

SEX, DRUGS AND DRUGS: HIV, CRYSTAL METH AND ARV ADHERENCE

Authors: Andrew Stone^{1,2}, Amy Mullens^{1,3}, Erich Fein¹, Kirstie Daken¹

¹*School of Psychology and Counselling, Centre for Health Research, Institute for Resilient Regions, University of Southern Queensland, Ipswich, Australia,*

²*The Albion Centre, Sydney, Australia,*

³*School of Psychology and Counselling, Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove, Australia*

Introduction and Aims: Men who have sex with men (MSM) have higher rates of HIV transmission and methamphetamine use, commonly in sexualised contexts. Since 2010, antiretroviral (ARV) medication has been used to not only prevent HIV developing into AIDS, and to also prevent transmission of HIV among at-risk people and populations. ARVs now form part of Australia's HIV strategy. The protective effects of ARVs rely on consistent (>90%) adherence, and methamphetamine has been shown to interfere with adherence to ARVs, increasing risk of HIV transmission or development of ARV-resistant HIV. This systematic literature review examines the barriers and facilitators of ARV adherence among methamphetamine-using MSM, and suggests possible strategies for improving ARV adherence among this higher-risk group.

Design and Methods: Following stringent PRISMA methodology (with 2 reviewers at each stage); criteria for inclusion: studies must be published in English peer-reviewed journals (2008 onwards); participants MSM over the age of 18, some-all participants on ARV medications; and some-all report methamphetamine use (past 12 months).

Results: Individual and structural barriers to ARV adherence among methamphetamine-using MSM identified include lack of access to healthcare, internalised homophobia, and injection as route of drug administration. Individual and structural facilitators of ARV adherence include SMS reminders, perceived self-efficacy and access to counselling.

Discussions and Conclusions: Enhanced screening of MSM when prescribing ARVs to prevent or treat HIV is recommended, incorporating SMS reminders and personalised, gay-specific counselling for methamphetamine-using clients identified of being at particular risk of ARV non-adherence.