

Enhanced Syphilis Point of Care Testing Program at Congress- a practice-based approach to early identification and increased screening in an outbreak setting,

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Background/Purpose:

While identified as a useful tool in identification of new cases and reduction in time to treatment, Syphilis point of care testing (PoCT) has shown limited uptake and usage by clinicians in front line primary health care settings at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress since the rollout of the program,

Given increasing notification rates in Central Australia, the purpose of the project was, and continues to be timely identification, treatment and contact tracing infectious cases

Approach:

Consultation with clinicians revealed a number of factors that contributed to reluctance to undertake PoCT, including a lack of clarity around the clients appropriateness for PoCT, access to the tests, and being unsure about how to convey the result of the test in appropriate context.

An enhanced training/ refresher program and up scaled testing kit rollout was undertaken across all sites in an attempt to encourage increased testing and provide easier access to equipment

In consultation with Flinders International Centre for Point of Care Testing and Congress clinicians, individual desk top kits were distributed in each clinic room to provide ease of access, and prevent interruption to the consult.

Rollout was accompanied by training sessions for all staff across the town and remote settings, both face to face and online for accessibility.

Flow charts and information sheets were distributed, outlining organisational process for documentation of known syphilis reactive clients as well as pathway for contacting the NT register for guidance and further information.

Outcomes/Impact:

Since rollout of the training and desktop kits there has been a 4 fold increase in syphilis PoCT numbers compared to the same period 12 months prior.

Innovation and Significance:

Use of PoCT assists with reduction in risk of transmission, and issues with follow up in a population that can be quite transient

The rollout of the desktop kits reduces interruption to consults and is literally on hand for clinicians undertaking routine screening or adult health checks in the primary health care setting.

Disclosure of Interest Statement (example):

I have no conflict of interest to declare