

## Acceptability of oral naltrexone and bupropion for treatment of methamphetamine use disorder

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**Introduction:** Combination naltrexone/bupropion is a promising new treatment for methamphetamine use disorder. We aimed to explore the acceptability of this combination from a participant perspective before studying its effectiveness in the Australian context.

**Methods:** Participants in a pilot single-arm, open-label clinical trial of 12-weeks of oral naltrexone/bupropion (40mg/450mg per day) participated in a semi-structured interview after completing the intervention. Interviews were conducted by an interviewer with no other role in the trial. Data were analysed thematically according to the Theoretical Framework of Acceptability in Healthcare: affective attitude, burden, ethicality, intervention coherence, opportunity cost, perceived effectiveness, and self-efficacy.

**Results:** Thirteen people participated in interviews. Participants described a positive attitude towards medication-based treatments which aligned with their values. While the intervention was described as low time-burden, some participants didn't like the time it took to experience the effects of the treatment. Participants largely understood the goals of the intervention, however some expected immediate cessation of methamphetamine, and were disappointed when this was not met. Staff and pre-prepared blister packs were universally appreciated. For some, the lead-time before treatment-related side-effects resolved was unpleasant but tolerable. The dominant perception was that the medication was effective in reducing methamphetamine use over the 12-week intervention, although there was disagreement. General health benefits including mood and sleep stabilisation were noted, but appetite reduction and weight loss was sometimes unwanted. One participant thought the medication made withdrawing from methamphetamine harder.

**Discussions and Conclusions:** The experiences of participants in this trial describe an intervention that was generally considered acceptable. Future studies should ensure that the range and likelihood of medication effects and side effects are clearly described and understood.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** A participant acceptability study can be feasibly implemented during the clinical trial pilot phase, and results can inform the co-design of a new intervention trial.

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