

A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF TRAJECTORIES AMONG SUBURBAN USERS OF METHAMPHETAMINE

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The goal of this exploratory study was to gain a better understanding of methamphetamine use among suburban users. We know very little about the mechanisms of initiation and trajectory patterns of methamphetamine use among this under-researched and hidden population. This study employed qualitative methods to examine the drug career of suburban methamphetamine users. Analysis of in-depth interviews with 48 former and current users indicated that suburban users often initiate and continue use for functional purposes. Turning points into dysfunctional use included loss of work, broken relationships, and stress related to a suburban lifestyle. The route to cessation included frequent relapses. Findings call for treatment and prevention programs targeted for specific patterns of suburban use.