Key Findings from 2017 WA State Syringe Exchange Health Survey:

Interest in Reducing or Stopping Methamphetamine Use

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Study Aims

1) Identify if sociodemographic characteristics, drug use behavior, and concern about mental health are associated with interest in reducing or stopping meth use among people whose main drug is meth.

2) Explore types of help that participants would want who are interested in reducing or stopping their meth use.

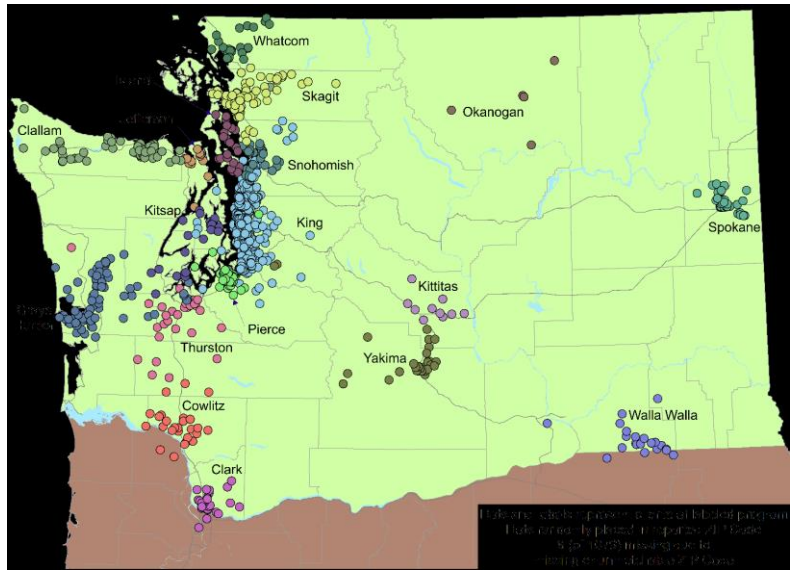
3) Contrast findings with participants whose main drug is an opioid.

Data Source

2017 WA State Syringe Exchange Health Survey

50 items, paper-based

- Demographic characteristics
- Sex partner gender
- Drugs used
- Injection-related infections
- Source of health care
- Concern about mental health
- Drug treatment



Respondents by zip code and SEP location
Image from ADAI report

Outcome

How interested are you in reducing or stopping your stimulant / opioid use?

Not interested vs Interested (Very & Somewhat)

Not sure (not in primary analysis)

Covariates

Demographic

Age

Race

Gender

MSM

Housing status

Rural/urban location

Health insurance status

Legal monthly income (before taxes)

Drug Use

Overamping/Overdose

Injection-related infections

Other drugs used

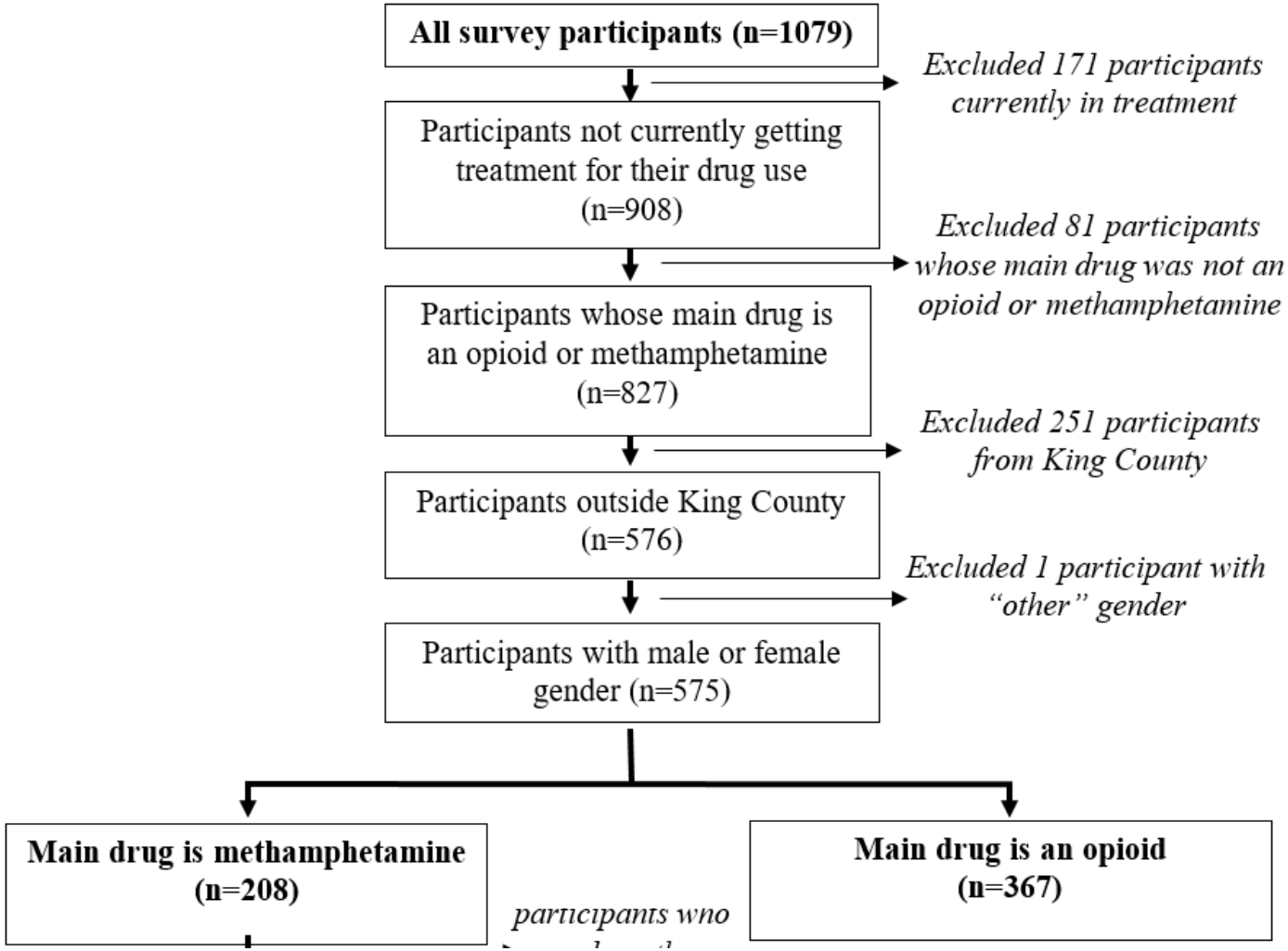
Other

Past year source of health care

Concern about mental health

Past year incarceration

Sample Selection



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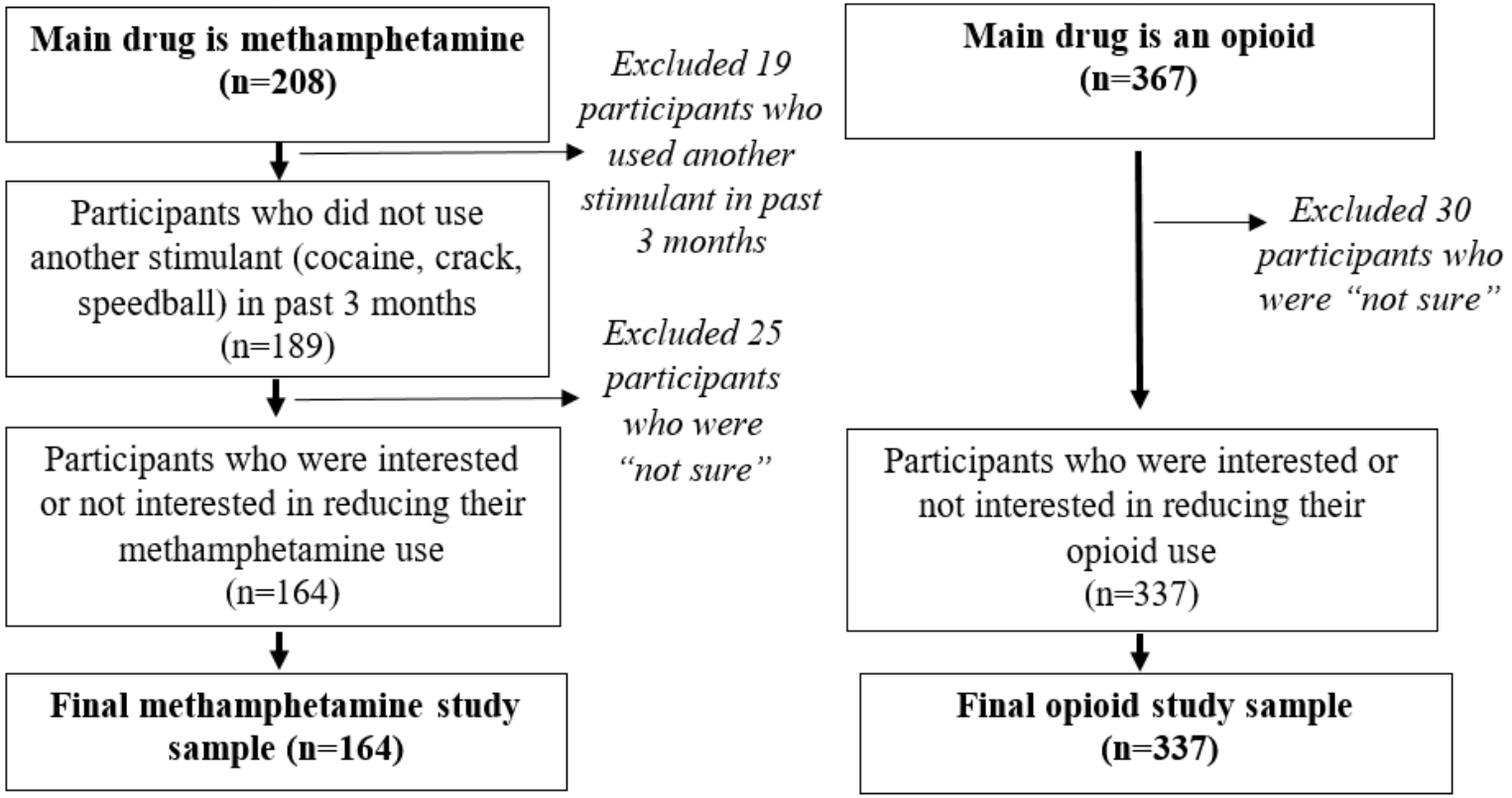


Results: Reported Drug Use in Past 3 Months by Main Drug Used (n=501)

		Drugs Used in 3 Past Months									
Main Drug Used †	Total	Methamphetamine (n=433)		Heroin (n=391)		Prescription Opiates (n=127)		Fentanyl (n=48)		Goofball (n=205)	
		%	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Methamphetamine	164	164	100%	55	34%	18	11%	7	4%	37	23%
Heroin	331	268	81%	331	100%	103	31%	40	12%	167	50%
Prescription Opiates	6	1	17%	5	83%	6	100%	1	17%	1	17%

† No participants reported fentanyl or goofballs as their main drug.

Results: Demographic Characteristics by Main Drug (n=501)

Characteristics†	Total (501)		Methamphetamine (164)		Opioids (337)		*p* value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Age							<.001
Median (IQR)	35 (28-46)		39 (31-50)		33 (27-43)		
Gender							.049
Male	271	54%	99	60%	172	51%	
Female	230	46%	65	40%	165	49%	
Race							.973
White	419	84%	137	84%	282	84%	
Non-White	80	16%	26	16%	54	16%	
MSM							.009
No	483	96%	153	93%	330	98%	
Yes	18	4%	11	7%	7	2%	
Insurance							.425
Uninsured	57	11%	16	10%	41	12%	
Insured	444	89%	148	90%	296	88%	
Insurance type							.017
Public/Government	421	95%	143	97%	278	94%	
Private	21	5%	3	2%	18	6%	
Other	2	0%	2	1%	0	0%	

Results: Demographic Characteristics by Main Drug (n=501)

Characteristics†	Total (501)		Methamphetamine (164)		Opioids (337)		*p* value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Urban/Rural							.121
Urban Core	289	58%	88	54%	201	60%	
Suburban	50	10%	12	7%	38	11%	
Large Town	130	26%	51	31%	79	23%	
Small Town/Rural	32	6%	13	8%	19	6%	
Housing							.675
Permanent	159	32%	50	30%	109	32%	
Unstable/Homeless	342	68%	114	70%	228	68%	
Legal monthly income before taxes (USD)							.209
None	279	56%	88	54%	191	57%	
1st Tertile ($1-730)	74	15%	26	16%	48	14%	
2nd Tertile ($731-1200)	88	18%	35	21%	53	16%	
3rd Tertile ($1201-6000)	59	12%	14	9%	45	13%	
Jail/Prison							.035
Not in jail in last year	315	63%	114	70%	201	60%	
In jail in last year	185	37%	50	30%	135	40%	
Concerned about Mental Health							.012
Not at all	201	40%	79	48%	122	36%	
Very/Somewhat	298	60%	85	52%	213	64%	
Source of Medical Care in Last Year							.043
ER	259	52%	71	44%	188	56%	
Other	109	22%	41	25%	68	20%	
None	131	26%	50	31%	81	24%	

Results: Significant Bivariate Associations with Interest in Reducing or Stopping Use Among Participants Whose Main Drug is Meth (n=164)

Characteristics	Methamphetamine					
	Total (164)	**Not Interested (78)**		**Interested (86)**		***p* value**
	n	n	(%)	n	(%)	
Age *						.011
Median (IQR)	39 (31-50)	42	(34-51)	35	(29-45)	
Housing						.035
Permanent	50	30	60%	20	40%	
Unstable/Homeless	114	48	42%	66	58%	
Concerned about Mental Health † *						< .001
Not at all	79	49	62%	30	38%	
Very/Somewhat	85	29	34%	56	66%	

Results: Significant Bivariate Associations with Interest in Reducing or Stopping Use Among Participants Whose Main Drug is an Opioid (n=337)

	Opioids					
Characteristics	**Total (337)**	**Not Interested (54)**		**Interested (283)**		***p* value**
	n	n	(%)	n	(%)	
Insurance type *						.032
Public/Government	278	40	14%	238	86%	
Private	18	6	33%	12	67%	
Other	0	0	0%	0	0%	
Concerned about Mental Health † *						<.001
Not at all	122	33	27%	89	73%	
Very/Somewhat	213	21	10%	192	90%	

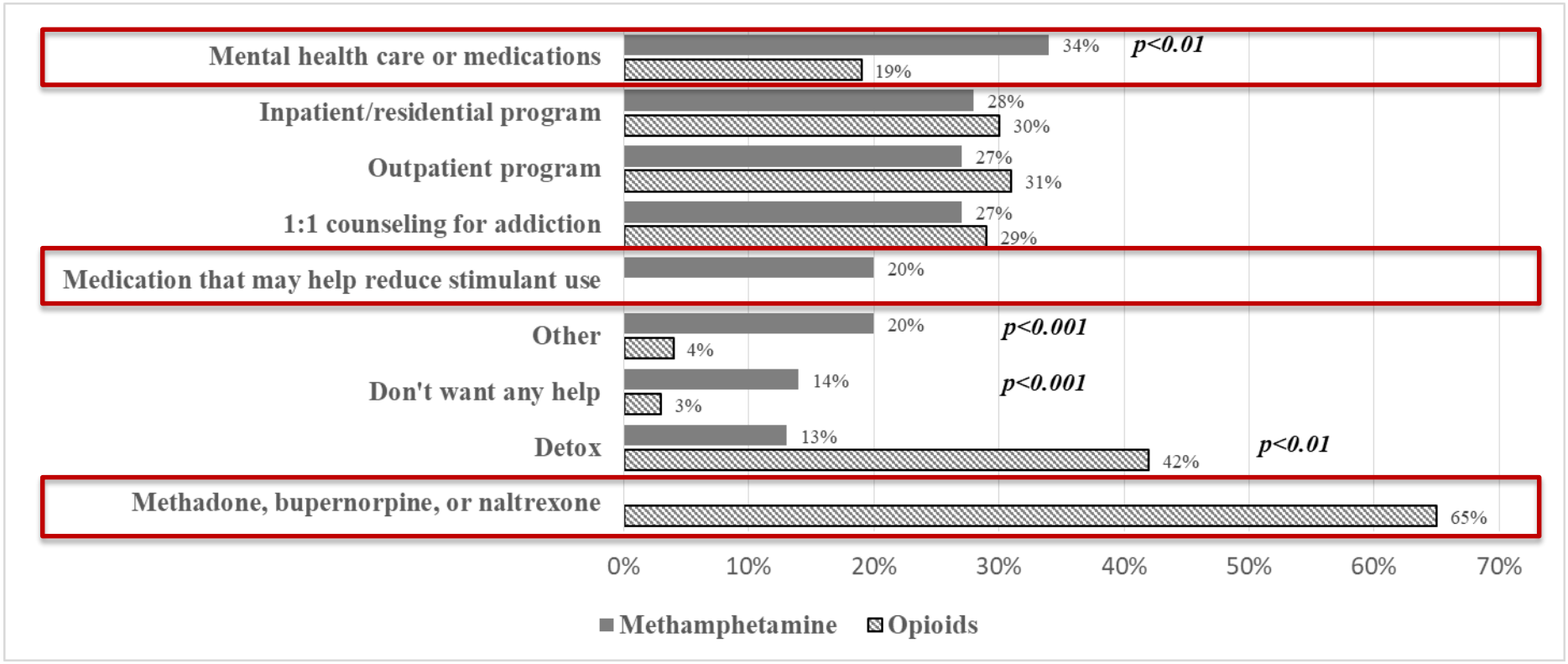
Results: Multivariable Associations with Interest in Reducing or Stopping Use (n=501)

Concern about mental health (depression, anxiety, or some other mental health issue) was associated with

- 3.04 times the odds of interest in reducing or stopping meth use (95% CI: 1.52-6.06)

- 3.00 times the odds of interest in reducing or stopping opioid use (95% CI: 1.61-5.60)

Results: What Types of Help People Wanted to Reduce Use Among Those Interested (n=369)



Implications

> People who use methamphetamine should be asked about their interest in reducing or stopping their use and supported as appropriate.

> Mental health practitioners should be involved in care provision for people who use methamphetamine.

> There is interest in medications to reduce meth use – this research should be a priority.

Future Work

- Better understand the relationship between mental health and methamphetamine.
- Assess depression vs anxiety.
- Collect data on frequency of meth use.
- Assess interest in reducing vs stopping use.
- Include people who use meth via non-injection ways and individuals outside of SEPs.

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Study Participants