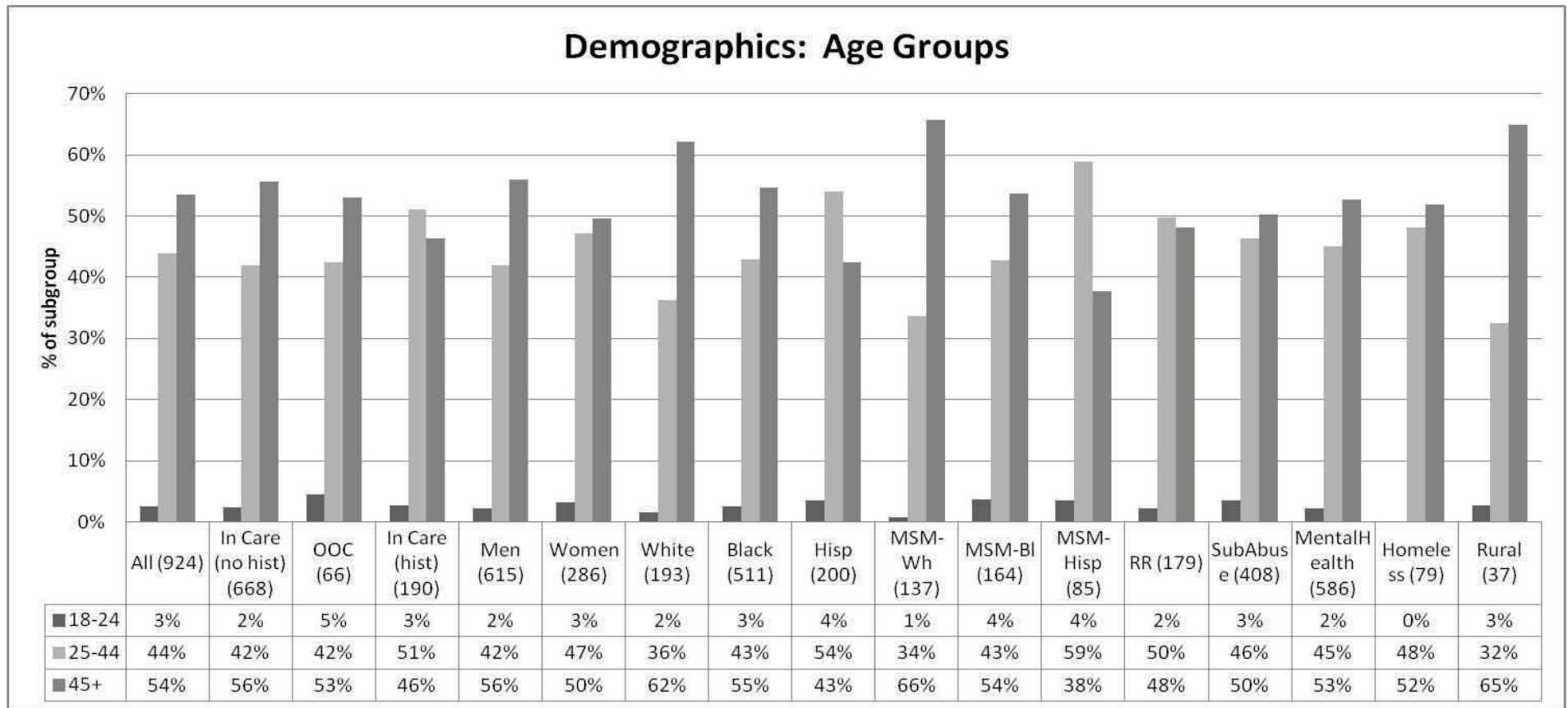


~ Subgroups not shown: Men, MSM-White, MSM-Black, MSM-Hispanic.

The chart above shows the self-reported pregnancy status of female respondents in selected subgroups.

- Overall, relatively few respondents were pregnant; 4% (n=11) reported being pregnant at the time of the survey.
- The subgroups with the highest proportions of pregnant women were the in-care with a history of being out of care (8%) and the recently released (10%).

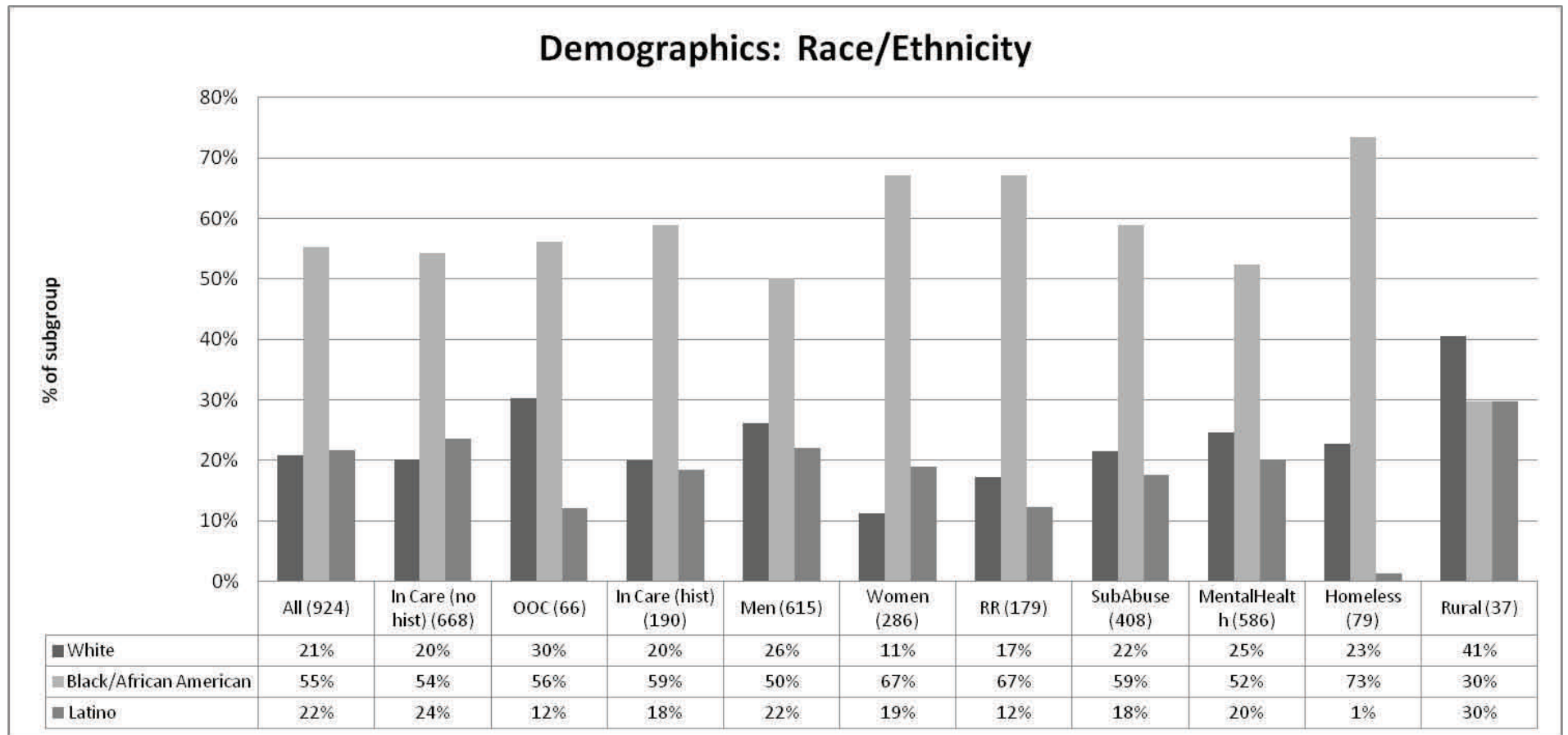
Survey Respondents - Demographics



The chart above shows respondent age groups for each subgroup.

- The average age of respondents was 44.69 years, ranging from 17-75. Ninety-eight percent of respondents were above the age of 25; 44% were between the ages of 25-44, and 54% were above the age of 45. Three percent were youth between the ages of 18 and 24.
- Overall, a little more than half (54%) of all respondents were 45 years or older.
- Rural respondents (65%), Men (56%), Whites (50%) and MSM-Whites (66%) had more respondents above 45 than other subgroups.

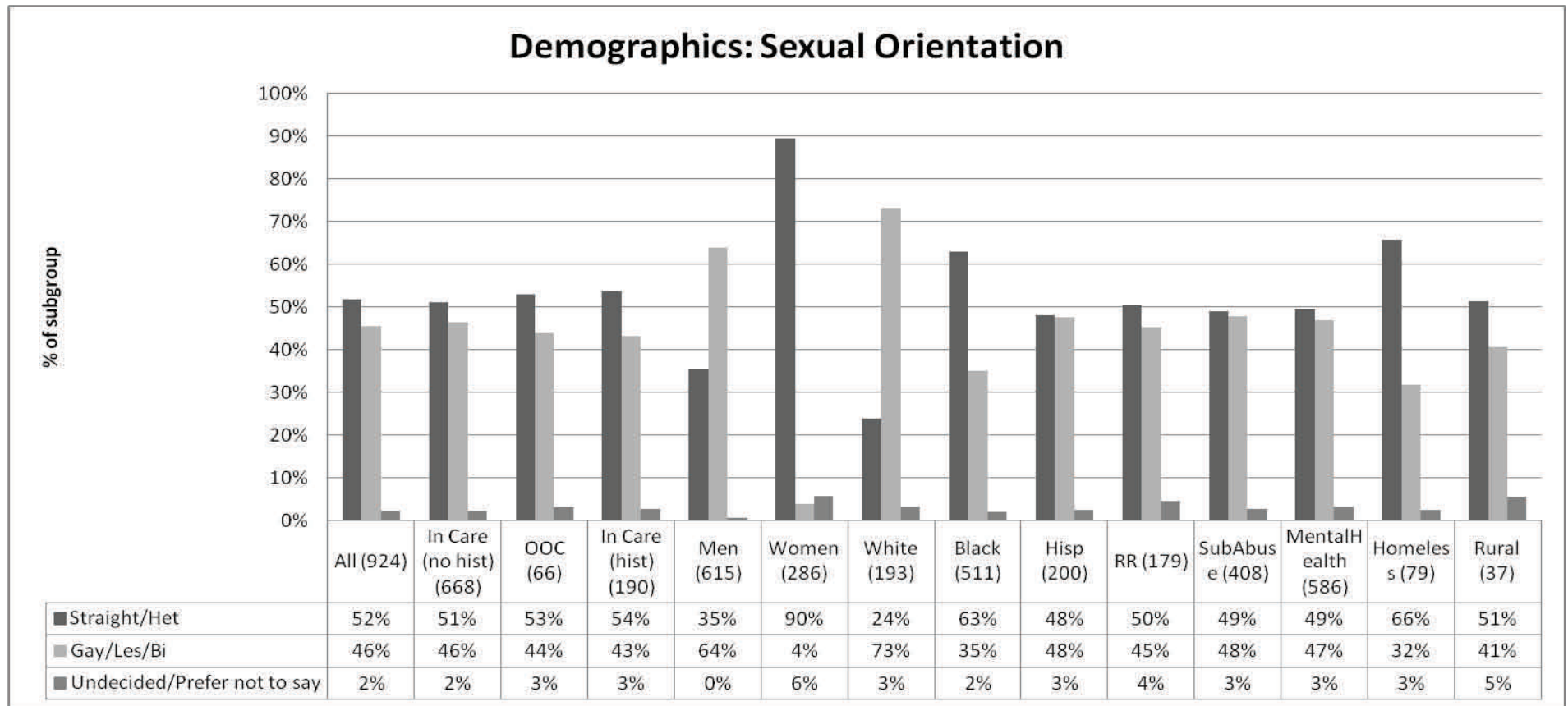
Survey Respondents - Demographics



The above chart shows the racial breakdown for selected subgroups.

- 21% of respondents identified as White, 55% as Black, 22% as Latino and 2% as Other (Asian, Native American or multi-racial).
- Blacks were represented the most among the Homeless (73%), the Recently Released (67%) and Women (67%).
- Whites were represented the most among the Rural respondents (41%), Out of Care (30%), Men (26%) and those with Mental Health problems (25%).
- Latinos were represented the most among Rural respondents (30%), the In Care with no history of being out of care (24%), Men (22%) and those with Mental Health problems (20%).

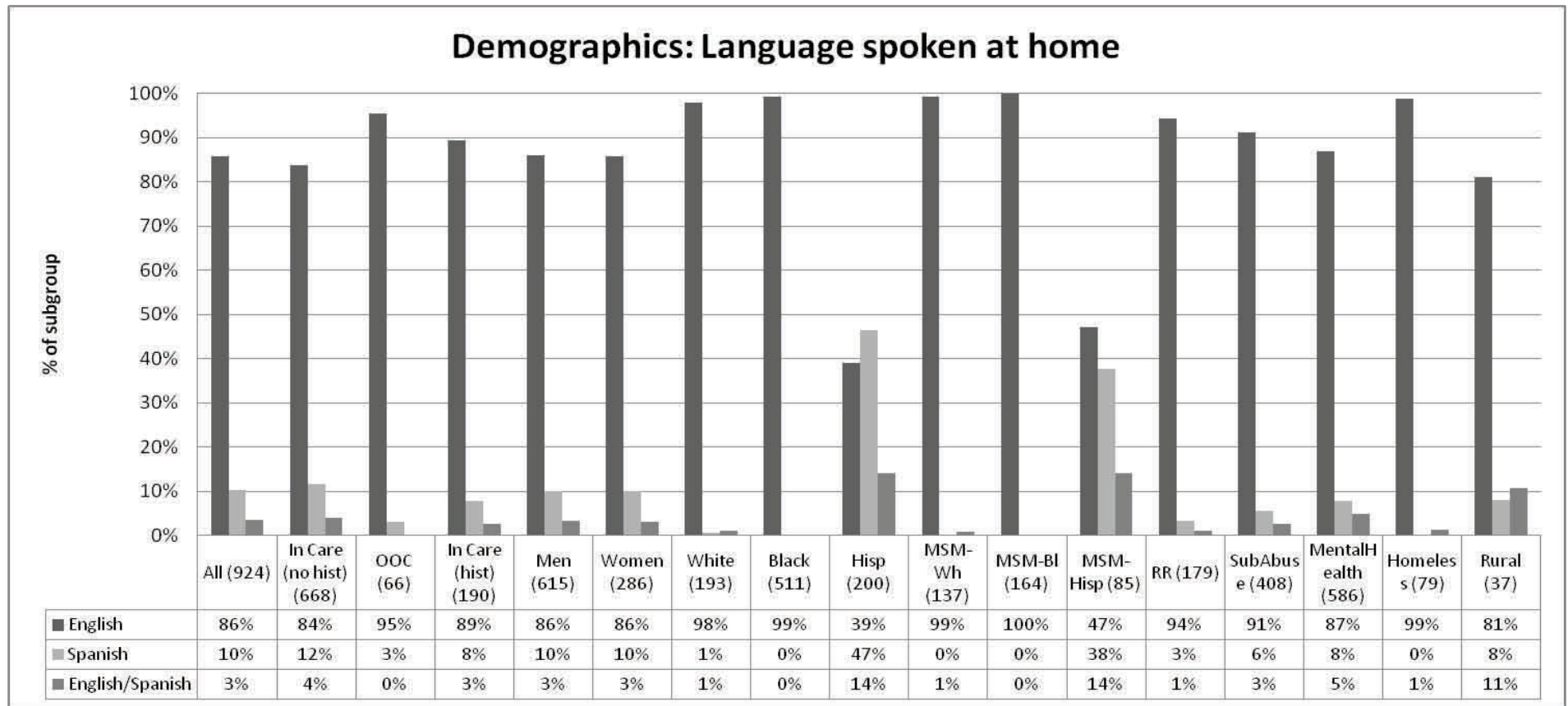
Survey Respondents - Demographics



The chart above shows the sexual orientation breakdown for selected subgroups.

- Respondents were defined as straight or heterosexual if they self-identified as such and did not report any same sex behavior. Respondents were defined as gay or bisexual if they self-identified as such or reported same sex behavior.
- Heterosexuals were most represented among Women (90%), the Homeless (66%) and Blacks (63%).
- The White (73%) and male (64%) subgroups had the highest proportion of gay/bisexual respondents.

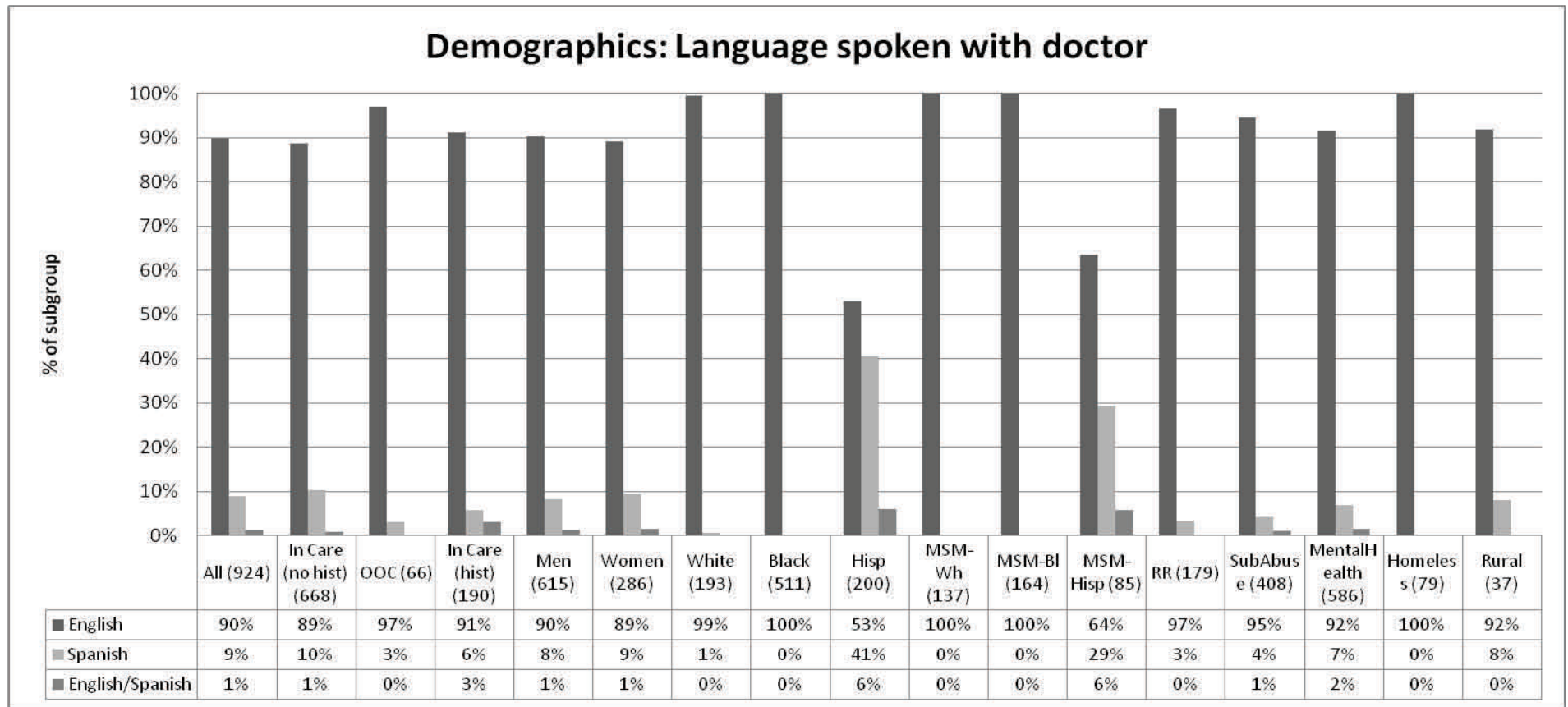
Survey Respondents - Demographics



The chart above shows the primary language spoken at home for each subgroup.

- Overall, English was the most common primary language for all respondents (86%). Ten percent of respondents primarily spoke Spanish at home and 3% spoke both English and Spanish equally.

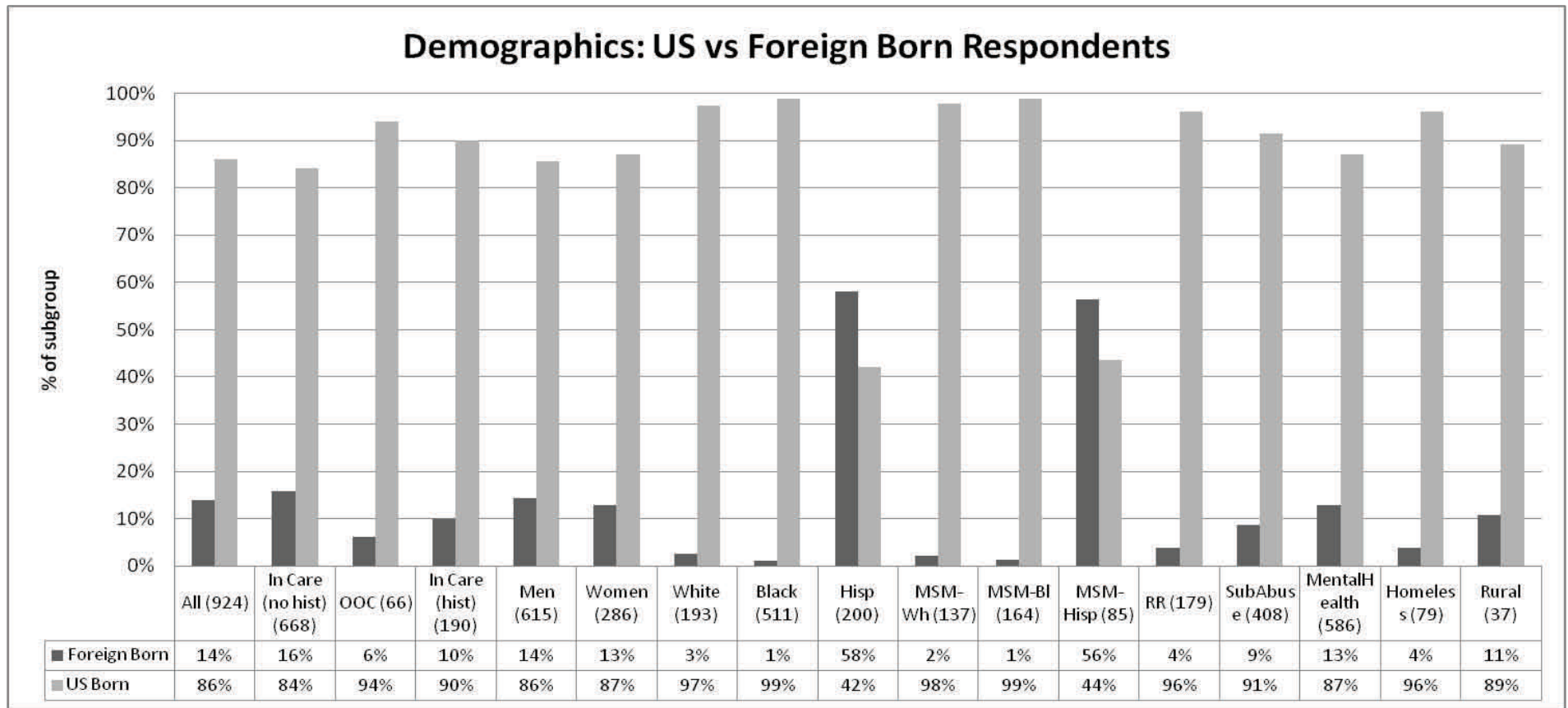
Survey Respondents - Demographics



The chart above shows the primary language spoken with a doctor for each subgroup.

- By far, English was the most common language spoken with a doctor (90%). Nine percent of respondents spoke Spanish primarily and 1% spoke a combination of English and Spanish with their doctor.

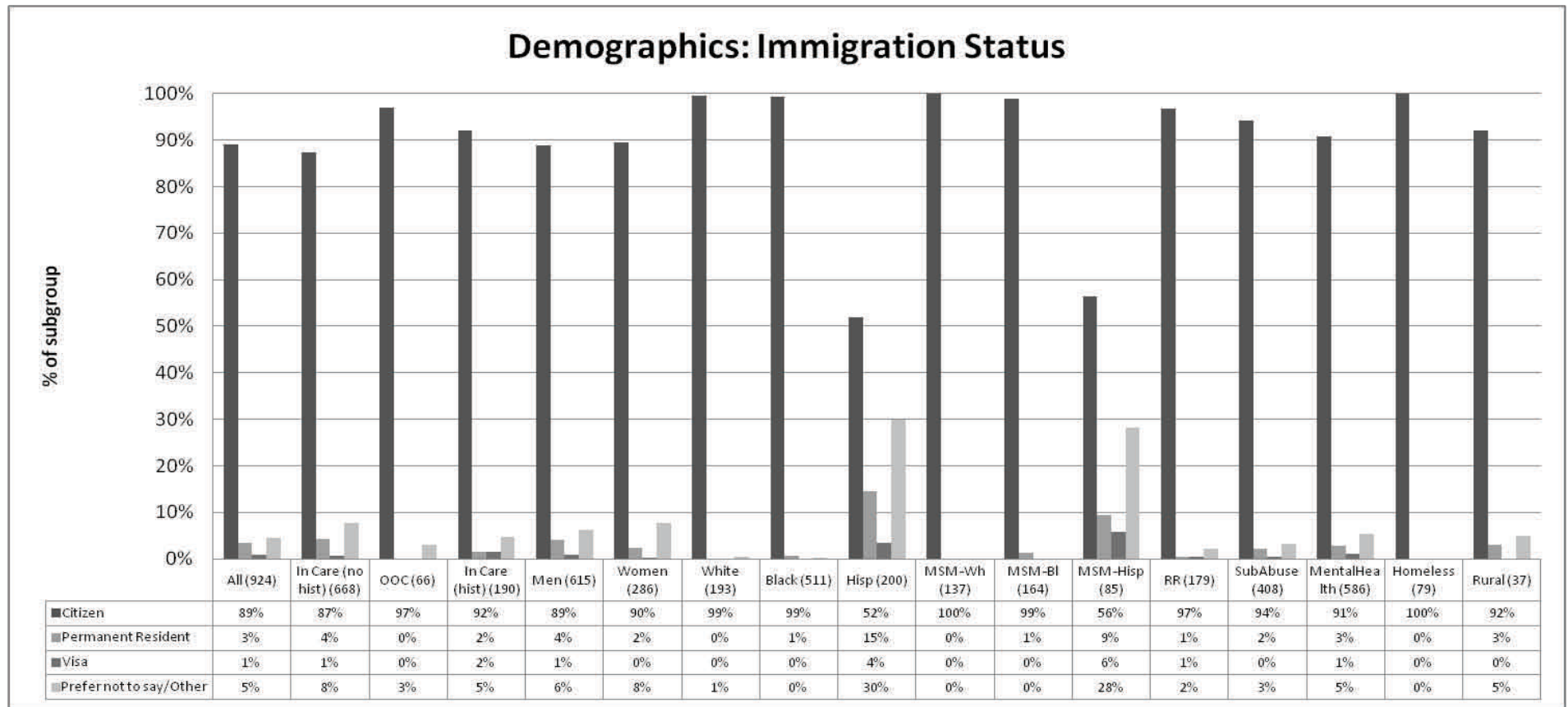
Survey Respondent Demographics



The chart above shows US-born and foreign-born respondents for each of the subgroups.

- US-born respondents represented 86% of all respondents and foreign-born represented 14%.
- Foreign-born respondents were most represented among Hispanics (58%) and MSM-Hispanics (56%).

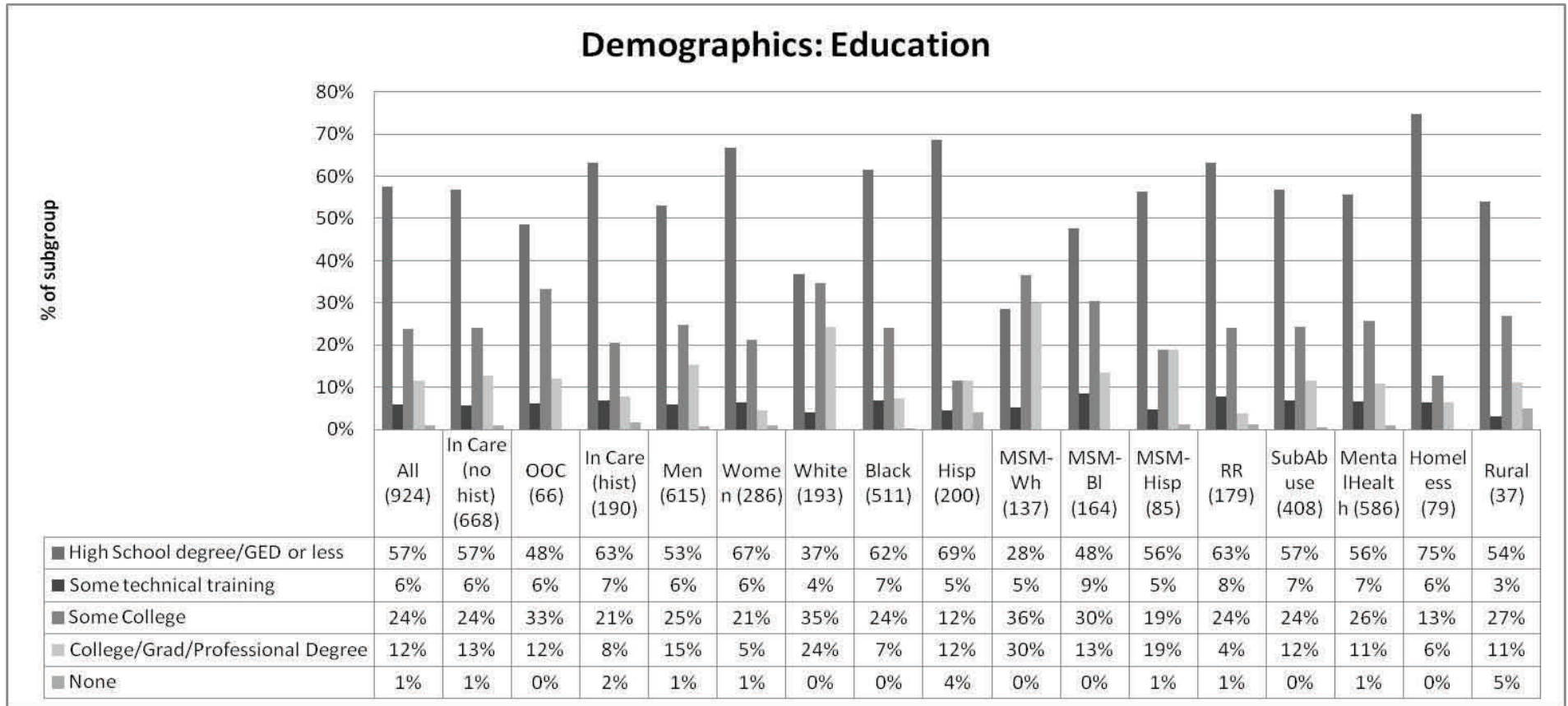
Survey Respondent Demographics



The above chart shows the immigration status distribution for each subgroup.

- The vast majority of respondents were U.S. citizens (89%). Three percent were permanent residents and 1% visa holders.
- Five percent of respondents preferred not to report their immigration status, and <1% described their immigration status as “other.” Respondents that identified as such are assumed to be undocumented.

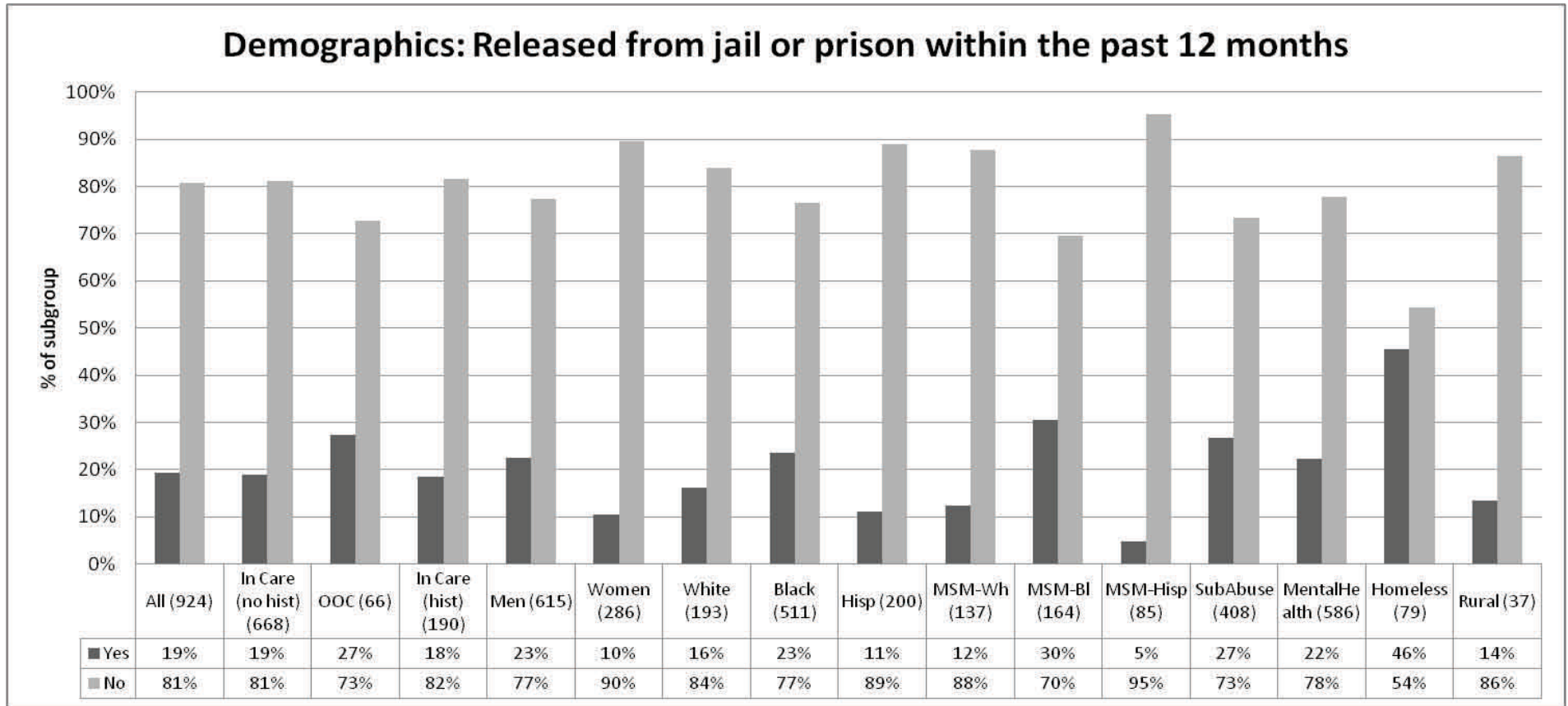
Survey Respondent Demographics



The chart above shows the levels of education for each subgroup.

- Fifty seven percent of all respondents had a high school degree/GED or less. Twenty-four percents had a college degree, 12% had a graduate/professional degree and 6% had some technical training. One percent reported receiving no education.
- White MSMs were more educated than other subgroups; 30% reported a college or graduate degree.
- The Homeless (75%) and Women (67%) reported having a high school degree/GED or less.

Survey Respondent Demographics



The chart above shows, for each subgroup, those released from jail or prison within the previous year.

- The Recently Released were represented most often among the Homeless (46%) and MSM-Blacks (30%).