

10 YEARS IN THE LIFE OF A STIMULANT TREATMENT PROGRAM

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Introduction / Issues:

Concerns around crystal methamphetamine dependence, and access to treatment services, have been increasing in Australia in recent years.

In 2006 NSW Department of Health initiated a pilot Stimulant Treatment Program (STP) with a trial of two clinics; one based in Darlinghurst at St Vincent's Hospital and the other a shopfront clinic in Newcastle run by Hunter New England Area (HNE) Health Service. The primary aim of the clinics was to provide counselling for dependent stimulant users. At HNE STP, the overwhelming majority of clients attend for assistance with crystal methamphetamine use.

HNE STP offers treatment using a stepped-care approach including brief intervention, comprehensive assessment, withdrawal management, acute symptom management and counseling through to (limited) pharmacological intervention where appropriate. Interventions are client focused and harm reduction driven, and counselling is based on current best practice models.

This presentation will deliver an overview of experiences from HNE STP.

Method / Approach:

Quantitative data from the past 10 years will provide a picture of typical HNE treatment seekers for methamphetamine dependence and explore demographic changes over time, including client numbers, referral sources, gender breakdowns, age ranges, poly substance use rates, methods of use, income and living arrangements.

We will explore the length and nature of treatment episodes and include an overview of outcomes, prevalence of co-morbid mental health issues and our ability to engage identified target populations (eg ATSI, CALD, Youth, Pregnant women, Opiate Substitution Treatment clients, LGBTI).

Results:

Pending.

Discussions and Conclusions:

Discussion about the implications for improving access to treatment for people with methamphetamine issues will conclude the presentation.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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