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 desigingng 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 in 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**, t**rusting 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

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