

'beyondblue' study at NCHSR

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The National Centre in HIV Social Research at The University of New South Wales recently completed a three-year study called the Primary Health Care Project on HIV and Depression.

This research provided preliminary insights into how different patterns of alcohol and other drug use relate to depression, and how these patterns are influenced by social, psychological and health-related features of gay men's lives. In interviews with general practitioners we also identified some emerging themes relating to problematic levels of crystal methamphetamine use in their gay and HIV positive male clients with depression.

With funding from **beyondblue – the national depression initiative**, we are now commencing further research in this area, with the aim of:

1. Exploring more closely the issues associated with alcohol and drug use in data collected on depression in gay men from the NHMRC-funded Primary Health Care Project on HIV and Depression;
2. Developing and distributing appropriate recommendations for medical practitioners and other health professionals in relation to how alcohol and drug use might impact the diagnosis and management of depression in gay men.

Our approach will comprise:

1. Producing new journal articles that focus on drug and alcohol use in the quantitative and qualitative data from our original study, which includes a survey of gay men with depression and interviews with general practitioners and with gay men with depression.
2. Hosting a half-day implementation workshop aimed at general practitioners, alcohol and drug counsellors who work with gay men and other medical practitioners, health professionals, community educators and policymakers interested in and/or attached to this area of work. Invited external speakers will respond to our draft findings and powerpoint presentations will be made available on the web.
3. Distributing a four-page summary report of key findings, including the final set of study recommendations as refined through the process of analysis and workshop consultation, aimed most directly at health care professionals who are involved in developing treatment and care plans for gay men with depression who have a history of problematic drug and alcohol use. Electronic copies will also be made available on the web.
4. Publishing a set of articles in community media publications, including newspapers for gay men around Australia, and magazines for people living with HIV.

Expert Committee

The following Expert Committee guides the study, made up of all Investigators and additional invited members with particular expertise in this topic area.

- Dr Christy Newman is Senior Research Fellow at the National Centre in HIV Social Research at The University of New South Wales (areas of expertise include: qualitative research, gay men's experiences of depression, gay men's health, general practice and primary health care research)
- Dr Joanne Bryant is a Research Fellow at the National Centre in HIV Social Research at The University of New South Wales (areas of expertise include: quantitative and qualitative research, illicit and injecting drug use, drug and alcohol service research, hepatitis C prevention among injecting drug users)
- Dr Martin Holt is a Research Fellow at the National Centre in HIV Social Research at The University of New South Wales (areas of expertise include: quantitative and qualitative research, gay men's health, drug and alcohol use, mental health)
- Mr Peter Canavan is the Senior Coordinator of the Health, Treatments and Research Unit at the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (areas of expertise include: consumer advocacy, health care service delivery issues for people living with HIV, including gay men)
- *Professor Susan Kippax is a Professorial Research Fellow at the Social Policy Research Centre at The

University of New South Wales (areas of expertise include: quantitative and qualitative research, gay men's experiences of depression, HIV prevention)

*Professor Deborah Saltman AM is a General Practitioner and Head of the Institute of Postgraduate Medicine at the Brighton and Sussex Medical School in the UK (areas of expertise include: quantitative and qualitative research, gay men's experiences of depression, general practice research)

*Professor Michael Kidd AM is a General Practitioner and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Flinders University (areas of expertise include: quantitative and qualitative research, gay men's health, general practice and primary health care research, translating research into practice)

Ms Rebecca Gray is a Research Assistant at the National Centre in HIV Social Research and a Research Officer and Group Facilitator at Relationships Australia (areas of expertise include: qualitative research, alcohol and other drug counselling, humanist approaches in healthcare settings, shame and stigma, systemic relationship dynamics and family violence)

Mr David McGuigan is Manager of the HIV/STI [Clinical](#) [1]Pertaining to or founded on observation and treatment of participants, as distinguished from theoretical or basic science. Program at the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (areas of expertise include: GP and health care worker education, health promotion, HIV prevention, workforce development)

Ms Angela Matheson is Manager of the Alcohol and Other Drugs Program at ACON (areas of expertise include: GLBT health promotion; drug and alcohol use, particularly in social contexts; and harm reduction)

*Chief Investigators of the Primary Health Care Project on HIV and Depression

- [living with HIV](#)
- [recreational drugs](#)
- [stress, depression, anxiety](#)

Links:

[1] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/475>