



**Crystal methamphetamine use among gay and bisexual men in Australia**

UNSW AUSTRALIA

Never Stand Still | Arts & Social Sciences | Centre for Social Research in Health

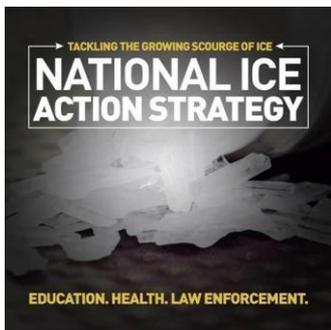
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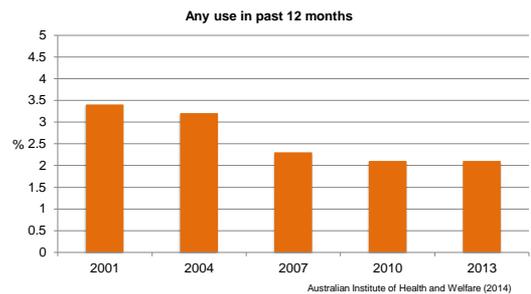


**Aims**

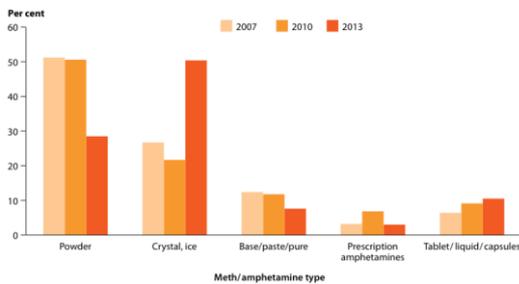
- Examine trends in methamphetamine use in Gay Community Periodic Surveys (GCPS)
- Describe characteristics of men who use crystal in GCPS and context of use among men in GBM Hep C Survey



**Methamphetamine use in Australia (NDSHS)**



**Methamphetamine forms (NDSHS)**



**Methamphetamine purity (VIC)**

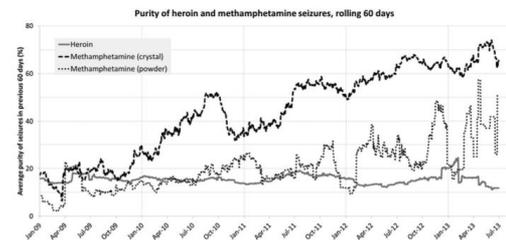


Figure 2 Average purity of Victoria Police Forensic Services Department (VPPSD) seizures, January 2009 to July 2013

Scott et al. Addiction 2015.



Methamphetamine cost (VIC)

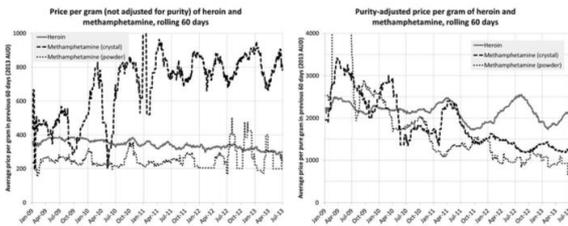


Figure 1 Average price [Melbourne Injecting Drug User Cohort Study (MIX)] and purity-adjusted price [MIX prices adjusted by average Victoria Police Forensic Services Department (VFFSD) seizure purities] per gram of heroin and methamphetamine, January 2009 to July 2013

Scott et al. Addiction 2015.



AOD treatment services in Australia

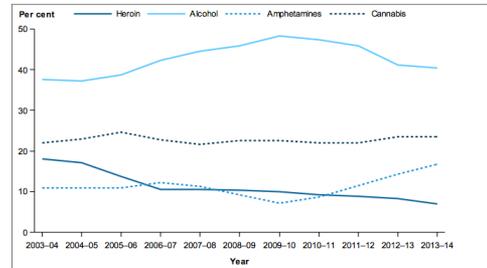


Figure 4.1: Closed episodes provided for own drug use, by selected principal drug of concern, 2003-04 to 2013-14



AOD treatment services in Australia

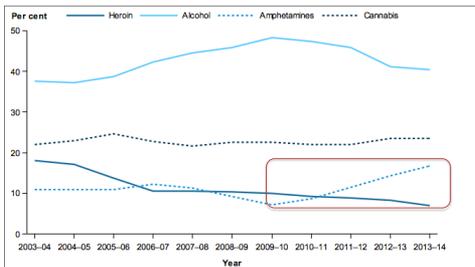


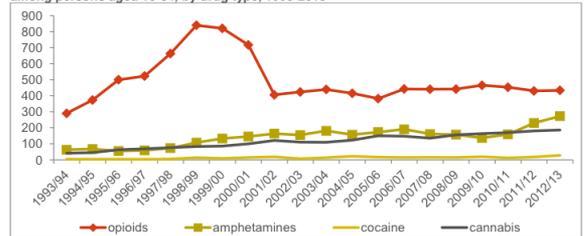
Figure 4.1: Closed episodes provided for own drug use, by selected principal drug of concern, 2003-04 to 2013-14



AOD-related hospital admissions in Australia



Figure 1: Rates per million persons of principal drug-related hospital separations in Australia among persons aged 15-54, by drug type, 1993-2013



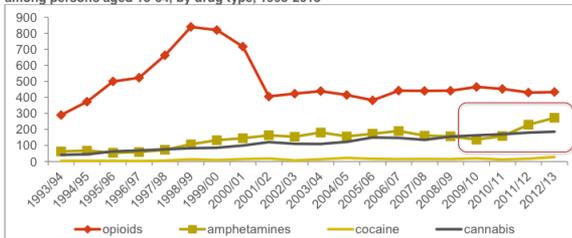
Roxburgh & Burns 2015.



AOD-related hospital admissions in Australia



Figure 1: Rates per million persons of principal drug-related hospital separations in Australia among persons aged 15-54, by drug type, 1993-2013



Roxburgh & Burns 2015.



Design and methods



- GCPS are repeated, cross-sectional surveys of gay men conducted in six states/territories annually or biennially (n~7000 annually)
- Conducted face-to-face at gay community events/venues, SOPVs, clinics. Online recruitment introduced in 2014
- GCPS data on recent (any) and regular (at least monthly) use of crystal and speed during 2005-14
- Trend analyses stratified by HIV status and survey location (2015 data available for Syd/Melb)



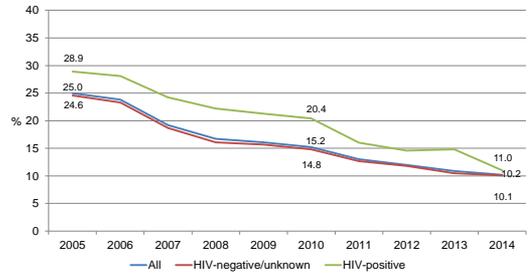


GCPS sample characteristics

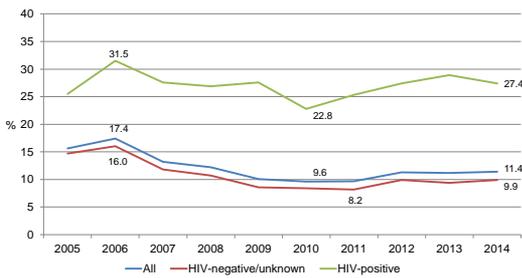
- Valid responses from 70,732 men (2005-14)
- Mean age 36 years (↑ p-trend < .001)
- 88% gay, 7% bisexual, 5% heterosexual/unspecified
- 67% Anglo-Australian (↓ p-trend < .001)
- 67% full-time employed (↓ p-trend < .001)
- 49% completed university degree
- 9% HIV-positive, 76% HIV-negative, 15% untested/unknown
- 80% recruited from gay events/venues, 12% SOPVs, 6% clinics, 1% online (↑ p-trend = .001)



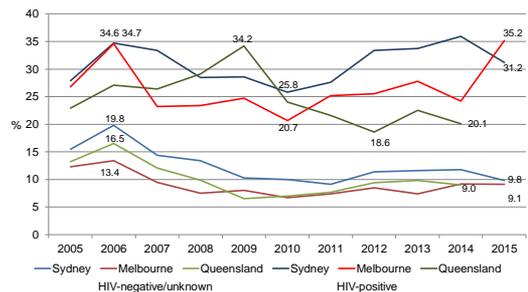
Any speed use in past 6 months by HIV status, 2005-14 (GCPS)



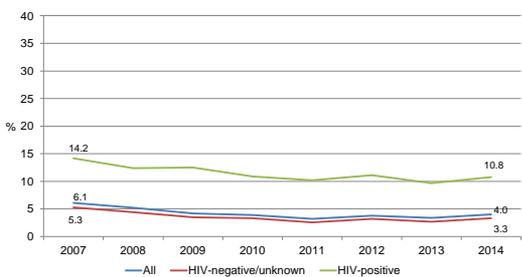
Any crystal use in past 6 months by HIV status, 2005-14 (GCPS)



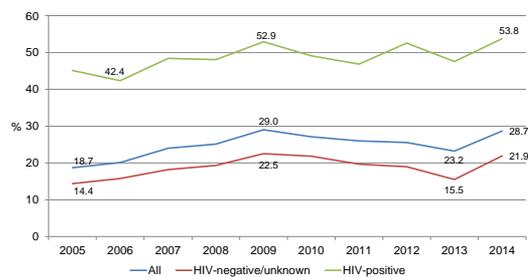
Any crystal use in past 6 months by HIV status and survey location, 2005-14 (GCPS)



Regular crystal use in past 6 months by HIV status, 2007-14 (GCPS)



Injecting drug use among men who used crystal by HIV status, 2005-14 (GCPS)



## Covariates of crystal use, 2014 (GCPS)



	Less than monthly use (ref. no use)	At least monthly use (ref. less than monthly use)
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	Adjusted OR (95% CI)
HIV-positive	1.9 (1.4-2.7)***	not significant (ns)
STI diagnosis in past 12m	1.4 (1.0-1.8)*	ns
Condomless sex with casual partners <sup>^</sup>	1.4 (1.1-1.8)*	ns
Used party drugs for sex <sup>^</sup>	5.7 (4.5-7.2)***	1.8 (1.1-2.6)**
Injected drugs <sup>^</sup>	7.1 (4.8-10.4)***	2.3 (1.6-3.2)***
Used amyl nitrite <sup>^</sup>	1.9 (1.5-2.4)***	ns
Used erectile dysfunction meds <sup>^</sup>	2.1 (1.6-2.7)***	ns
Used GHB <sup>^</sup>	7.5 (5.6-10.1)***	2.2 (1.6-3.0)***

<sup>^</sup>p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.  
<sup>^</sup>Refers to past 6 months.



## GBM Hep C Survey, 2013



- Online survey conducted nationally (n=474)
- Targeted recruited of PWID (30% ever; 15% in past 6 months)

Among men who injected in past 6 months (n=71):

- 76% most commonly injected crystal; 8% speed
- 90% had injected in sexual contexts
- 85% had injected crystal in sexual contexts; 21% speed
- 8% reported receptive sharing of needle / syringe
- 38% reported receptive sharing other equipment
- Sharing more common among those who recently injected in sexual contexts (OR=3.2)



## Limitations and strengths



- Community-based, mostly urban sample
- GCPS does not include detailed questions on illicit drug use, SUD, harm reduction practices, HIV treatment compliance
- One of few surveys internationally routinely collecting data on drug use among gay men
- Most reliable estimates of drug use among gay men available in Australia



## Conclusions



- Crystal use declined during 2005-14 and increased during 2010-14, and approaching previous peak levels among HIV-positive men
- Regular crystal use declined during 2005-14 and remained stable during 2010-14
- Injecting drug use among crystal users has increased by 50% during 2005-14
- Crystal use associated with a range of sex and drug use practices
- Further research required to understand cultures of crystal use among gay men



## Acknowledgements



### Funding bodies

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### Study investigators

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- GBM Hep C Survey: Max Hopwood, Peter Aggleton

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