

CORRELATES OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN A COMMUNITY COHORT OF PEOPLE WHO PRIMARILY SMOKE METHAMPHETAMINE

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Background:

People who use methamphetamine experience depression at a much higher rate than the general population, but much less is known about their experience of anxiety. Much of the research in this area has focused on people who inject drugs and those recruited from treatment settings. We sought to examine factors associated with depression and anxiety in a community-recruited cohort who primarily smoked methamphetamine.

Methods:

Data were derived from baseline surveys of 744 participants of the prospective 'VMAX' study, recruited from metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas of Victoria, Australia, via snowball and respondent driven sampling. Depression and anxiety were measured using the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ)-9, and the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)-7 instruments; associations between 'moderate to severe' scores on these measures and demographic, socio-economic, substance use and other health and social characteristics were examined using logistic regression.

Results:

More than half (60%) of participants were classified as experiencing 'moderate to severe' anxiety and/or depression. In the multivariable models, both moderate to severe depression, and moderate to severe anxiety was associated with poor self-reported health, methamphetamine dependence, and being unemployed. Moderate to severe depression was associated with living in a large rural town, being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and smoking. Moderate to severe anxiety was associated with being female.

Conclusion:

We found elevated rates of anxiety and/or depression among our sample of people who smoked methamphetamine and that these were associated with a range of demographic, socio-economic, substance use, health and other social characteristics. Further work is needed to determine how anxiety and depression changes over time among people who smoke methamphetamine, to help identify key intervention points.

Disclosure of Interests:

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