

The utility of the Adult Health Check (MBS item 715) for sexual health screening within an urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Service

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Background:

The Adult Health Check (AHC) is a preventative health assessment designed specifically to support the health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and can be conducted not more than once in a nine-month period. Under the AHC guidelines, a patient's medical history includes a sexual and reproductive health assessment and recommends an examination for STI (by urine or endocervical swab for chlamydia and gonorrhoea), especially for those aged from 15 to 35 years. This provides an important opportunity to deliver STI testing within a Community Controlled Health Service. The aim of this study is to gain an understanding of the testing rate for chlamydia within the Adult Health Check (715) in an urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community health service.

Methods:

Via the ATLAS project, de-identified electronic medical record (EMR) data from 2016-2019, relating to STI testing, treatment and management as well as AHC (715) data were extracted from an urban Community Controlled Health Service. Data extracted included a de-identified patient number, gender, age, Indigenous status, consultation date, chlamydia, gonorrhoea and testing and results and AHC status.

Results:

For 15-29 year olds between 2016-2019 there was a total of 4969 AHC, of which 43% (n=2146) were males and 57% (n=2823) females. Of those AHC, 26% (n=560) of Males and 22% (n=607) of females undertook a chlamydia test.

Of the total number of CHL test for males (n=947), 59% (n=560) were conducted within the AHC. In comparison, of the total number of CHL for females (n=1858), only 33% (607) were conducted within the AHC. This indicates that males are more likely to have a chlamydia test within an AHC compared to females. Subsequently females are more likely to be tested for chlamydia outside the AHC compared to males.

Conclusion:

The benefits of normalising chlamydia testing within a wider array of tests that are included in the Adult Health Check, will assist to demystify the stigma that surrounds sexual health and contribute to the long-term sustainability of STI screening through primary care.

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