

CHARACTERISTICS OF PATIENTS ATTENDING COMMUNITY VERSUS HOSPITAL-BASED HIV SERVICES IN WESTERN SYDNEY.

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Background:

HIV has evolved from a life-threatening to a chronic illness and models of care have adapted accordingly. In Western Sydney Local Health District, most HIV patients are managed either at the community-based publically-funded Western Sydney Sexual Health Centre (WSSHC) or at the medicare-billed Infectious Diseases' outpatient clinic within Westmead Hospital (WH). We hypothesized that there would be a difference in demographic, sexual orientation and HIV prognostic factors among patients presenting to these two services.

Methods:

We conducted a retrospective case-note review of patients who commenced or transferred their HIV care to WSSHC or WH over 6 years (2011-2016). We reviewed 237 patients' records (181 [76.3%] from WSSHC; 56 [23.6%] from WH). Categorical variables were analysed using contingency tables and Chi-square tests. Continuous variables were compared using t-test for 2 samples.

Results:

There was a similar male:female patient ratio at both services (WSSHC, 3.6:1 vs. WH, 3.3:1; $p=0.807$). Those presenting to WSSHC were younger (mean age, 33.0 years [95% CI 31.5-34.5] vs. 38.9 years [95% CI 35.4-42.0]; $p<0.001$) and less likely to have been born in Australia (32.6% versus 55.4%; $p<0.005$). The heterosexual:homosexual patient ratio was higher at WH (1.47 vs. 0.96; $p=0.085$). Most WH patients (77.7%) were diagnosed due to clinical indications rather than through routine HIV screening. The mean viral load at presentation was lower at WSSHC (\log_{10} 4.42 [95% CI 4.22-4.62] vs. \log_{10} 4.93 [95% CI 4.69-5.18]; $p<0.004$). The mean CD4 count at presentation was higher in WSSHC patients (458 cells/mm³ [95% CI 419-498] vs. 325 cells/mm³ [95% CI 230-419]; $p=0.003$). More patients attending WH had advanced HIV disease (stage 4: 34.7%, WH vs.6.0%, WSSHC; $p<0.0001$).

Conclusion:

Patients presenting to WSSHC were more often younger, born overseas, diagnosed through screening and had less severe disease when compared to patients attending the local hospital for their outpatient care.

Disclosure of Interest Statement

There are no disclosures of interest