

Correlates of higher risk drug related behaviours at music festivals in New South Wales, Australia

Authors:

Amy Healey (ORCID: 0000-0001-6746-748X)¹, Krista J Siefried (ORCID: 0000-0002-6534-3325)^{2,3,4}, Mary Ellen Harrod⁵, Erica Franklin⁵, Amy Peacock^{4,6}, Monica J. Barratt (ORCID: 0000-0002-1015-9379)^{7,4}, Jonathan Brett (ORCID: 0000-0003-3065-7495)^{1,2,8}

¹ *St Vincent's Clinical School, Faculty of Medicine, the University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia*

² *Alcohol & Drug Service, St Vincent's Hospital Sydney, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010, Australia*

³ *National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs, c/o the University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW 2052, Australia*

⁴ *National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW Sydney, NSW, Australia*

⁵ *DanceWize NSW, New South Wales Users Association, Level 5, 414 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW, 2010*

⁶ *School of Psychology, University of Tasmania, TAS, Australia 7001*

⁷ *Social and Global Studies Centre and Digital Ethnography Research Centre, RMIT University, Melbourne, Vic, Australia*

⁸ *Department of Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology, St Vincent's Hospital, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010, Australia*

Presenter's email: Amylouhealey@gmail.com

Introduction and Aims: *There are few contemporary data on illicit drug use at music festivals. We aim to describe drug use patterns and prevalence of specific higher risk drug-related behaviours, and their associations with festivalgoer characteristics.*

Design and Methods: *We approached attendees at six major music festivals in NSW, Australia, from November 2019-March 2020. Participants self-completed an anonymous survey on prior and intended drug use and associated higher-risk behaviours; double dropping; higher-volume ethanol alongside drug use; higher quantity MDMA; mixing stimulants; and preloading. Logistic regression and UpSet analyses were performed to identify festivalgoer characteristics and the intersection of high-risk behaviours, respectively.*

Results: *Of 1,229 participants, 372 (30.3%) used or planned to use drugs at the festival. In multivariable analyses, men and those purchasing drugs both inside and outside the venue had greater odds of engaging in higher risk behaviours. Of those using MDMA, 47.9% reported double dropping. People using drugs for the first time had 3.3(95% CI1.2-8.7) greater odds of higher-volume ethanol alongside drug use. People reporting that police/police dog presence influenced their decision to take drugs had 2.2(95% CI1.4-3.6) greater odds of preloading. In Upset analysis, preloading was the most common intersection (17% of those using drugs).*

Discussions and Conclusions: *Engagement in the 5 higher-risk drug behaviours was common, particularly amongst males and those using drugs for the first time, whilst police/police dog presence appeared to influence higher-risk behaviours amongst festival attendees. This information can be used to inform harm reduction advice, public health and law enforcement strategies.*

Disclosure of Interest Statement: No conflicts of interest to declare