Factors affecting the continual use of Ketamine amongst teenagers and adults in Hong Kong

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Introduction
Young drug abusers aged under 21 years had an alarming rising trend in recent years. The number of young people abusing psychotropic substances had seen a significant rise by 34% from 2007 to 2010. The rising trend continued in the first half of 2008 and then increased by 22.4% year-on-year. 99% of all reported young drug abusers abused psychotropic substances. In recent years, ketamine abuse has become more common among Hong Kong teenagers. Teenagers often used these drugs anytime and everywhere. They sometimes sniffed ketamine multiple times a day whenever they liked. The risk factors of psychotropic substances abused were peer influences, curiosity, relief of boredom, depression and anxiety. These are strongly related to adolescent growth and problem-coping ability. Poor academic achievement, parental absence, availability of drugs and growing addiction culture were also risk factors. The consequences of ketamine abuse not only affect physical, psychosocial health of individual, but also affect family, society and economic growth. The impact of ketamine abuse is long term and produces chain reaction.

Objectives
Many studies have done to find out risk factors of ketamine abused but few systematic studies have examined the factors affecting the continual use of ketamine. Therefore, the study explores the reasons of initial and continual ketamine used in teenagers and adults and also explores the knowledge about the psycho-social and physical consequences related to ketamine used.

Methodology
This qualitative study is to identify the main characteristics of people using ketamine and to identify the determinants and factors related to initiation and continual use of ketamine. A qualitative semi-structured interview was used and thematic analysis was performed with a purposive sample of ten participants with ketamine-associated cystitis.

Result
Thematic analysis identified four key themes about the factors influencing participants
ketamine used: influence of ‘perceived drug norms’ on behavior, attributions for initial and ongoing drug-taking norms on behavior, knowledge and information about the nature of ketamine and its consequences, having ideas of quitting ketamine because of changing in physical and psycho-social conditions after ketamine used. These findings could have implications for interventions at a number of levels to support people using ketamine including public health messages, education and interventions.