

A RAPID CLINICAL RESEARCH PRIORITY SETTING STUDY FOR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER DUE TO METHAMPHETAMINE AND EMERGING DRUGS OF CONCERN IN AUSTRALIA

Krista J Siefried¹; Quoc Nguyen¹; Nadine Ezard^{1,2}; Robert Ali³, The NCCRED
Methamphetamine and Emerging Drugs Clinical Research Network Working Group

¹ The National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED)

² St Vincent's Hospital Sydney Alcohol and Drug Service

³ School of Medicine, Adelaide University

Presenter's email: krista.siefried@svha.org.au

Introduction and Aims: Given resource limitations, it is important to prioritise areas for clinical research in Australia. This study aimed to determine clinical research priorities for treatment of substance use disorder due to methamphetamine and emerging drugs of concern.

Methods: A rapid research priority setting study was conducted (Feb-March 2019) following the Nine Common Themes of Good Practice in four phases: 1) online survey of stakeholders; 2) qualitative thematic analysis of responses; 3) brief literature review; 4) expert group review and ranking against predetermined criteria.

Results: 47 people responded to the survey from a range of backgrounds. Themes and priorities identified for methamphetamine clinical research included: overcoming barriers to intervention uptake (e.g. at time of crisis in emergency departments or primary health care); pilot pharmacotherapy trials for adults seeking treatment; effective communication strategies to consumers on available treatments and the evidence-based options; and for emerging drugs of concern clinical research: fixed-site community located drug checking / pill testing (connected to an early warning system); feasibility of social media and other creative opportunities to alert consumers and reduce harm; GHB withdrawal management (ranked equally for third highest scoring priority); early warning system/shared information system – pooling and sharing of information – and its impact on reducing harm (ranked equally for third highest scoring priority).

Implications for Practice or Policy: Results will be published to ensure transparency of the methods. As the only peer-reviewed AOD Sector health research priority setting exercise published in Australia, the results may inform other funding bodies, policymakers, and clinical researchers.

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