

Supporting people who use methamphetamine through SMART Recovery Mutual-help Groups

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SMART Recovery Australia

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the unceded and continuous connection to country, water and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge community controlled Aboriginal organisations that we work with around the country. We value self determination, we learn by looking back and as we look to the future we center deep listening and collaboration in our work.

SMART Recovery

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Acknowledgements

Partner

Funding

Research Team

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Outline

- Background to the program of research
- SMART Recovery
- Facilitator data
- Participant survey
- Qualitative interviews
- Implications
- Future of SMART Recovery
- Questions



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Background



Common to delay or avoid help seeking¹



Barriers²⁻⁴

- Stigma
- Embarrassment/ shame
- Problem recognition
- Access



Positive outcomes are possible⁵⁻⁷

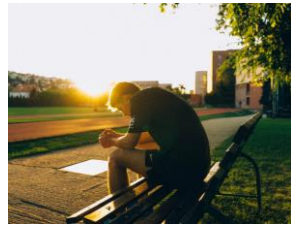


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How do we improve engagement with treatment and support options?



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Mutual support?



Social



Emotional



Informational



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Self Management and Recovery training

What is SMART?

- Strengths based, self management mutual aid
- Any problematic behaviour
- Solution focused
- Utilising CBT and MI to help support change process
- Helping participants equip themselves with tools, skills and strategies
- Harm minimisation focused
- Research and evidenced based
- Run by trained facilitators (100+ NGO, Government, and also volunteers)

Who is SMART?

- Global program/model
- 31 Countries (USA, UK, Ireland, Denmark, Canada Affiliates)
- 13 different languages
- Delivered Face to Face and Online
- Family and Friends, Inside Out, Youth, First Nations
- In partnership with over 75 member organisations facilitate over 268 groups for 115,000 people living with addictive behaviours.



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Local Impact and National Reach



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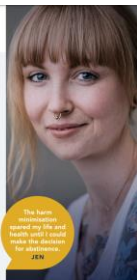
What happens in SMART Meetings?

- Welcome
- Check ins
- Work time
- Check out
- Utilising CBT and MI tools and activities in a group setting and encouraging communication and supporting the mutual aid discussion
- Plan a 7 day plan.



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The Addiction Cycle



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SMART Tools

- Cost benefits analysis
- ABC of CBT
- Rating Scales
- Areas of Importance
- Problems solving
- Lifestyle balance
- Urge and behavioral log
- Refusal skills training
- SMART Goals setting



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Design and Methods



AIMS

- Do people attend for methamphetamine?
- Similarities and differences vs. other behaviours of concern?
- What can we learn about group cohesion?
- How does SMART Recovery 'fit'?
- Initiation and engagement



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METHODS

- Post-group facilitator entered data
- Participant survey
- Participant interviews



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Facilitator Data



"Entitativity"

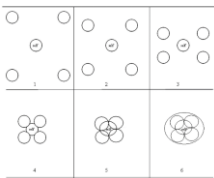


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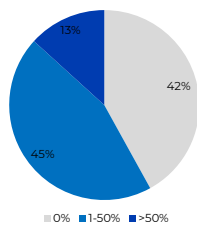
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Key Findings

Do people who use methamphetamine attend SMART Recovery?

- Aug 2018 to July 2020
- 3841 groups
- 22185 attendees
- 4929 (22.2%) attending for methamphetamine



■ 0% ■ 1-50% ■ >50%

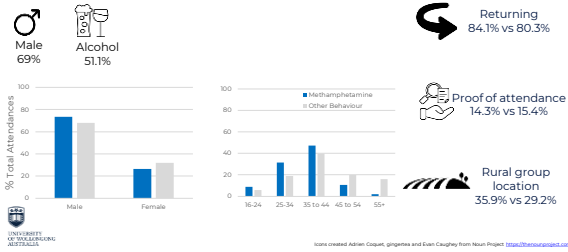
Group composition according to the proportion of group participants attending for methamphetamine



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Key Findings

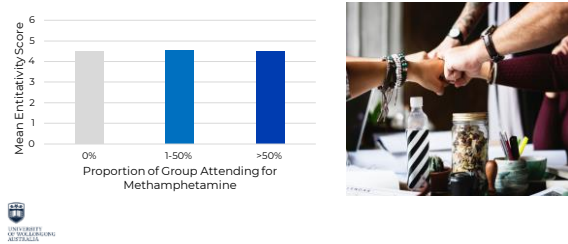
Participant characteristics



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Key Findings

Group Cohesion



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So what...

- Attendance
- Male
- Younger
- Rural
- Cohesion



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Participant Survey Data

Engagement

- I felt welcome at today's meeting
- I felt supported and understood by people attending the meeting
- I had an opportunity to contribute to the group discussion

Experience

- Today's group was well facilitated
- I experienced technical difficulties during the meeting

Contribution to Recovery

- I took away practical strategies/ideas/ tools from today's group to help me manage my behaviour
- Overall, I found today's group helpful
- I plan on continuing to attend SMART online
- Did you leave today's meeting with a 7-day plan?



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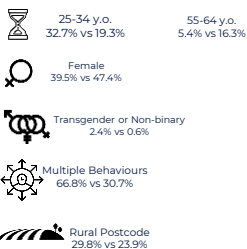
Key Findings

Participant Characteristics

- Sample
- Jun 2020 – Nov 2021 (n=1414)



Methamphetamine (n=205)



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Key Findings

Group Experience

Engagement

- Welcome 95.6% vs 96%
- Supported 95.6% vs 95.8%
- Opportunity to contribute 95.1% vs 95.9%

Experience

- Well facilitated 95.1% vs 95.9%
- Technical difficulties 26.3% vs 20.7%

Contribution to Recovery

- Practical strategies 92.2% vs 95.1%
- Helpful 93.7% vs 95.9%
- Continue attending 96.1% vs 97.1%
- 7-day plan 72.7% vs 81.9%



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So what...

- Consistency between participant and facilitator data
- Largely comparable, positive experience irrespective of behaviour
- Difference in use of 7-day plan



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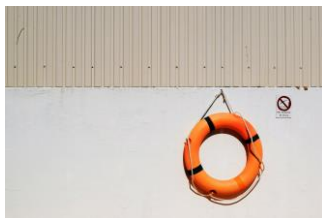
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Qualitative Study

- Help-seeking patterns
- Initiation and Engagement in SMART Recovery
- Semi-structured telephone interviews (n=18)

M=37.83 y.o.
(8.35; 27 to 54)

♂ Male
50%



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Key Findings:

Qualitative

Initiation

- SMART Recovery later
- Adjunct to other services
- Rehabilitation early
- Awareness
- Variable help-seeking trajectory

"I was just really scared of falling back into addiction and I just wanted something to kind of prop me up while I found my feet" Olivia

You have to actively go out there to find out about SMART Recovery before you're told about it. It's not the sort of thing that GPs and practitioners kind of go on about... they definitely go to old school. Everyone knows AA and NA, because it's being well advertised. William

"It was like removing myself physically from the environment, because I have tried several times on my own just to shut down and give up, but I mean, I was essentially supporting my habit by selling to friends I guess you could say and they wouldn't leave me alone, I just needed to get out of the life to remove myself physically you know." Hannah

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Key Findings:

Qualitative

Engagement

- Fit
- Tolerance of discomfort
- Empowering
 - Shared lived experience
 - Choice and autonomy
 - Self-efficacy

"I knew it was CBT based, I knew it was not disease focused, I knew it was based on a shorter time frame, I knew it had this sort of next week, last week focus ... it was facilitated by someone who had done training that was one ... that thing, the trained facilitator thing was the big draw card" Alex

"At first it was a bit weird because I am not used to talking about my feelings and that sort of thing, but after that initial kind of that first couple of meetings, I really enjoyed it, probably my favourite part of the week was SMART Recovery, I enjoyed it" Logan

"you know these people sort of understand, like it's good to have people who are in the same situation, because it is like hard to talk to some people, say your family or your friends who don't have addiction, because they don't really know where you're coming from" Hazel

"like there's no pressure to you know talk a lot or talk a little, you can sort of do what works, does that make sense? Like some weeks you just don't feel like talking and some weeks you know you are full of ideas and inspirations" Olivia

"Yeah, it's not like I am setting myself up for failure, which is what I have tended to do in the past an awful lot" Isaac

"I write them all up on a piece of paper and I've got them all on my wall... it makes me happy because I've never had much apart from a drug addiction." Mia

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So what...

- Mutual support
- Self-management
- Autonomy
- Willingness



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Implications



- Attendance
- Cohesion
- Characteristics
- Experience of online groups
- Initiation and engagement



- Awareness
- Needs and preferences
- Elements that predict outcome



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Future of SMART



SMART FIRST NATIONS: Yarning Our Way, Healing Our Way

SMART Family and Friends

SMART for Youth

SMART InsideOut



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