



Evaluating Cracks in the Ice – a digital health initiative to support families, health workers and communities affected by crystal methamphetamine ('ice')

Lisbon Addictions 2022

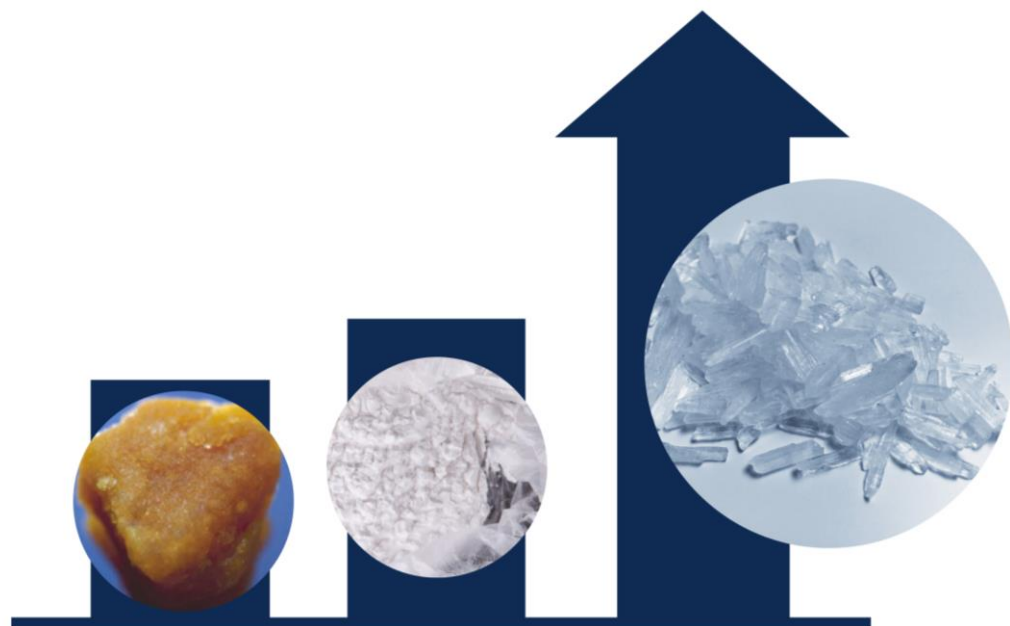


Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care

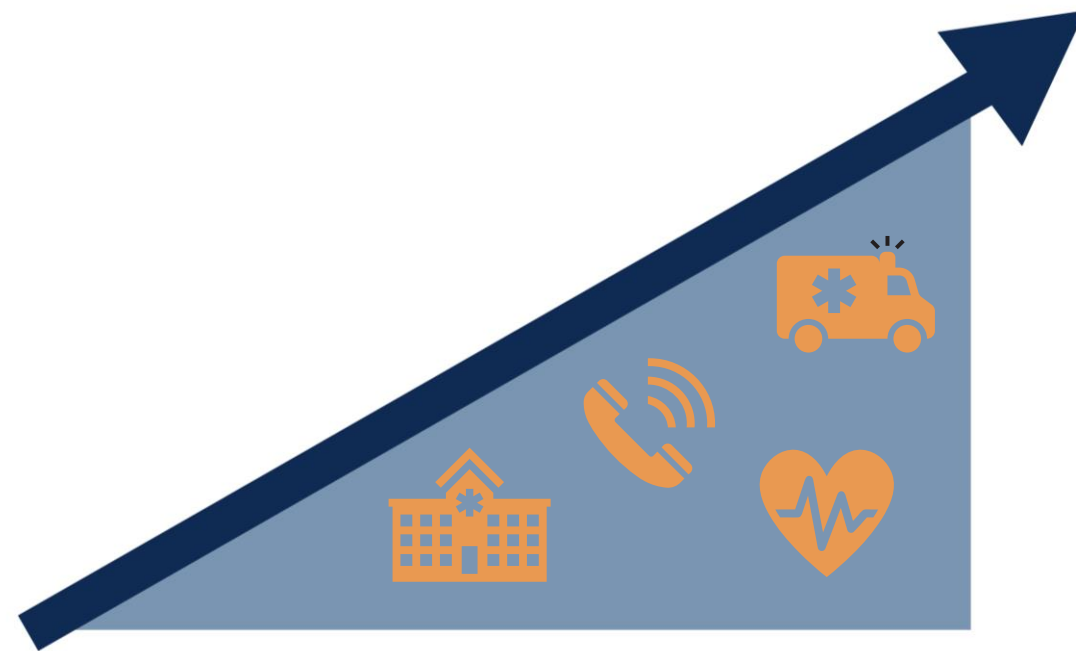


THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY
—
Matilda Centre

Methamphetamine trends in Australia



Crystal is now **the most prevalent form** of methamphetamine in Australia



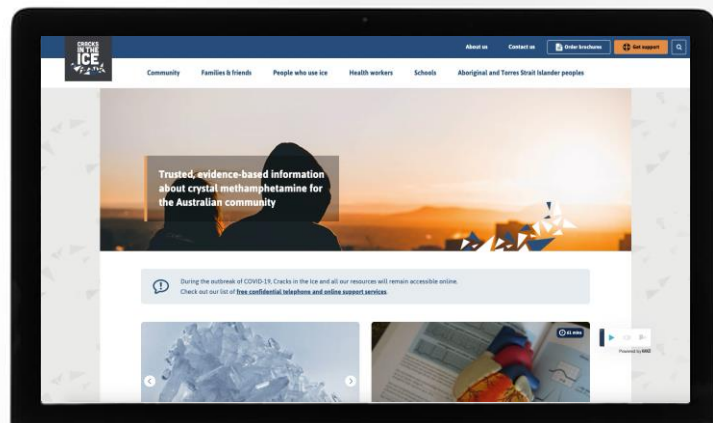
Methamphetamine-related harms are rising



What is *Cracks in the Ice*?

Targeted information and resources for:

- ✓ Community members
- ✓ Families and friends
- ✓ People who use crystal methamphetamine
- ✓ Health workers
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Toolkit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples





Reach and Engagement

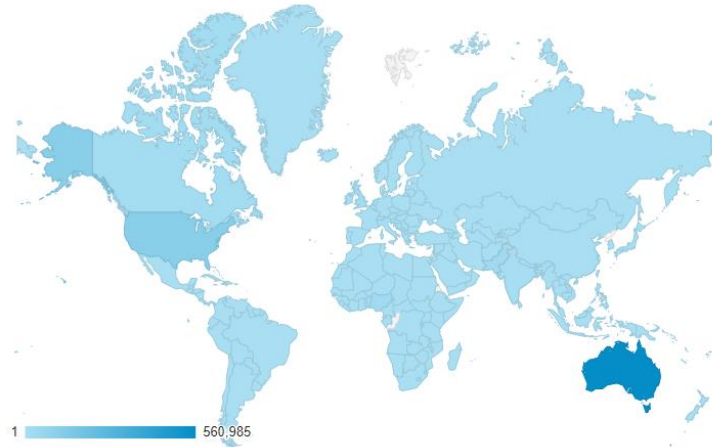
Since the launch of the portal

1.93 *OVER*
Million
page views

& 947k *site users*

66% *users from Australia*

as of 23 Nov 2022



SOCIAL MEDIA REACH



3.2 million

People reached on Facebook



682k

Twitter impressions

NEWSLETTER

6,994

subscribers

WEBINARS

Registrations: **12,759**

Attendees: **4,587**

31,301

total views



OVER
250k+

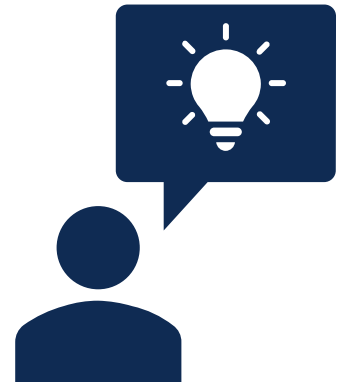
**hardcopy resources
distributed across
Australia**

Evaluation survey: aims

A **national online survey** in Australia was conducted

Aim 1: Determine whether the CITI toolkit is achieving its aims and assess its usability

Aim 2: Examine the association between the use of CITI and the knowledge and attitudes



Methodology

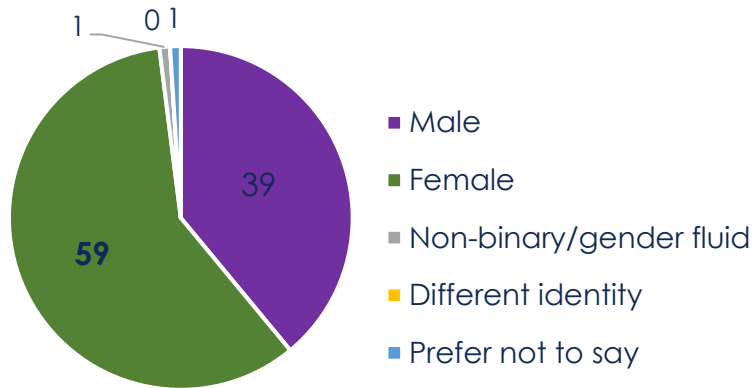
- Ethics approval from University of Sydney (HREC 2018/844)
- Conducted a cross sectional online survey which took 10-30 minutes to complete
- Open to anyone in Australia over the age of 18years.
- Participants included people who reported having used crystal methamphetamine, affected family members and friends, health workers and the general community.





Evaluation survey: demographics

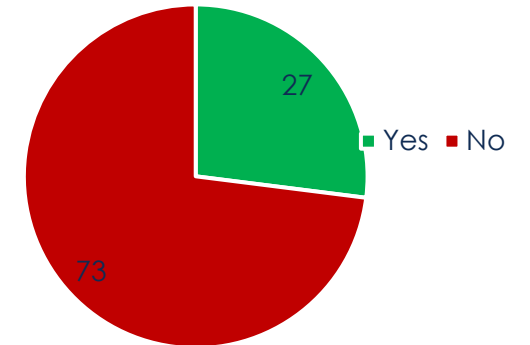
Gender (%)



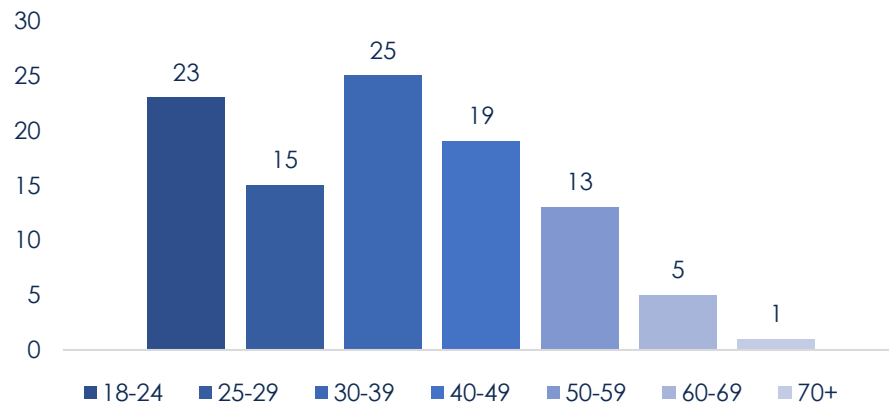
State/Territory (%)



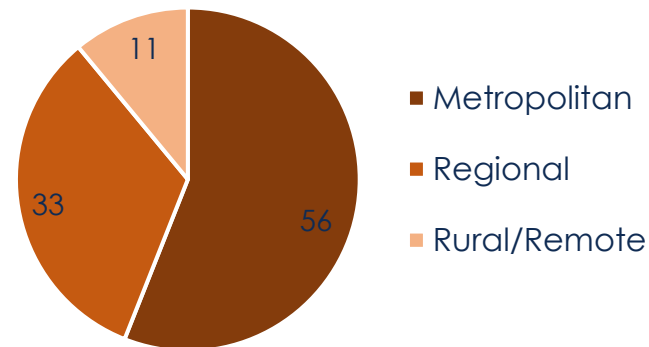
Have you ever used crystal methamphetamine (ice)? (%)



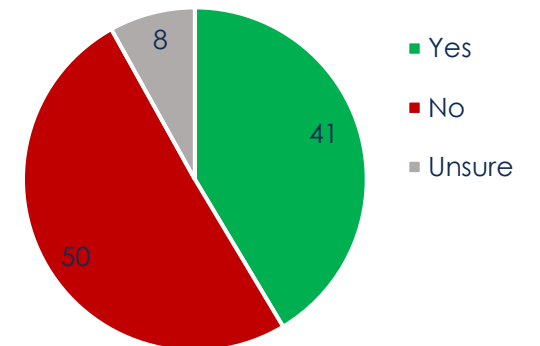
Age (%)



Region (%)



Do you have a family member or friend who you think may be using ice? (%)



Total sample: N=2108

Evaluation survey



The primary goal/purpose of Cracks in the Ice is clear



The terminology on Cracks in the Ice is non-stigmatising



The information and resources on Cracks in the Ice have been informed by evidence

Would you recommend it to others?

CITI website users

8.6



Non users

7.9

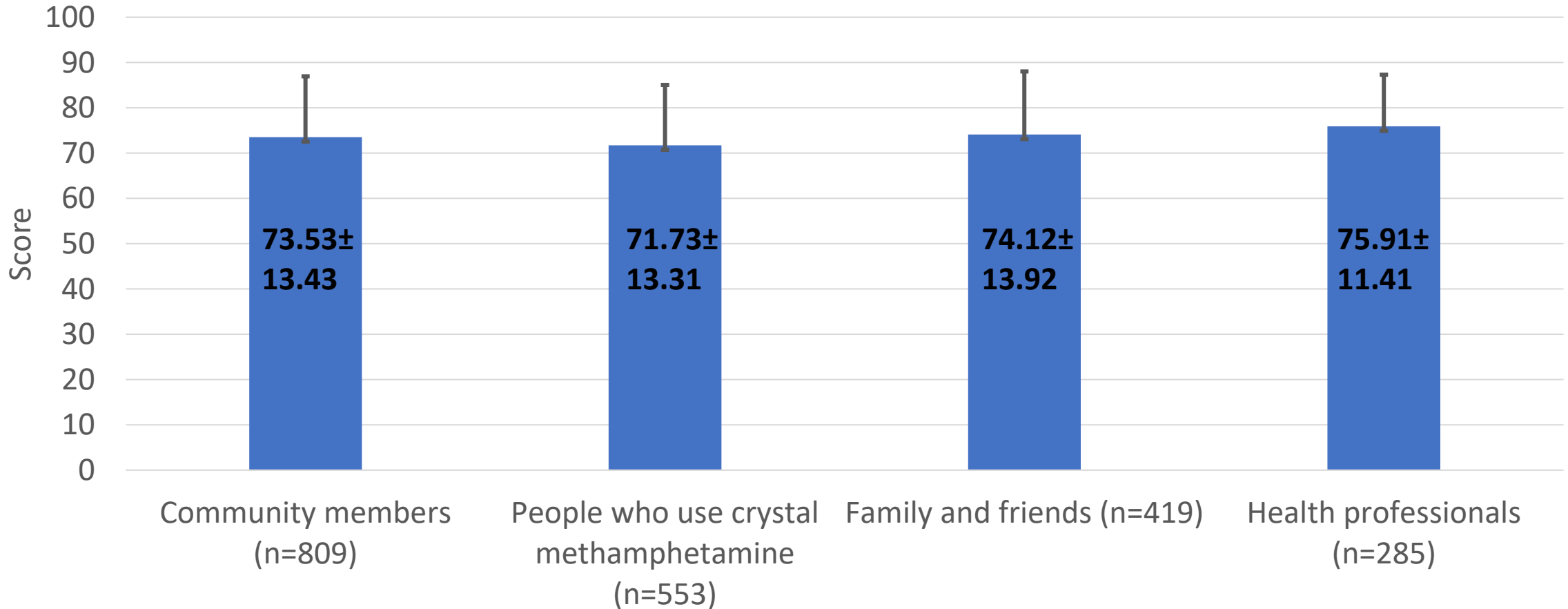


Average score on a 10-point Likert scale for would you recommend CITI

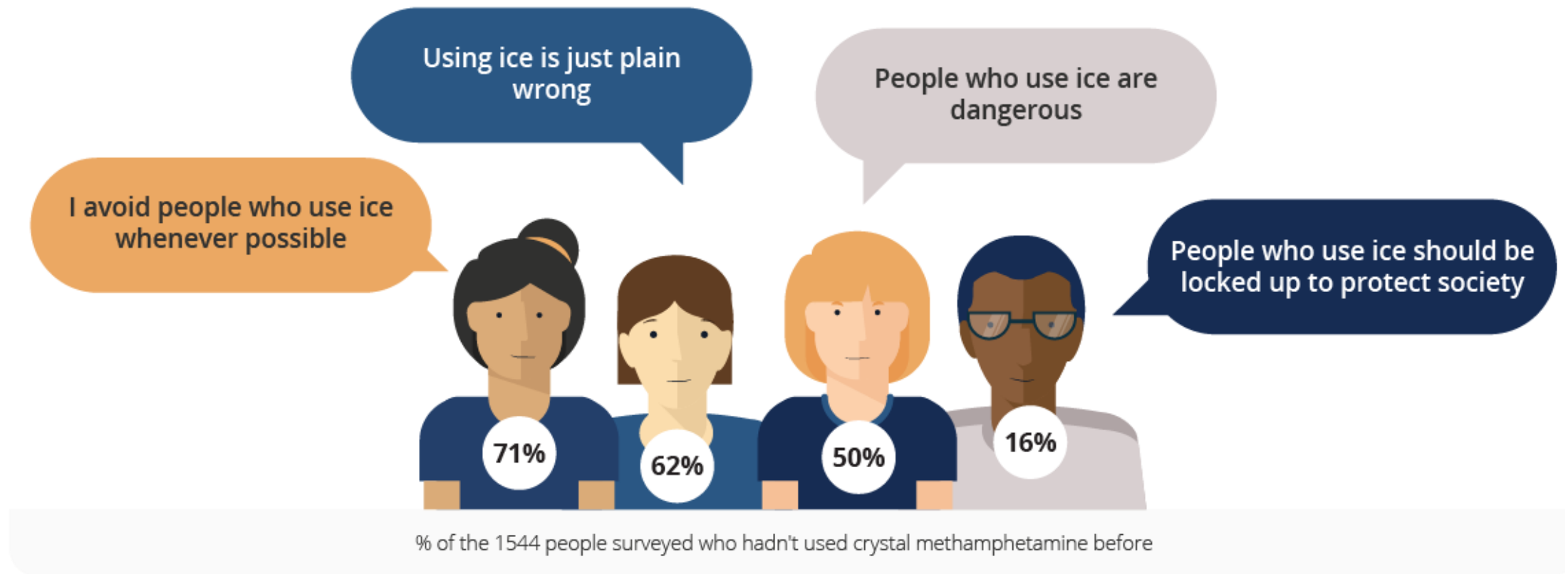


Evaluation survey: Cracks in the Ice

System Usability Scale



Stigmatising attitudes are common

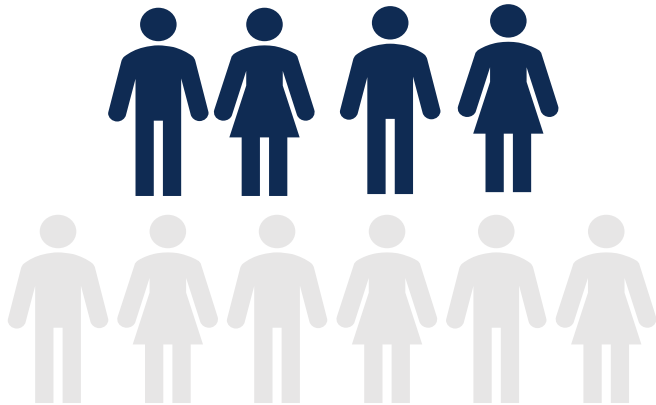


Proportion of participants who selected "agree" or "strongly agree" on a 5-point Likert scale

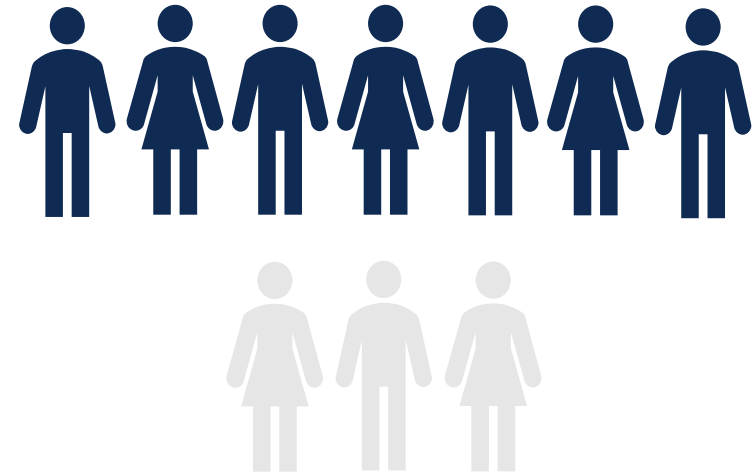


Discrimination

Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your ice use?



39% of people who reported using ice (n=565)



70% of people who reported using ice frequently (at least once a month) (n=90)



Knowledge and attitudes after exposure to CITI

After exposure



Knowledge scores increased following exposure to the website (mean 15.2, SE 0.05) compared to baseline (mean 14.4, SE 0.05; $P < .001$).



Knowledge and attitudes after exposure to CITI

After exposure



Decrease in
**negative or
stigmatising
attitudes**

Stigmatizing attitude scores among the naïve group were significantly lower following exposure to CITI (mean 41.97, SE 0.21) compared to baseline (mean 44.3, SE 0.21; $P < .001$).



For more information

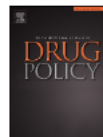
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Research Paper

Stigma, discrimination and crystal methamphetamine ('ice'): Current attitudes in Australia

Hannah Deen^a, Steph Kershaw^{a,*}, Nicola Newton^a, Lexine Stapinski^a, Louise Birrell^a, Jennifer Debenham^a, Katrina E. Champion^a, Frances Kay-Lambkin^b, Maree Teesson^a, Cath Chapman^a

^a The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

^b Priority Research Centre for Brain and Mental Health, The University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
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Methamphetamine

ABSTRACT

Background: Crystal methamphetamine attracts an elevated level of negative attention in Australia and internationally, however there is a paucity of research into stigma and discrimination surrounding this drug. This study aimed to investigate and compare levels of public stigma, self-stigma and discrimination surrounding crystal methamphetamine use in a large sample of Australian residents.

Methods: A cross-sectional online survey, open to all Australian residents aged 18 years and over, was conducted from November 2018 to March 2019 examining stigmatising attitudes towards people who use crystal methamphetamine. Respondents also reported any personal history of crystal methamphetamine use and experiences of discrimination. Multiple linear regression examined whether prior crystal methamphetamine use was associated with holding stigmatising attitudes. Covariates included in the analysis were presence of a family member or friend who uses crystal methamphetamine, knowledge about crystal methamphetamine, gender, age and region.

Results: A total of 2108 Australian participants completed the study (mean age = 36.3 years; 59% females; 27% had used crystal methamphetamine). Many participants reported being discriminated against because of their crystal methamphetamine use. Stigmatising attitudes were prevalent, particularly among those who hadn't used crystal methamphetamine ($p < .001$). Others more likely to endorse stigmatising attitudes included females ($p = .004$ vs. males), individuals with less knowledge about crystal methamphetamine ($p < .001$) and those living in regional ($p < .001$) and rural/remote locations ($p < .001$) compared to metropolitan areas.

Conclusion: Stigma and discrimination surrounding crystal methamphetamine use was common in this sample of Australian residents, with public stigma more prevalent than self-stigma. This highlights a need for stigma reduction initiatives. Given higher levels of knowledge were associated with less stigmatising attitudes, public education campaigns providing accurate, evidence-based information about crystal methamphetamine along with guidelines and support for accurate media reporting, present promising approaches to stigma reduction. Exploration of other stigma reduction initiatives is also vital to ensuring people who use crystal methamphetamine feel supported in seeking help.



Scan to read
the full paper



JOURNAL OF MEDICAL INTERNET RESEARCH

Kershaw et al

Original Paper

Evaluation of a Digital Health Initiative in Illicit Substance Use: Cross-sectional Survey Study

Steph Kershaw¹, BLabMed (Hons), PhD; Louise Birrell¹, BSocSci, BPsych (Hons), PhD; Hannah Deen¹, BPsych (Hons); Nicola C Newton¹, BPsych (Hons), PhD; Lexine A Stapinski¹, BPsych (Hons), MCLinPsych, PhD; Katrina E Champion¹, BAPsych (Hons), BHealth, PhD; Frances Kay-Lambkin², BScPsych (Hons), PhD; Maree Teesson¹, BScPsych (Hons), PhD; Cath Chapman¹, BA (Hons), PhD

¹ The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

² Priority Research Centre for Brain and Mental Health, The University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia

Corresponding Author:

Steph Kershaw, BLabMed (Hons), PhD
The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use
University of Sydney
Level 6, Jane Foss Russell building
Camperdown
Sydney, 2006
Australia
Phone: 61 2 8627 9018
Email: steph.kershaw@sydney.edu.au

Abstract

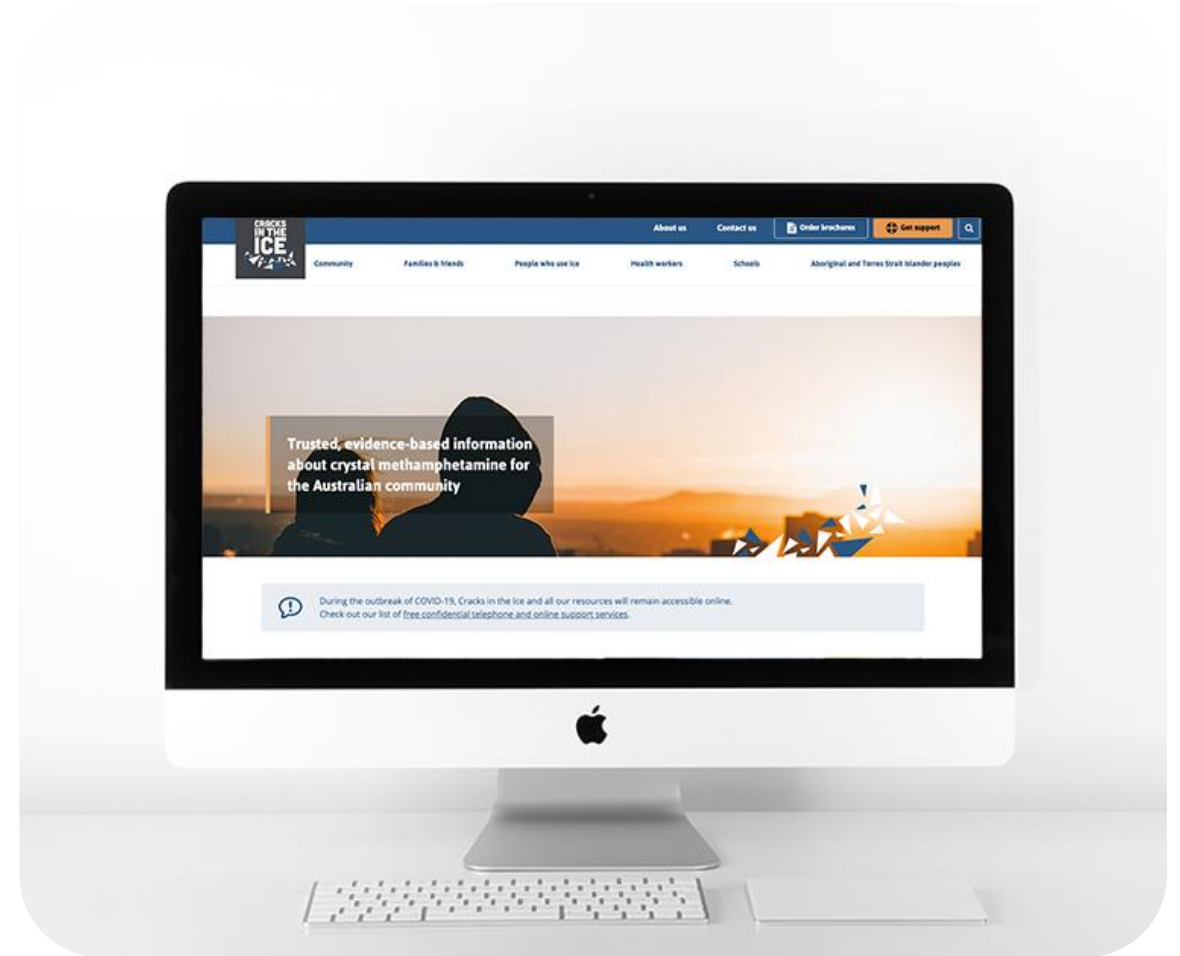
Background: The *Cracks in the Ice* (CITI) community toolkit was developed to provide evidence-based, up-to-date information and resources about crystal methamphetamine to Australians. Given the high rates of internet use in the community and the potential for misinformation, CITI has the potential to play an important role in improving knowledge and challenging misconceptions surrounding crystal methamphetamine.

Objective: This study aims to determine (1) whether the CITI toolkit is achieving its aim of disseminating evidence-based information and resources to people who use crystal methamphetamine, their family and friends, health professionals, and the general community and (2) examine the association between the use of CITI and the knowledge and attitudes about crystal methamphetamine.



In summary

Digital public health initiatives stand to overcome structural, geographical, and attitudinal barriers to alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention efforts





Thank you

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- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care for funding the project
- The *Cracks in the Ice* Team & Collaborators
- The many **community members** who provided input into Cracks in the Ice

