

## **SMART Family and Friends: The feasibility of a video-conference-delivered intervention for Australian families affected by another's methamphetamine use.**

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**Introduction / Issues:** Families, including loved ones and friends, affected by another's methamphetamine use experience significant harms to their mental and physical health. Despite these harms, evidence-based interventions to support affected families remain limited. This study examined the feasibility of SMART Family and Friends, a group intervention targeted at improving outcomes for families affected by another's substance use, delivered via video-conferencing.

**Method / Approach:** Recruitment for the pre-post mixed-methods study occurred between March-October 2021 via the SMART Recovery Australia website with 45 participants enrolled. Participants were English-speaking Australian residents, aged >18 years, affected by another's methamphetamine use, and interested in participating in an online eight-module, workbook-guided mutual-support intervention, delivered by a mental-health clinician. Feasibility was evaluated by attendance rates, participant satisfaction, fidelity ratings, and semi-structured interviews. Psychosocial outcomes assessed preliminary effectiveness.

**Results:** Attendance rates (M=79%), participant satisfaction (M=4.63 out of 5, SD=0.68) and fidelity (>94% for all modules) were high. Qualitative findings illustrated the benefits of mutual-support and the intervention workbook, convenience of video-conference-delivery, and challenges of developing connections with other participants in the online format. Significant reductions in psychological distress (d=0.43), family impact (d=0.58), stress symptoms (d=0.38), and total family burden (d=0.65), along with improved coping (d=0.49-88) were reported post-intervention.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** These findings provide preliminary support for the feasibility of a mutual-support intervention for families affected by another's methamphetamine use, delivered via video-conferencing. The results merit further sufficiently powered research trials to evaluate program efficacy.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** This study contributes to evidence demonstrating the benefits and acceptability of a video-conferencing-delivered intervention for families affected by another's methamphetamine use and reinforces the need to expand support for families as a population in their own right. This is important due to the high prevalence, enduring stigma and hidden burden on families, and scarcity of evidence-based interventions.

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