Public stigma declines as the length of time in recovery from substance use increases.

TYPICAL FINDINGS OF PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT OF NEGATIVE & POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES

**Bad Character**
- Control: 5.00
- Current Use: 4.67
- 6 Months Recovery: 4.38
- 5 Years Recovery: 4.00

**Good Character**
- Control: 1.00
- Current Use: 1.38
- 6 Months Recovery: 1.75
- 5 Years Recovery: 2.00

**REFERENCES**

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**INTRODUCTION**
- Public stigma towards people with SUDs creates a barrier around accessing treatment and maintaining successful recovery.
- Public stigma has 3 dimensions:
  1. Negative attributes (stereotypes)
  2. Negative emotional reactions (prejudice)
  3. Negative behaviors (discrimination)
- Do these dimensions of stigma decrease as the length of time someone is in recovery from SUDs increases?

**METHODS**
- Derived outcome measures from past studies that looked at stigma towards SUDs
- Data collected from RIC students and Prolific.co recruiting website (N = 185)
- Participants randomly assigned to read 1 of 5 stories about a woman who either:
  1. never used drugs before,
  2. currently using heroin,
  3. in stage 1 of recovery [6 months],
  4. in stage 2 of recovery [2 years], or
  5. in stage 3 of recovery [5 years]
- Data analyzed using Kruskal Wallis H-tests

**DISCUSSION**
- Some dimensions of stigma (bad character, discrimination, & dehumanization) declined rapidly even with just 6 months in recovery when compared to the control condition
- Whereas other dimensions of stigma (worthless, slander, & criminality) declined more slowly for earlier stages of recovery
- Positive attributes & emotions (good character & hopeful) steadily increased as length of time in recovery increased

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