



Waipapa  
Taumata Rau  
**University  
of Auckland**



# Tū Whakaruruhau: The evaluation of treatment outcomes for methamphetamine dependence in Aotearoa New Zealand – design of prospective longitudinal cohort study and longitudinal qualitative study.

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12<sup>th</sup> November, 2025



Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs  
conference, Sydney, 2025

## Acknowledgements/Declaration

I would like to acknowledge that I am a visitor on the lands of the Gadigal people. I'd like to extend my acknowledgement and pay respects to the traditional custodians where this work took place

**In memory of Whaea  
Pam Armstrong**

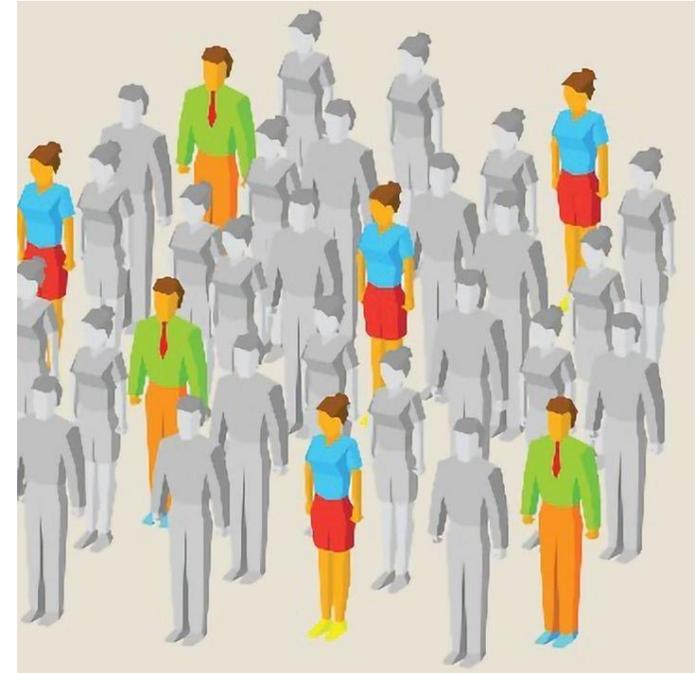
**Thanks to Te Whatu Ora  
(NZ Health), NGO  
partners and participants**

**Funder – NZ Health  
Research Council [HRC  
22/327]**



# Background - why we need to undertake this study

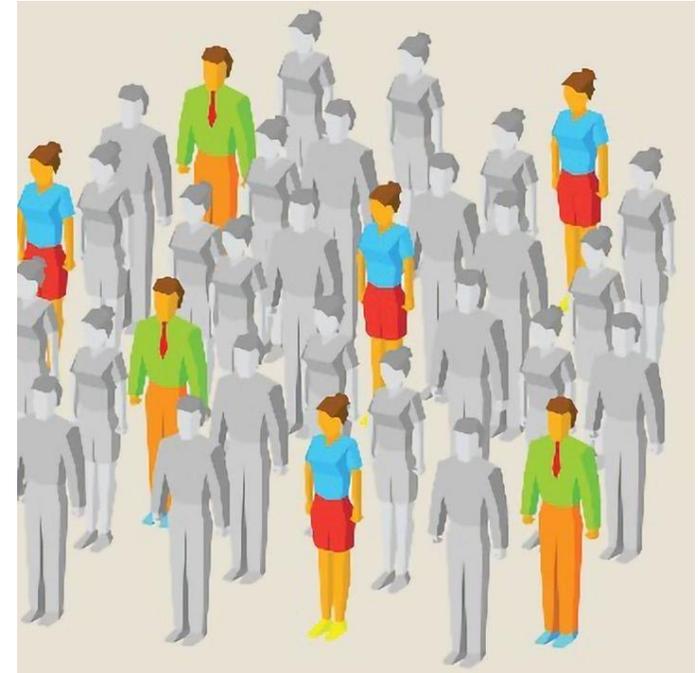
- Prevalence estimates are unreliable / there is limited information on the characteristics of people who use methamphetamine!
- Limited local evidence for the effectiveness of treatment for Methamphetamine Use Disorder (MUD) in Aotearoa
- lack of generalizability of international data on treatment effectiveness to Aotearoa



Yasbeck et al 2022. Minimising the harm from methamphetamine. The Helen Clark Foundation and NZ Drug Foundation, Wellington.

## Aims of current study – to examine

- The characteristics of people entering treatment for MUD and how they differ from those who are not in treatment.
- The factors predictive of abstinence, and reduction of meth use, psychiatric morbidity, and criminal involvement.
- The treatment outcomes and the types of treatment/client characteristics that are associated with the best long-term outcomes for whaiora.
- The patterns of health service use utilisation.

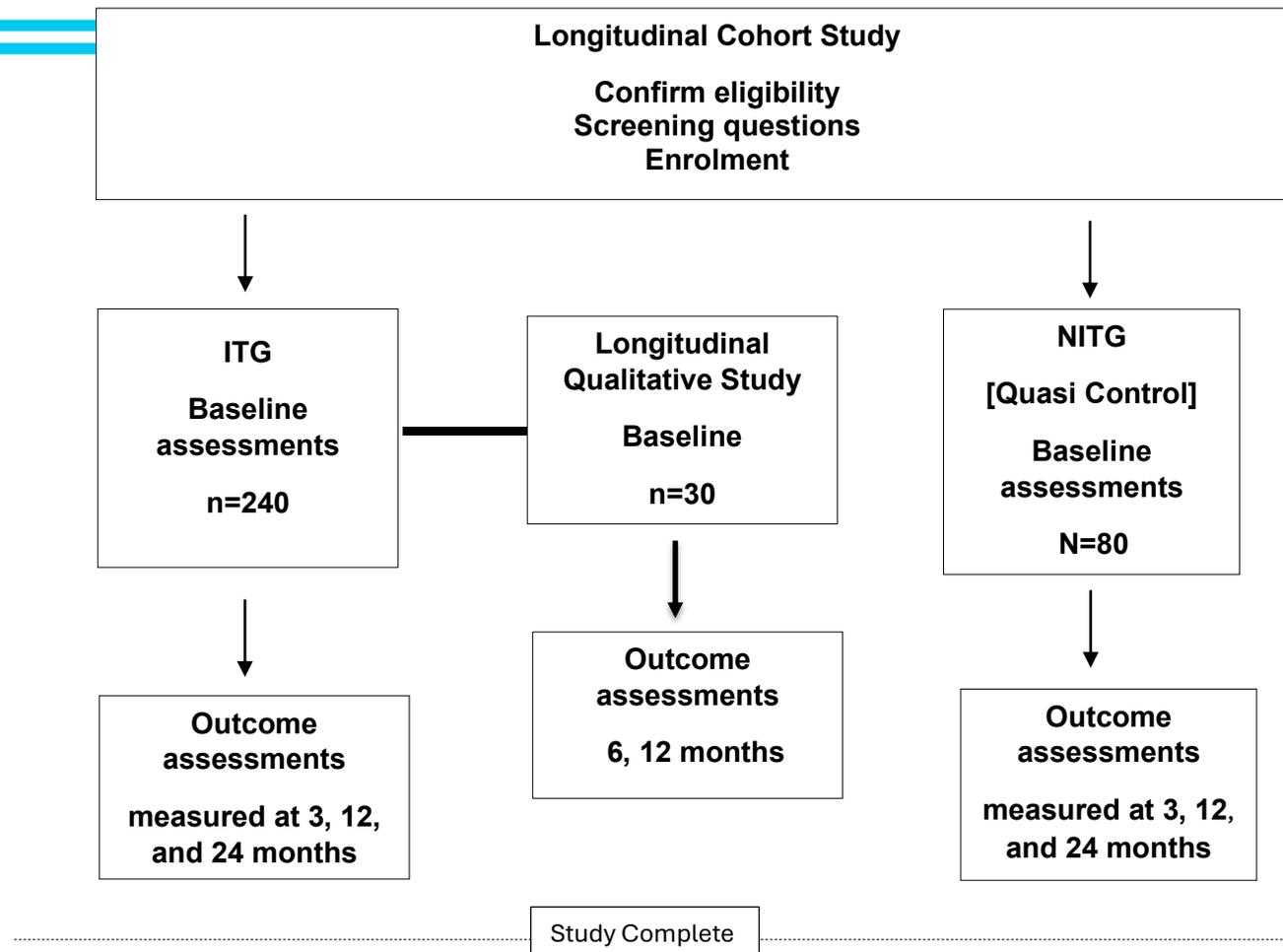


# Study Design Influences

- Based on Australian Methamphetamine Treatment Evaluation study [MATES]<sup>1</sup>
- Addition of parallel longitudinal qualitative arm to ensure the voices of *whaiora* are heard
- Aimed to recruit 50% who identify as Māori
- Inclusion of Te Ao Māori and consumer perspective
  - *Kaitiaki* – Māori governance group
  - Lived experience advisory group
  - Recruitment/ training of interviewers
  - Engagement – Dynamics of Whanaungatanga



1. McKetin R., et al. Evaluating the impact of community-based treatment options on methamphetamine use: findings from the Methamphetamine Treatment Evaluation Study (MATES). *Addiction*. 2012;107(11):1998-2008.



**Figure 1:** Tū Whakaruruhau enrolment pathway [ITG = In-Treatment-Group; NITG = Not-in-treatment group]. NB: participants in the Longitudinal Qualitative Study will be recruited from those who have already volunteered to participate in the Longitudinal Cohort Study

Newcombe et al. (2025). Tū Whakaruruhau: the evaluation of treatment outcomes for methamphetamine dependence in Aotearoa, New Zealand - study protocol for a prospective longitudinal cohort study and longitudinal qualitative study. BMC health services research, 25(1):1131.

# Study progress

- Recruitment terminated at end of August, 2025 (Sample size n= 208)
- Follow up interviews underway – data collection will be complete ~ August/September 2026.
- Longitudinal cohort study
  - In Treatment Group = 152 (73%)
  - Not in treatment group = 56 (27%)
  - 57 % of tangata whaiora identify as Māori
  - ~ 40% female
- longitudinal qualitative study
  - 23 have volunteered



**TŪ** NEW ZEALAND METHAMPHETAMINE  
TREATMENT EVALUATION STUDY  
**WHAKARURUHAU**

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa  
takitini

*Success is not the work of an individual, but  
the work of many.*

