Kirby **I**nstitute

What drugs are GBMSM using and what role do they play?

Mohamed A. Hammoud[1] Brendan Jacka[2] Garrett Prestage[1]

[1] The Kirby Institute, UNSW, Sydney, Australia
[2] Centre de recherche du CHUM, Université de Montréal, Montréal Canada

Cross Track Session 1: Sexualised drug use among gay, bisexual and other MSM: exploring assumptions, motivations and implications

Australasian HIV & AIDS Conference | September 2018

What drugs are GBMSM using?   Flux   UNSW   Kirby Institute

Background:
Drug use among GBMSM

Prevalence of licit drug use

Method:
The Flux Study

Methods

The Flux Study

- Following Lives Undergoing Change
- A prospective observational study on licit and illicit drug use among GBM
- Over 3000 enrolled between 2014 and 2018

Analysis

- Baseline
    - Latent class analysis
- One year follow-up data
    - Latent transition analysis

www.flux.org.au   # FluxStudy   f /FluxStudy   /FluxStudy   mhammoud@kirby.unsw.edu.au

Characteristics

Participants	3253
Mean age (SD)	35 (13)
Professional Details n (%)	
University educated	52%
Manager or professional	61%
Sexual Identity n (%)	
Gay	88%
Bisexual	9%
Heterosexual	<1%
Other	2%
HIV Status n (%)	
HIV positive	8%
HIV negative	72%
Don't know	21%
Any history of Hepatitis C	2%

www.flux.org.au   # FluxStudy   f /FluxStudy   /FluxStudy   mhammoud@kirby.unsw.edu.au
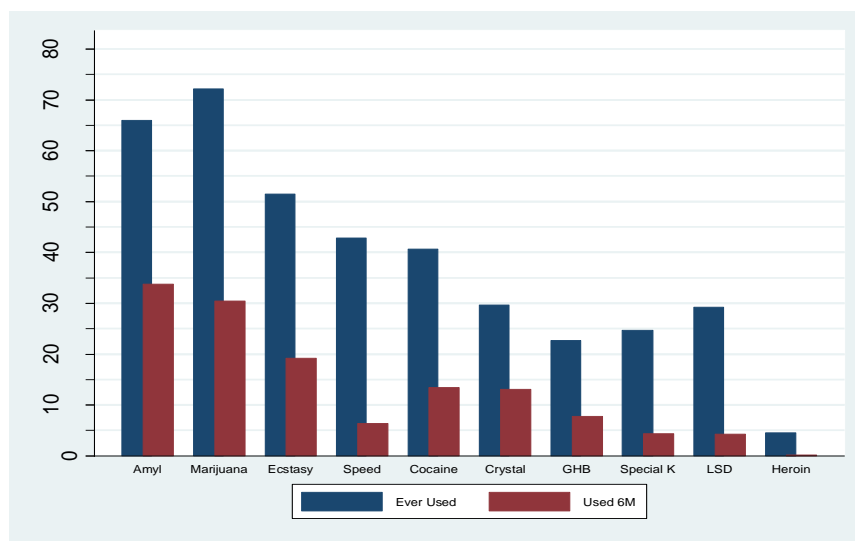
What drugs are GBMSM using?

Results:
Prevalence, frequency, and incidence

Drug use among gay and bisexual men

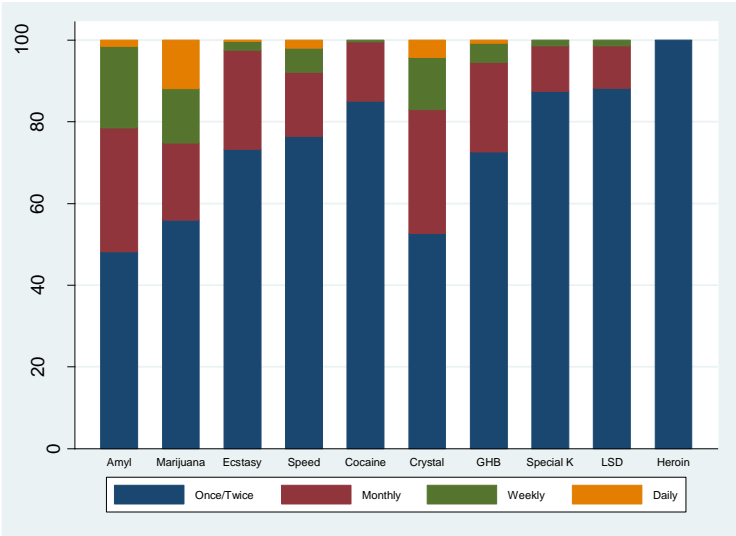## Baseline prevalence

www.flux.org.au   FluxStudy   /FluxStudy   /FluxStudy   mhammoud@kirby.unsw.edu.au

Drug use among gay and bisexual men

Frequency at use

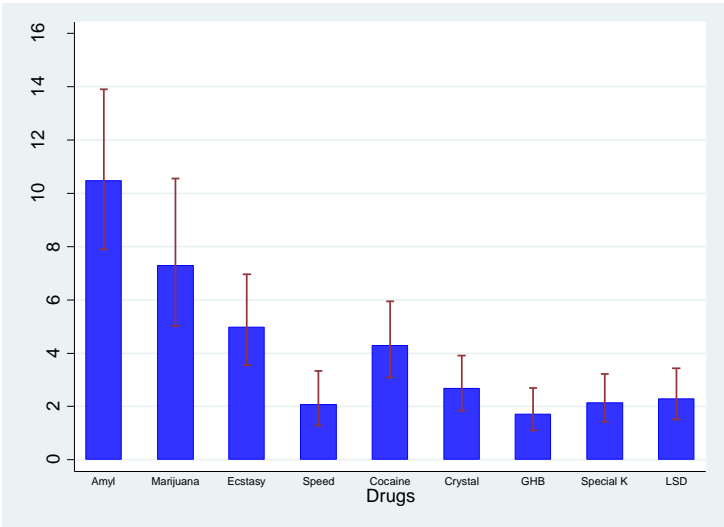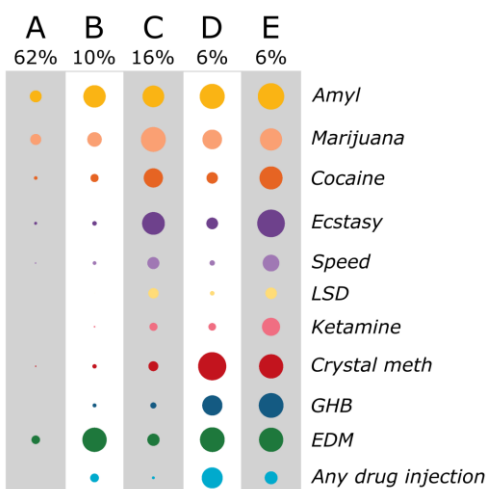Drug use among gay and bisexual men

Drug initiation

Results:
Identifying patterns of polydrug use among GBMSM

Latent class analysis (N=3253)

We can apply descriptors to the groups:

A – **Minimal/no recent drug use**

B – **Licit drugs used for sex**
EDM and amyl

C – **Party drugs**
Ecstasy, marijuana, cocaine, speed, LSD

D – **Chemsex drugs**
EDM, crystal meth, GHB, amyl,
injection drug use

E – **Chemsex and party drugs**

A	B	C	D	E	
62%	10%	16%	6%	6%	
					Amyl
					Marijuana
					Cocaine
					Ecstasy
					Speed
					LSD
					Ketamine
					Crystal meth
					GHB
					EDM
					Any drug injection

Relationships between characteristics

	Min/no drug use	Licit sex drugs	Party drugs	Chemsex drugs	Chemsex & party drugs
Age, [mean (SD)]*	33.6 (13.5)	36.0 (10.2)	32.1 (10.6)	41.7 (10.6)	47.6 (12.2)
HIV status					
Positive	3.7	12.2	3.8	25.8	17.9
Negative	72.7	84.4	84.5	70.3	77.0
Untested/unknown	23.6	3.3	11.7	3.8	5.1
Gay social engagement*	3.3 (1.6)	4.7 (1.6)	3.8 (1.7)	4.1 (1.6)	4.1 (1.5)
Number of sexual partners*	10.8 (33.8)	33.6 (62.8)	14.0 (22.0)	38.0 (87.7)	25.4 (38.9)
Group sex*	16.9	49.4	27.8	50.5	40.4
Sex with casual partners*					
AI without Condom/PrEP-/TasP	16.0	20.6	21.1	24.2	20.9
PrEP/TasP condomless sex	6.5	34.4	14.1	41.8	28.5
Drugs used for sex*	0.3	85.0	6.4	91.8	40.6

www.flux.org.au # FluxStudy /FluxStudy /FluxStudy mhammoud@kirby.unsw.edu.au

Latent transition analysis (n=1119)

www.flux.org.au # FluxStudy /FluxStudy /FluxStudy mhammoud@kirby.unsw.edu.au
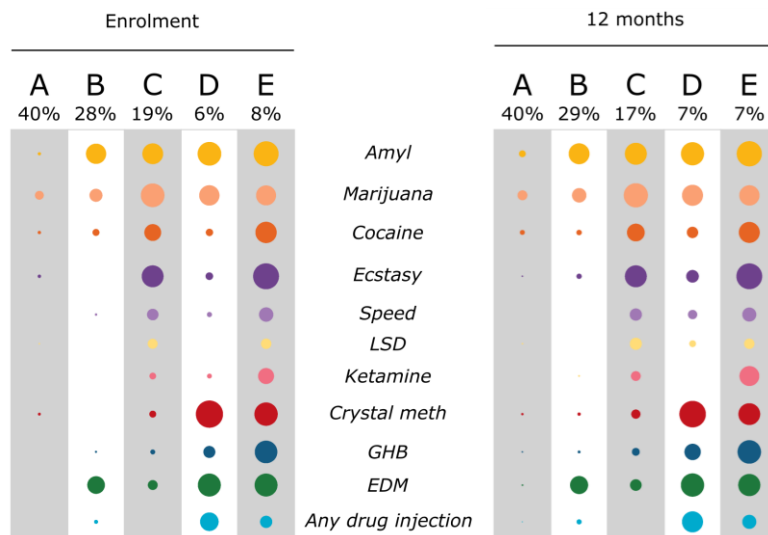
Conclusion:
What do these findings mean in the real world?

Summary

- Most recent drug use was infrequent

- Five group memberships were

- Little change in drug using behaviours over time

Conclusion

What drugs are gay and bisexual men using and what role do they play?

Drugs that are used to enhance sex to specifically engage in chemsex

Thank you

The Flux participants
All 3253 participants

Lead Investigator
Garrett Prestage
Kirby Institute, UNSW

Lead Author
Brendan Jacka
Centre de recherche du CHUM

Senior Research Officer
Mohamed A. Hammoud
Kirby Institute, UNSW

The Study Team
Shawn Clackett
Kirby Institute, UNSW

Stefanie Vaccher
Kirby Institute, UNSW

Steven Philpot
Kirby Institute, UNSW

Chief Investigators
Lisa Maher
Kirby Institute, UNSW

Jeff Jin
Kirby Institute, UNSW

Adam Bourne
ARCSHS, La Trobe

Louisa Degenhardt
National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, UNSW

Toby Lea
Centre for Social Research in Health, UNSW

Bridget Haire
Kirby Institute, UNSW

Peter Saxton
New Zealand AIDS Foundation

Associate Investigators
Nicky Bath
National LGBTI Alliance

Brent Mackie
AOCN

Colin Batrouney
VAC

Funders
Australian Research Council
Gilead Science

Special thanks
Garrett Prestage
Primary PhD Supervisor

Roderick Lander
Mentor

Shawn Clackett
Recovery team leader

Brent Clifton
Crisis team lead

Stefanie Vaccher
Bringer of happiness

Craig Cooper
He knows why