

A Qualitative Exploration of Member and Facilitator Perspectives and Experiences of SMART Recovery in Singapore

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Introduction: Research on Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART) for alcohol and other drug use recovery were almost exclusively conducted in the United States and Australia. The present study sought to ascertain how SMART Recovery is experienced in a different cultural context by gathering the perspectives of members and facilitators in Singapore.

Method: Members (n = 14) and facilitators (n = 4) attending or have attended SMART Recovery in Singapore were invited to participate in a semi-structured interview. Participants were recruited using purposive sampling from recovery centres. Interviews were conducted in English in-person or via Zoom, and were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis.

Key Findings: All members reported a positive experience with SMART Recovery. Various factors influenced members' experience of SMART Recovery, and responses from both members and facilitators stressed the importance of camaraderie, safety, relevancy of the topics, and facilitation style. Participants also highlighted experiences with stigma and shame, as well as potential cultural and language barriers that they or other members faced when attending SMART Recovery. Some of the initiatives that facilitators took to adapt features to address these barriers were also identified.

Discussions and Conclusions: These accounts provide insight into the experiences of members and facilitators of SMART Recovery in Singapore. Consideration to the needs of members and cultural contexts in which these groups are held is critical for improving members' experience and engagement. Findings provide a direction for tailoring the program for this population.

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