



**Methamphetamine treatment outcomes among clients attending ACON's Substance Support Service**

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

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### Design and methods



- Collaboration between ACON and CSRH
- Secondary analysis of treatment outcomes
- Longitudinal observational design
- Decision to limit to methamphetamine
- Clients completed questionnaires at treatment entry (n=107), session 4 (n=64; 59.8%) and session 8 (n=35, 32.7%)



### Measures



- Days of methamphetamine use in past 4 weeks
- Methamphetamine dependence (Severity of Dependence Scale)
- Other substance use in past 4 weeks
- Injecting drug use
- Psychological distress (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale [K10])
- Quality of life (European Health Interview Survey - Quality of Life [EUROHIS-QOL-8])



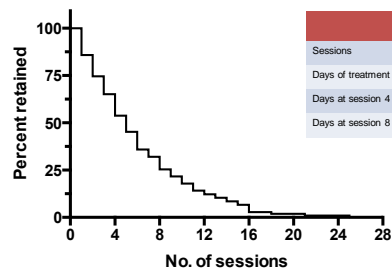
### Sample characteristics



	(n=107)
Median age (interquartile range [IQR])	41 (31-44)
Male gender (%)	94.4
Gay / lesbian (%)	96.3
Born in Australia (%)	69.2
Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander (%)	3.7
Employment (%)	
Full-time employed	48.6
Unemployed / welfare	30.8
HIV status (%)	
Positive	53.3
Negative	39.3
Untested / unknown	7.5
Previous AOD treatment	31.8
Self-referral	67.3



### Treatment retention



	Median	Interquartile range
Sessions	5	2 - 9
Days of treatment	117	42 - 169
Days at session 4	47	33 - 76
Days at session 8	117	86 - 141



### Methamphetamine use



	Baseline (n=107)
Any use in past 4 weeks (%)	82.2
Days used in past 4 weeks (median)	4
Severity of dependence (median SDS score)	8
Methamphetamine dependent (%)	89.7
Route of administration	
Inject	58.9
Smoke	31.8

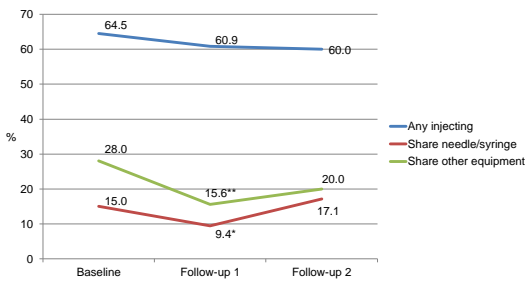
### Methamphetamine use



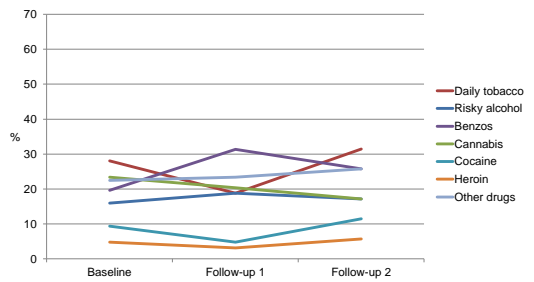
	Baseline (n=107)	Follow-up 1 (n=64)	P	Follow-up 2 (n=35)	P
Any use in past 4 weeks (%)	82.2	54.7	<0.001	57.1	0.01
Days used in past 4 weeks (median)	4	2	<0.001	2	<0.001
Severity of dependence (median SDS score)	8	6	<0.001	5	<0.001
Methamphetamine dependent (%)	89.7	75.0	0.007	68.6	0.04



### Injecting drug use



### Other substance use



### Psychosocial wellbeing



	Baseline (n=107)
K10 score (median)	26
High/very high psychological distress (%)	71.0
Quality of life score (median)	21

### Psychosocial wellbeing



	Baseline (n=107)	Follow-up 1 (n=64)	P	Follow-up 2 (n=35)	P
K10 score (median)	26	21	0.001	18	0.002
High/very high psychological distress (%)	71.0	48.4	0.005	34.3	0.01
Quality of life score (median)	21	25	<0.001	24	0.01



### Reduced methamphetamine use (by 50% at follow-up 1)



Baseline (%)	No (n=21)	Yes (n=33)	P
Quality of life score (median)	25	20	0.047
HIV-positive	57.1	51.5	ns
First treatment episode	14.3	27.3	ns
Number of sessions (median)	7	8	ns
Days of methamphetamine use (median)	4	6	ns
Methamphetamine dependent	76.2	90.9	ns
Primarily inject methamphetamine	71.4	48.5	ns
Cannabis use	38.1	18.2	ns
High/very high psych distress	61.9	72.7	ns

Excludes n=10 who were abstinent at baseline.



### Completed at least four sessions



Baseline (%)	No (n=43)	Yes (n=64)	P
Medium or high-risk alcohol use	0.0	26.0	<0.001
Paid employment	41.9	65.6	0.02
Benzodiazepine use	9.3	26.6	0.03
HIV-positive	53.5	53.1	ns
Days of methamphetamine use (median)	5	4	ns
Methamphetamine dependent	81.4	81.3	ns
High/very high psych distress	79.1	65.6	ns
Quality of life score (median)	19	23	ns



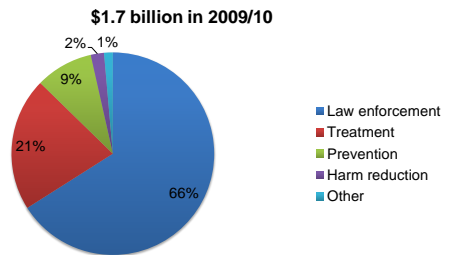
### Conclusions



- Reduced methamphetamine use, injecting risk practices, and improved psychosocial wellbeing after entering treatment
- Sample almost all gay men and mostly HIV-positive
- Need to better engage with other LGBTI people
- First study of its kind in Australia



### Australian government drug budget (2009/10)



Shanahan & Ritter 2013.



### Conclusions



- Few LGBTI-specific drug treatment services and at capacity
- Need funding for expanded services and training for mainstream services

