Health service, peer and/or structural and policy interventions to respond to sexual health for international students

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NSW context
NSW newly diagnosed HIV Jan-Mar 2019

- Of all MSM (n=52)
  - 35 (67%) overseas-born cf 17 Australian born MSM
  - 26 (51%) were born in SE/NE Asia
- Of overseas-born MSM, 12/35 (34%) <=29 y
- 21/35 (60%) of overseas-born MSM likely acquired HIV in Australia
- Overseas-born MSM with early stage infection
  - 3/10 (30%) had been in NSW for less than 4 years
- Overseas-born MSM with late stage infection
  - 10/15 (67%) in NSW for less than 4 years
- 7 /10 (70%) of heterosexual people newly diagnosed were born overseas

Working in collaboration

- NSW Sexual Health Promotion Action Plan, NSW STI Strategy 2016-20, NSW HIV strategy 2016-20
- Sexual Health International Students group, 2018
- Members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STIPU</th>
<th>Overseas Student Health Insurance (BUPA, Medibank, Allianz, NIB, etc)</th>
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<td>Universities (UNSW, USYD, UTS, WSU)</td>
<td>NSW LHD</td>
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<td>NSW Dep of Industry</td>
<td>FPNSW, ACON</td>
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<td>TAFE International</td>
<td>Redfern Legal, City of Sydney</td>
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<td>English Australia, Council of International Students Australia (CISA)</td>
<td>ISANA International Education Association.</td>
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<td>Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS-NSW)</td>
<td>Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH-Vic),</td>
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- Aim: to inform, develop & implementation NSW project activities targeting International Students.
International student demographics

► NSW has highest number 225,300 international student (Jan-Mar 2019)
► 66,584 (74%) coming from Asian countries (2019) (Australian Government, Dep of Education & Training).

Literature review:

International student’s sexual health education and behaviours

► Adolescents and young people in Asia-Pacific countries are provided limited sexual health education (McManus & Dhar, 2008; Smith et. al, 2003; Stone et. al, 2003; Zhang et. al, 2010).

► more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviours (ie unprotected sexual intercourse) when compared to domestic students (Vivancos et. al, 2009).

► association between sexual risk-taking behaviour and limited sexual health knowledge (Lim et. al, 2007)
Barriers to sexual health for international students

- Limited knowledge and understanding of
  - Overseas health cover
  - Australian health system
  - Accessing sexual health services

- Cost and affordability of sexual health care
- Stigma, beliefs, fear of discrimination
- Confidentiality concerns
Enablers to sexual health for international students

- Sexual health education during university lectures, digital mediums and online resources

- Same-sex and cultural group sessions for some (female) students

- When accessing services,
  - confidentiality
  - expert staff
  - anonymous counsellors
  - online advisors
  - doctors and providers with similar backgrounds to students and education programs
Actions:

Complete:
✓ quarterly meetings
✓ systematic review - barriers/enablers to accessing sexual health services/information

Underway
✓ Apply for a Study NSW partner project grant
  ✓ Development & promote via a media campaign Sexual and Reproductive Health hub for international students
✓ Test the Peer education toolkit (Sex Health Promotion Action Plan) in the University setting.
  ✓ Review findings, adjust & upscale across NSW
✓ Piloting HIV content for lesson plans for English colleges.
  ✓ Upscale in English colleges across NSW in partnership with English Australia
‘Discreet lives’

- NSW HIV testing campaign ‘Discreet Life’
  - Target audiences:
    - Heterosexual men who have sex with men, including CALD* (Chinese, Indonesian, Filipino, Thai, Vietnamese)
    - Men who have sex overseas, including CALD*
  - Channels:
    - Outdoor advertising (posters)
      - Sex beats’ (male toilets – parks, truck stops, shopping centres, university, TAFE)
        - metro/regional venues
        - Sydney Airport – Arrivals Terminal; 47 display points
    - MSM online hook-up apps
    - Geo-targeted advertising to sex beat visitors and hook-up app users (men, 20yrs+, NSW)
  - Proactive media (The project), Health Professionals
Further proposed actions:

► Partner with key **health insurance providers**
  ► identify sexual health data collection
  ► analysis to assist in enabling barriers and facilitators

► Explore opportunities for **sexual health training** for GPs (health insurance funds ‘**preferred providers’**)

► Develop and implement policy on the provision of **condom vending machines** with University residential colleges/private university accommodation services
SESLHD and service responses

Community outreach clinics:
1. Mandarin speaking aTEST SSHC/ACON
   - Jan 2019
   - language nurses (male, female) and ACON male Chinese speaking peers
2. UNSW Health, SSHC/ HARP testing kiosk for GBM
   - MSM students not born in Australia (incl international students) or not speaking English at home
   - ETA Sextember promotion week
   - Concurrent health promotion actions at UNSW

SSHC core business:
1. All MSM priority population in NSW STI & HIV strategy
2. HBV clinic-Asian MSM, often students who need PrEP and have viral hepatitis

ACON
Asian gay men’s project- Social event
Research

- The characteristics of recently arrived Asian born men who have sex with men diagnosed with HIV through sexual health services in Sydney and Melbourne, 2014-2017 [Blakshaw et al. ANZJPH 2019]
  - N= 114, fewer partners, less HIVT, lower CD4, longer TTRx

- Asian gay men periodic survey
  - ‘Not so conservative’

- Qualitative research on newly diagnosed HIV+ from overseas
  - Slow recruitment
Other jurisdictions

- HIV and mobility – Road Map for Action. 2014, Curtin University (SIREN, ACSHR, La Trobe Uni, CERIPH)

- Communities of Practise for Action on HIV & Mobility (CoPAHM) 2015 (WA, Qld, SA, Victoria)

- 2018 Priority Actions aligned with HIV strategy
  1. Local solutions
  2. Health literacy
  3. Test
  4. Treatment and prevention meds
  5. Inform
  6. Evaluate
Many thanks

► Carolyn Slattery
► Carolyn Murray