

COMMUNITY SCREENING IN KEY POPULATIONS: AN INTEGRATED INTERVENTION IN TWO FAST-TRACK CITIES WITH SIGNIFICANT HIV AND HEPATITIS C PREVALENCE

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Background:

HIV infection is still an important public health problem in Portugal. Data from 2019 reveals that 56,7% of new infections occur in vulnerable populations and 50,4% of these new infections occur in the Lisbon area.

SER+, Portuguese Association for AIDS Challenge and Prevention community screening project covers two areas with high HIV and Hepatitis C prevalence (Cascais and Oeiras), both Fast Track Cities. These data concern the period from 11/2020-12/2021.

Methods:

The method used was integrative intervention with people who experience homelessness (PWEH), people who use drugs (PWUD), sex workers (SW), men who have sex with men (MSM), migrants (M) and prisoners (P). The purpose is access to:

- Prevention: Material (condoms, lubricant gel and flyers); Needle exchange program (n=269/13 injecting drug users); Training actions.
- Screening: HIV, HBV, HCV and Syphilis rapid, anonymous, free and confidential testing, through SER+ Mobile Unit.

Referral to health care of all reactive cases and reconnection of previously diagnosed cases.

Results:

For 69% of the population tested (n=1978), this was their first rapid test.

1/34 of the SW tested was reactive to HVC, but not linked to care.

5/65 PWEH were reactive to HVC, 2/65 cured and 2/65 in treatment.

16/261 PWUD (unaware of serological status) were reactive to HVC. 2/16 are cured, 2/16 taking direct-acting antivirals, 6/16 in treatment. 6/16 were not linked to care.

3/797 P were reactive for HVC.

3/70 MSM were reactive for HIV, all linked to care and taking ART.

9/70 MSM, 3/34 SW and 1/261 PWUD were referred to PrEP. 1/70 MSM referred to PEP.

2/65 PWEH, 1/261 PWUD and 2/797 P were reactive for HVB. 4/70 MSM and 3 general population were reactive for Syphilis.

Conclusion:

Combining strategies seem to be the most effective way to reach vulnerable populations, adding outreach, peer mediation, harm reduction and social support to standard testing.

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