

Correlates of social support among Australians who primarily smoke methamphetamine

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Introduction and Aims: Little is known about correlates of social support (SS) among people who use methamphetamine. We aimed to determine correlates of SS among a community-recruited cohort of Australians who primarily smoke methamphetamine.

Design and Methods: Baseline survey data were sourced from the VMAX prospective study of methamphetamine use in Victoria, Australia. Eligible participants aged ≥ 18 years were recruited over June 2016-June 2018 across four metropolitan or regional areas through convenience, snowball, and respondent-driven sampling. SS was measured using the seven-item ENRICH Social Support Inventory (ESSI)¹. Characteristics independently associated with ESSI quartiles were assessed via multivariable partial proportional odds ordinal logistic regression.

Results: Seven hundred participants were included for complete-case analysis. The mean (standard deviation) and median (interquartile range) ESSI scores were 22.8 (7.4) and 24 (17-29), respectively, on a scale of 8-34 where higher scores denote better SS. Characteristics independently associated with lower ESSI were homelessness (adjusted odds ratio [aOR]=0.52, 95% confidence interval [CI]=0.39-0.71), non-metropolitan residence (aOR=0.63, 95% CI=0.42-0.94), moderate/severe depression (aOR=0.66, 95% CI=0.47-0.93), education <year 11 (aOR=0.73, 95% CI=0.55-0.98), and increasing age relative to <30 years (aOR[30-39]=0.68, 95% CI=0.49-0.93; aOR[≥ 40]=0.53, 95% CI=0.37-0.76). Characteristics unrelated to ESSI were gender, sexual orientation, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, country of birth, employment, income, arrest, methamphetamine dependence, moderate/severe anxiety, and alcohol use disorder.

Discussions and Conclusions: On average, SS was low in our cohort relative to a general patient population¹. SS services for people who use methamphetamine could be targeted to subgroups such as those who experience homelessness or depression.

Reference:

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