

## **Domains of reinforcement associated with greater alcohol use among gay, bisexual and men who have sex with men (GBMSM) within 'Chemsex' contexts in Queensland**

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### **Introduction and Aim**

"Chemsex", the use of recreational substances with sexual activity (for sexual enhancement), has been an emerging research area. Chemsex is normative among some GBMSM and involves alcohol use with substances (e.g., methamphetamine, Viagra).

### **Design and Methods:**

This study employed online cross-sectional questionnaires among 175 GBMSM 'Queensland', recruited through GBMSM media/networks; including demographics, sexual health, substance use, chemsex, and drinking expectancies (Drinking Expectancy Questionnaire - MSM).

### **Key Findings:**

All participants reported engaging in chemsex. Most (74%) participants reported alcohol use at least once a week, with 2-3 drinks/occasion. Most participants (80%) were from metropolitan areas, Anglo-Australian (82%), and 30-39 years. Methamphetamine and marijuana were commonly used during chemsex.

We investigated a range of perceived reinforcement associated with greater alcohol use, with ten expectancy items for general/sexual contexts. Of ten expectancy items, six were positively associated with alcohol frequency during chemsex (e.g. "I feel more stimulation during sex when I am drinking", "My mood is better when I have been drinking", "I feel more connected to other people when I drink"). HIV status, use of PrEP (biomedical HIV prevention), and STIs were unrelated to alcohol frequency.

### **Discussions and Conclusions:**

These results provide insight for motivations underpinning alcohol use during chemsex, and could be linked to health promotion and clinical intervention planning. Implications for chemsex participants and the wider GBMSM community are discussed and recommendations for future research are made, particularly in relation to harm reduction and support within the GBMSM community.