

“Sometimes we miss those opportunities because we just get jaded”

# Healthcare stakeholder perspectives on improving the care of trauma patients who use methamphetamine: A qualitative study

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## Background

- The prevalence of methamphetamine use in Hawai'i is more than twice the national average<sup>1</sup>
- Approximately 17,000 people in the state report using the drug on a regular basis<sup>2</sup>
- Given that methamphetamine use is a risk factor for traumatic injury, providing comprehensive addiction care to trauma patients who use methamphetamine may improve health outcomes and decrease trauma recidivism
- The aim of this study is to qualitatively assess facilitators and barriers to the implementation of a methamphetamine treatment program at a Level 1 trauma center
- This is framed around a Contingency Management intervention, which is a behavioral intervention to provide extrinsic motivation for a reduction in stimulant use<sup>3</sup>
- Both healthcare stakeholders and patients were interviewed: qualitative results from the former are presented here

## Methods

- A semi-structured interview guide was developed to query issues relevant to improving patient care and interrogate barriers and facilitators to program implementation
- Fifteen stakeholders were interviewed
- Each interview was deidentified prior to transcription to ensure participant confidentiality
- A Template Analysis approach was used to code the interviews; the template was constructed iteratively using a priori themes and codes relevant to the data
- Coding was performed in duplicate prior to a consensus meeting to determine the final codes for each transcript to ensure comprehensive, accurate, and reproducible data

## Results

We interviewed 4 trauma surgeons, 2 other trauma care providers, 2 addictions providers, 2 clinical specialists in disposition planning, 2 surgical trainees, a nursing leader, an emergency physician, and a hospital physician leader.

### Representative quotations by stakeholders

#### Theme: General attitude towards patients using methamphetamine

- 5/15 (33.3%) stakeholders reported that their attitudes change after a positive methamphetamine screen
- 13/15 (86.7%) stakeholders believed their colleagues' attitudes change after a positive methamphetamine screen

“Maybe they engage more in riskier behaviors than the general population.”

“It's an additional data point to help understand the patient's situation.”

“I've seen team members completely disregard patients.”

#### Theme: Suggested improvements to care

- 8/15 (53.3%) stakeholders said to increase availability of addictions care post-hospitalization
- 7/15 (46.7%) stakeholders said to bridge services between inpatient and outpatient care

“From the hospital, if they went back to the community, [it would help] if there was some bridge in between.”

“Anything is better than nothing.”

“Having open conversations where they're nonjudgmental, open conversations with people regarding their use.”

#### Theme: General opinions on contingency management

- 13/15 (86.7%) stakeholders were not aware of contingency management
- 12/15 (80.0%) stakeholders believed that contingency management would be effective after they were given more information

“Winning a prize or getting something in return for doing something, I feel like always incentivizes people to come back and to keep going.”

“There's a lot of benefit to doing that. It'll definitely decrease recidivism.”

### Frequently mentioned facilitators and barriers

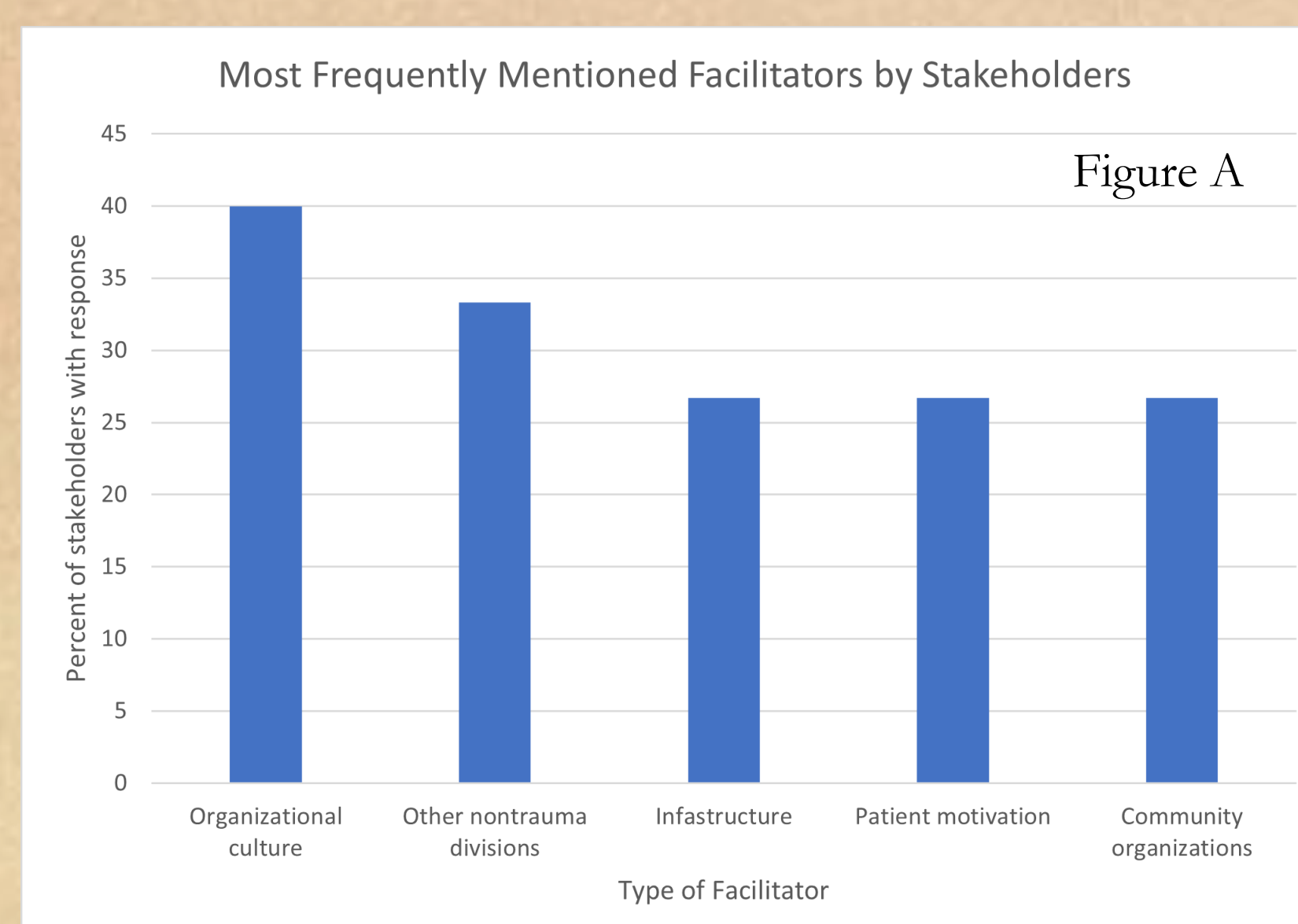


Figure A: Frequency of facilitators mentioned measured in percent of stakeholder responses

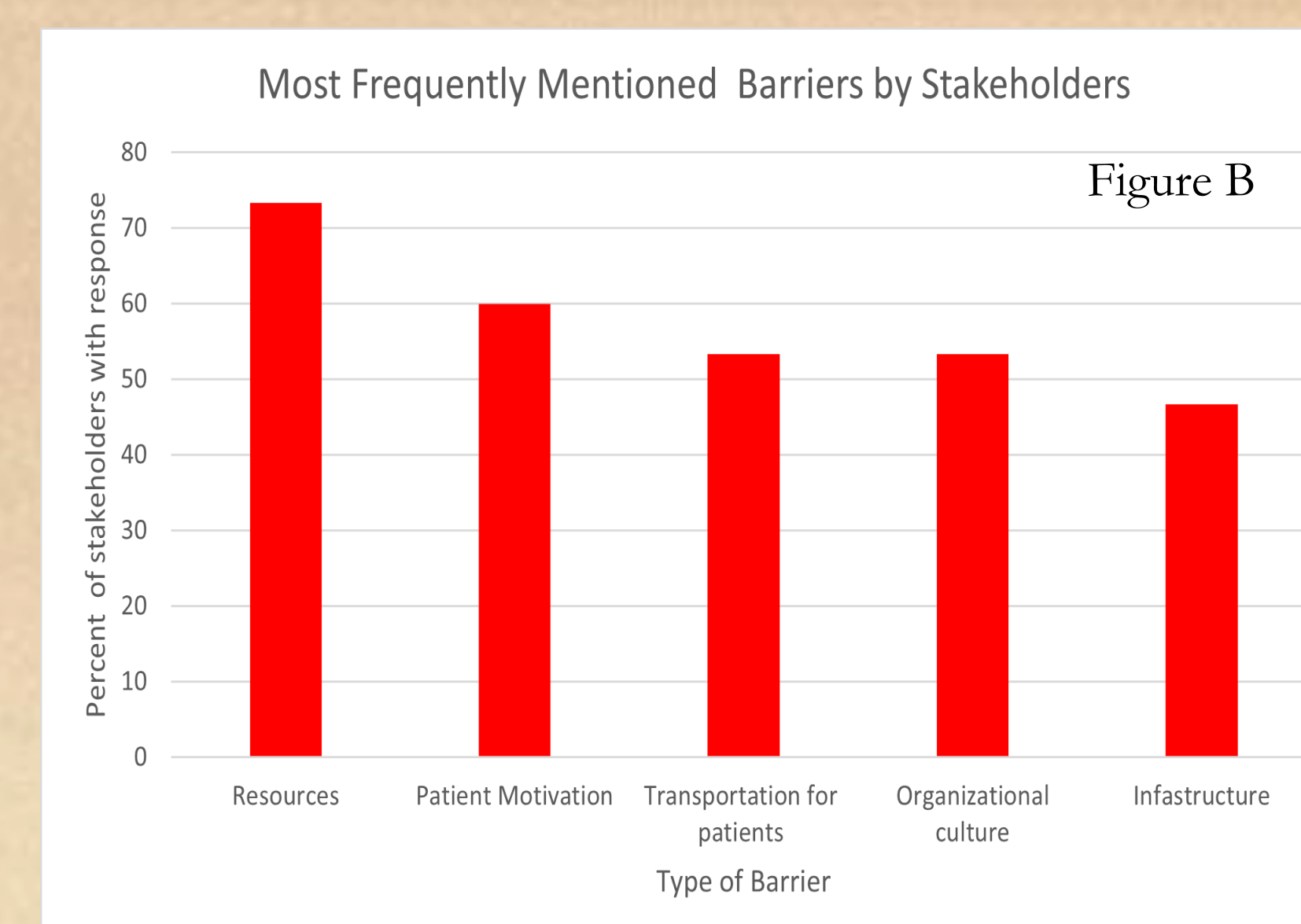


Figure B: Frequency of barriers mentioned measured in percent of stakeholder responses

## Discussion

- To our knowledge this is the first study that looks at healthcare stakeholders' perspectives on improving care for trauma patients who use methamphetamine
- Awareness of stakeholder perspectives is essential prior to program implementation
- Starting this discussion may encourage other providers to voice their opinions in order to bring more attention to the methamphetamine crisis
- Providers felt that improvement in access to inpatient addictions consultation (>2 days/week), expansion in bridge services, and increased access to outpatient addictions care are crucial factors in advancing patient care
- Organizational culture was found to be the most common facilitator; capitalizing on the ethos of Queen's as a safety-net hospital may facilitate change
- Many stakeholders commented on the fact that their colleagues' attitudes change in the presence of a positive methamphetamine screen; this highlights an opportunity for more staff education on addictions
- Only 15 stakeholders were interviewed, and not all professions were included; saturation may not have been fully reached for some topics

## Conclusion

- Based on stakeholder responses, priorities for enhancing care at The Queen's Medical Center include improving access to inpatient addictions consultations, increasing staff education for methamphetamine use disorder, and creating more services that can help patients decrease methamphetamine use when they are discharged
- Our findings may provide a platform for further collaboration with other trauma systems
- Ongoing research assesses patient perspectives on how to improve their care

## References

1. “2017–2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Model-Based Prevalence Estimates (50 States and the District of Columbia),” n.d.
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3. Brown HD, DeFulio A. Contingency management for the treatment of methamphetamine use disorder: A systematic review. Drug Alcohol Depend 2020; 216:108307.

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