

Perceptions of methamphetamine- and GHB-related presentations among emergency medicine healthcare professionals: An exploratory study

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Abstract

Aims: To determine the frequency of methamphetamine- and GHB-related presentations; knowledge of methamphetamine, gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB) and drug-related problems; preparedness to discuss the risks associated with these drugs; role support and resource needs, as perceived by emergency medicine healthcare professionals.
Methods: A convenience sample (n = 192) was recruited from 12 hospitals in eight major centres across Australia. A closed-response questionnaire was utilized.
Findings: Daily presentations related to methamphetamine and GHB were not widely reported but were more likely at hospitals in areas where use of these drugs was higher. Participants generally felt knowledgeable about methamphetamine and GHB, supported in their role and well prepared to manage such intoxications. There was a demand for additional resource materials.
Conclusions: Findings highlight the wide disparity in patterns of use of methamphetamine and GHB between jurisdictions in Australia. Overall, emergency medicine healthcare professionals were comfortable with the management of methamphetamine- and GHB-related presentations. An additional resource focusing on the clinical management of methamphetamine and GHB intoxication would be useful. Testing actual knowledge of emergency medicine healthcare professionals and how this correlates with perceived knowledge would be an important area for future research

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