

# PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES IN A PILOT STUDY FOR METHAMPHETAMINE WITHDRAWAL TREATMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR RETENTION

## Agency and Embodiment

“I’ve been shocked at how effective it has been... I just have no cravings. I feel completely normal. I’ve had an appetite. I’ve been socially active in here. I’ve been reading, which I, you know, haven’t done for a fairly long time, you know. Yeah, it’s been awesome, to tell the truth.” - Jesse

## Caring - Trust

“It was clear that the nursing staff knew what to expect. And, also the attentiveness. I guess I probably wasn’t expecting the fact that the nurses would notice if you hadn’t slept well. They’d have conversations with my mother and I guess with you - Charlie

## Safety

“And just felt ... one single reason I was coming to [Inner-Sydney hospital] is ‘cause I felt like it was a safe place... I still believed it was a safer place than on the streets or anyone else’s house that I’d go to” - Blake

## Communication

“Perhaps if we talked more about me as a person before getting here and the people that I was gonna be dealing with, to get to know them a little bit first, it would be easier to bring the situation about.” - Danny

By focusing on these themes when designing future clinical trials, researchers can not only **improve the clinical trial experience for participants**, but also a person’s subsequent and **related decision to remain enrolled in the study.**

### Introduction

- Poor retention undermines trust in clinical trials
- Few studies investigate participant experiences in substance use trials
- This study seeks to understand the experiences of people who completed a clinical trial of a pharmacotherapy for methamphetamine (MA) withdrawal

### Methods

- Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews
- Eight people who participated in an inpatient clinical trial of lisdexamfetamine for acute MA withdrawal

### Results

- Research procedures, the research setting, and the investigational product affected their experiences
- Of particular importance to participants were **transparent and low burden trial procedures, a welcoming trial environment, trusting relationships and effective communication**
- These were **linked with the participants’ subsequent decision to remain enrolled**

### Discussion

- Core elements to explore in future co-design processes include **strengthening participant agency, trust in service providers, feelings of safety and open communication between researchers, service providers and participants**
- The experiences of participants in this trial related to communication, safety and medication effectiveness may have relevance to *any* person experiencing clinical trial participation
- By including the experiences of trial participants in future clinical trial design, researchers can not only influence the clinical trial experience for participants, but also a person’s subsequent and related decision to remain enrolled

Liam S Acheson<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Rebecca McKetin<sup>1</sup>, Nadine Ezard<sup>2,3,4</sup>, Nicholas Lintzeris<sup>4,5,6</sup>, Jonathan Brett<sup>7,8</sup>, Craig Rodgers<sup>2</sup>, Michael Christmass<sup>9,10</sup>, Anthony Gill<sup>2</sup>, Michael Farrell<sup>1</sup>, Adrian Dunlop<sup>4,11,12</sup>, Steve Shoptaw<sup>13</sup>, Krista J Siefried<sup>1,2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre (NDARC), the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia  
<sup>2</sup> Alcohol and Drug Service, St Vincent’s Hospital Sydney, Sydney, Australia  
<sup>3</sup> The National Centre for Clinical Research on Emerging Drugs (NCCRED), c/o the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia  
<sup>4</sup> New South Wales Drug and Alcohol Clinical Research and Improvement Network (DACRIN), Sydney, Australia  
<sup>5</sup> The Langdon Centre, South East Sydney Local Health District, Sydney, Australia  
<sup>6</sup> Discipline of Addiction Medicine, the University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia  
<sup>7</sup> Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology, St Vincent’s Hospital Sydney, Sydney, Australia  
<sup>8</sup> St Vincent’s Clinical School, the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia  
<sup>9</sup> Next Step Drug and Alcohol Services, Perth, Australia  
<sup>10</sup> National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University, Perth, Australia  
<sup>11</sup> Drug and Alcohol Clinical Services, Hunter New England Local Health District, Newcastle, Australia  
<sup>12</sup> School of Medicine and Public Health, the University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia  
<sup>13</sup> Department of Family Medicine, The University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles, USA

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