

International experts reach consensus on which evidence-based methamphetamine prevention strategies are considered effective

Although in recent years few European countries have witnessed a rise in methamphetamine consumption the prevention efforts remain limited and inconsistent. At the same time, there is a lack of understanding of which prevention strategies are effective and in what context. One of the goals of IMPRESA project is to synthesize the latest evidence and identify the most effective selective and indicated prevention and harm reduction strategies to prevent and/or reduce methamphetamine use. To achieve this a systematic literature review and a mapping of the national prevention activities were conducted, followed by a Delphi expert consensus finding process.

What was done?

1. A systematic literature search was performed in electronic databases (MEDLINE, PSYINDEX, EMBASE, etc.), using appropriate keywords and inclusion / exclusion criteria to identify eligible studies.
2. A total of 1362 studies were identified. After screening and assessing the quality, a total of 20 relevant studies were extracted, synthesized and summarized.
3. In order to identify the prevention measures that were not published in peer reviewed papers a national mapping took place in 5 IMPRESA partner countries. The country-specific mapping identified additional 27 eligible prevention and harm reduction measures.
4. Combined with the results from the systematic literature search, a total of 47 good practice evidence-based prevention strategies were selected.
5. An online questionnaire with short descriptions of the interventions, their setting and target group served as the input for a Delphi expert consensus finding process. 36 national and international experts took part in the 2-round Delphi process.
6. After Delphi process was completed, 41 out of 47 interventions/measures reached consensus. Below are some of the examples of the prevention and harm reduction interventions that were seen as effective by the majority of the experts.

Literature review key inclusion criteria:

Study types: peer-reviewed, quantitative studies related to selective and indicated methamphetamine prevention and harm reduction (or addressing stimulant use in general)
Study designs: (cluster) randomized control trials (RCT), quasi-experimental, longitudinal studies, implementation studies, reviews and meta-analyses.
Search terms: methamphetamine prevention/ evaluation/ intervention; filter: language English, no animal studies, publication date 2000-2020.

What is next?

The systematic literature review, the mapping of the national interventions and the results from the Delphi process yielded a rich set of evidence-based prevention and harm reduction practices to prevent or reduce methamphetamine use. The selected 41 interventions will now serve as the basis for a further discussion on which possible measures best fit the local context and should be implemented to serve the target groups with the highest need for prevention or harm reduction interventions. These discussions will be carried out within the IMPRESA project partner countries among the members of the local multistakeholder partnerships.

Examples of an evidence-based methamphetamine prevention and harm reduction measures

