

[10.1071/PY23046](https://doi.org/10.1071/PY23046)

Australian Journal of Primary Health

Supplementary Material

Social media group support for antidepressant deprescribing: a mixed-methods survey of patient experiences

Amy Coe^{A,}, Noor Abid^A, and Catherine Kaylor-Hughes^A*

^ADepartment of General Practice and Primary Care, The University of Melbourne, Medical Bldg (181) Corner Grattan Street & Royal Parade, Melbourne, Vic. 3010, Australia.

*Correspondence to: Amy Coe Department of General Practice and Primary Care, The University of Melbourne, Medical Bldg (181) Corner Grattan Street & Royal Parade, Melbourne, Vic. 3010, Australia
Email: amy.coe@unimelb.edu.au

Appendices

Supplementary Appendix A: Online survey completed by participants

Thank you for your interest in this study. We are excited to work with you to find out how you have used social media to explore information about reducing antidepressant medication and your experiences around this.

To get started, please click and read through the Plain Language Statement & Consent Form. Once you have read and understood the Plain Language Statement, you are ready to start the survey.

Plain Language Statement & Consent Form

Please take care not to provide any information that may identify you or another person, such as using full names or clinic names.

Please indicate if you are ready to commence the survey below.

Declaration I declare that I am over 18 years of age, have read and understood this consent form and agree to participate in this research study. Yes / No

DEMOGRAPHICS	Q1 How do you describe your gender?	Male Female Non-binary I use a different term (please specify) Prefer not to say
	Q2 What is your age range?	18-25 years 26-35 years 36-45 years 46-50+ years
	Q3 When were you first diagnosed with depression?	< 12 months 12-24 months 2-3 years 3-4 years 4-5+ years
	Q4 Duration of current antidepressant medication?	0-12 months 12-24 months 2-3 years 3-4 years

		4-5+ years
	Q5 How long have you been a member of an antidepressant Facebook group?	0-6 months 7 -12 months 1-2 years 2-3+ years
	Q6 Which online group are you a member of?	[FG1] [FG2]
	Q7 How would you describe your involvement in the group?	Active participant Observer Occasional participant Prefer not to answer
	Q8 In which country do you currently reside?	Free text
QUANTITATIVE MEASURES	Q9 If you were having a personal or emotional problem, how likely is it that you would seek help from the following people? Please indicate your response by selecting the button that best describes your intention to seek help from each help source that is listed.	
	Intimate partner (e.g. girlfriend, boyfriend, husband, wife)	7-point Likert scale ranging from 1= Extremely unlikely to 7 = Extremely likely
	Friend (not related to you)	
	Parent	
	Other relative/family member	
	Mental health professional (e.g. psychologist, social worker, counsellor)	
	Phone helpline (e.g. Lifeline)	
	Doctor/GP	
	Minister or religious leader (e.g. Priest, Rabbi, Chaplain)	
	I would not seek help from anyone	
I would seek help from another not listed. Please list in the space provided, if no, please leave blank		

<p>Q10 If you were experiencing suicidal thoughts, how likely is it that you would seek help from the following people? Please indicate your response by selecting the button that best describes your intention to seek help from each help source that is listed</p>	
Intimate partner (e.g. girlfriend, boyfriend, husband, wife)	<p>7-point Likert scale ranging from 1= Extremely unlikely to 7 = Extremely likely</p>
Friend (not related to you)	
Parent	
Other relative/family member	
Mental health professional (e.g. psychologist, social worker, counsellor)	
Phone helpline (e.g. Lifeline)	
Doctor/GP	
Minister or religious leader (e.g. Priest, Rabbi, Chaplain)	
I would not seek help from anyone	
I would seek help from another not listed. Please list in the space provided, if no, please leave blank	
<p>Q11 Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?</p>	
Little interest or pleasure doing things	<p>4-point Likert scale range from 0 = None of the time to 3 = Nearly everyday</p>
Feeling down, depressed or helpless	
<p>Q12 We would like to ask you about your personal views about antidepressant medicines prescribed for you. Below are statements that other people have made about their antidepressant medicines. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with them by selecting the appropriate response. There are no right or wrong answers - we are interested in your personal views.</p>	
My medicine protects me from becoming worse	<p>5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly</p>

	My health, right now, depends on my medicine	agree, to 5 = Strongly disagree
	My health, in the future, depends on my medicine	
	Without my medicine, I would be very ill.	
	My life would be impossible without my medicine	
	I sometimes worry about the long-term effects of my medicine	
	My medicine is a mystery to me	
	I sometimes worry about becoming too dependent on my medicine	
	Having to take my medicine worries me	
	My medicine disrupts my life	
	Doctors use too many medicines	
	If doctors had more time with patients they would prescribe fewer medications	
	Doctors place too much trust in medicines	
	Natural remedies are safer than medicines	
	Most medicines are addictive	
	People who take medicines should stop their treatment for a while every now and again	
	Medicines do more harm than good	
	All medicines are poisonous	
QUALITATIVE/SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS	Q12 Can you briefly describe your motivations for joining an antidepressant tapering support group online?	Free text

	<p>Q13 Have you tried to stop using antidepressants in the past? Yes / No. Please elaborate</p>	<p>Free text</p>
	<p>Q14 Who first proposed the idea of tapering?</p>	<p>The clinician Myself Other</p>
	<p>Q14 (The Clinician) Please briefly describe your experience when the clinician first proposed the idea of tapering.</p>	<p>Free text</p>
	<p>Q14 (Myself) Please briefly describe your experience when you first proposed the idea of tapering</p>	<p>Free text</p>
	<p>Q14 (Other) Please specify who first proposed the idea of tapering and briefly describe your experience when this occurred</p>	<p>Free text</p>
	<p>Q15 Has the information/support provided by the Facebook group helped in your efforts to reduce your antidepressant use?</p>	<p>Yes No I am a member for another reason</p>
	<p>Q15 (Yes) Please describe what has been most helpful</p>	<p>Free text</p>
	<p>Q15 (No) Please explain why the information/support provided on the Facebook group has not been helpful</p>	<p>Free text</p>
	<p>Q15 (Other) Please describe any other reasons you have for being a member of the Facebook group</p>	<p>Free text</p>
	<p>Q16 Do you find it easier to express how you feel about your medications online compared with your clinician?</p>	<p>Yes No</p>

	Q16 (Yes) Please explain the reasons you find it easier to discuss your medications online	Free text
	Q17 Do you feel as though your queries about your medications were heard by your clinician?	Yes No I had no queries to raise
	Q17 (continued) Please explain why you did (or did not) feel as though your queries were heard by your clinician	Free text
	Q18 Have you noticed any side effects when attempting to deprescribe (taper)?	Yes No I have not attempted tapering
	Q18 (Yes) Please briefly describe the side effects you experienced when attempting to deprescribe (taper)	Free text
	Q18 (No) If you noticed no side effects, please describe how you felt while attempting to deprescribe (taper)	Free text
	Q19 Do you feel as though the reasons for being originally prescribed antidepressants were justified?	Yes No
	Q19 (continued) Please briefly describe why (or why not) you feel the reasons for being originally prescribed with antidepressants were justified. Please click the arrow below only if you are ready to submit your responses.	Free text

Supplementary Appendix B: Reported Withdrawal Symptoms

List of withdrawal symptoms experienced by participants when ceasing antidepressants (n = 17)

Symptom	n; %
Fatigue	7; 41
Insomnia	12; 70
Night terrors	1; 6
Restless leg	2; 11
Nausea and vomiting	4; 23
Digestive issues (irritable bowel, no appetite)	6; 35
Weight loss	2; 11
Tinnitus	2; 11
Vision issues	2; 11
Electrical “zaps”	7; 41
Headaches	3; 17
Dizziness	9; 53
Dry mouth	1; 6
Skin conditions (itching, hives)	4; 23
Sweating	5; 29
Light sensitivity	1; 6
Low libido	1; 6
Anxiety	9; 53
Depression	6; 35
Heightened emotions	3; 17
Suicidal thoughts	4; 23
Intrusive thoughts	3; 17
Restlessness	6; 35
Memory issues	3; 3
Brain fog	2; 11

Pain	8; 47
Flu-like symptoms	2; 11
Hot and cold flushes	3; 17
Increased heartrate	2; 11

Note: Totals do not equal to 100 as participants could list more than one symptom.

Supplementary Appendix C: Means and standard deviations (SD) for the GHSQ.

Problem Type				
Help Source	Personal- Emotional		Suicidal Thoughts	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Partner	5.3	1.5	5.2	2.0
Friend	4.7	1.7	3.8	2.4
Parent	3.8	2.4	3.3	2.6
Relative	3.0	1.7	2.7	2.2
Mental health professional	4.3	1.9	4.4	2.2
Helpline	2.5	1.8	3.2	2.3
Doctor/GP	2.6	1.6	3.7	2.4
Minister/religious leader	2.2	1.9	2.6	2.4
No help-seeking	2.2	1.6	1.6	1.3
Other	3.7	3.0	2.2	2.1