

Methamphetamine prices drop to record low

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The price of a gram of methamphetamine has dropped to record lows in three North Island regions, while many South Island regions are also reporting substantial declines in prices for the drug.

The latest research bulletin from Massey University's SHORE & Whāriki Research Centre shows the median price for a gram of [methamphetamine](#) is down nationwide, from \$538 in 2017/2018 to \$500 in 2018/2019.

Research lead, Associate Professor Chris Wilkins, says record lows of \$450 per gram were reported in the Auckland, Waikato and Wellington regions.

"The lower [prices](#) reported for methamphetamine in these North Island regions are consistent with their proximity to international smuggling routes, for example airports, seaports and isolated coastlines, and the concentration of domestic methamphetamine manufacture in these regions," Dr. Wilkins says.

"The higher prices for methamphetamine reported in Tasman/Nelson/Marlborough and the Southland/West Coast regions likely reflect geographical distance from production and importation sites and smaller less competitive drug markets," he adds.

While South Island prices were higher, a number of regions reported substantial declines in prices compared to the previous year. "These declining prices for methamphetamine are consistent with record

seizures of methamphetamine and reports of gangs expanding methamphetamine selling into rural areas and the South Island," Dr. Wilkins says.

Twenty-nine percent of methamphetamine users reported the price had been decreasing in the past six months. "In contrast, only 1 percent of [cannabis users](#), 6 percent of LSD users and 9 percent of ecstasy users reported the price of these drugs had gone down in the previous six months."

The overall median price for an ounce of cannabis for the entire country in 2018/19 was \$350—the same median price as reported in 2017/18. Higher median prices for an ounce (28g) of cannabis were reported in Otago (\$400), Northland (\$380), Auckland (\$360) and Southland/West Coast (\$360).

"Only one percent of cannabis users reported the price had dropped in the previous six months. Seventy-one percent said it was 'stable', 16 percent said it was 'increasing' and 12 percent said it had been 'fluctuating'," Dr. Wilkins says.

"The price of illegal drugs are important determinants of who uses them, the level of consumption, and the related individual and social harm. Declining prices can stimulate higher consumption and more harmful use, particularly among 'at-risk' groups."

The New Zealand Drug Trends Survey is an anonymous online survey designed to engage with large numbers of people who are knowledgeable about current [drug](#) market trends and related health, social and policy issues in New Zealand. The survey was promoted via a targeted Facebook campaign from November 2018 until February 2019. A total of 10,966 people completed the survey from the 16 regions.

This research bulletin presents the [median price](#) reported for a gram of methamphetamine, ounce of cannabis, pill of ecstasy, and tab of LSD by region, and users' perceptions of the change in the price of these drugs over the previous six months.

More information: What is the price of methamphetamine, cannabis, ecstasy and LSD in your region? [static1.squarespace.com/static...ce+Bulletin+2019.pdf](#)

Provided by Massey University

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