

Sydney World Pride 2023: impacts on a peer-led STI-HIV testing site in Central Sydney

Authors:

Ray, A¹, Turner F¹, Batchelor J, Sinkovic T³, Vaughan M³, Varma R^{1,2}

¹ Sydney Sexual Health Centre, Sydney, NSW

² Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney, NSW

³ ACON

Background/Purpose:

Sydney Sexual Health Centre (SSHC) in partnership with ACON coordinates the a[TEST] services at two locations in central Sydney: Oxford Street and Surry Hills. We describe our response to World Pride (WP), a large-scale LGBTQI+ event hosted by Sydney in 2023, attracting a large population of men who have sex with men (MSM) to the busiest peer-led testing site operating in NSW.

Approach:

During WP, SSHC and ACON took several measures to ensure that the community received accessible sexual health services. Nursing staff at the Oxford St location was increased by 50% and changes to were made to a[TEST] procedures to reduce barriers to care, these included enabling travellers and those unfamiliar with the booking system to attend without an appointment. Asymptomatic contacts of STIs could access testing. Additionally, SSHC was the first to implement the NSW nurse protocol, which allowed nurse led dispensing and supply to initiate PrEP and provide PEP without a doctor's prescription. ACON and SSHC also collaborated with local health districts to implement MPOX vaccination hubs.

Outcomes/Impact:

In the weeks leading up to WP and two weeks after (6/2/23 – 20/3/23), 36 clinics were run by a[TEST] which provided testing for 686 (2023). vs 1116 (2019) unique clients, including 616 HIV tests. Total number of clients diagnosed with a STI was 85 (8 Syphilis, 62 total Chlamydia infections, 44 total gonorrhoea infections) a decrease of 56% from 2019 (150 clients). Two new confirmed HIV positive and a total of 19 clients accessed nurse dispense PrEP. Most a[TEST] clients throughout WP were overseas born (443, 64%) and of these, almost half (334, 48%) were from a non-English speaking country.

Innovation and Significance:

Although testing numbers at this central testing site did not reach pre-COVID19 numbers, New models of care were required to facilitate testing for local and overseas visitors. Nurse dispensed PrEP was feasible in the context of community based sexual health clinic.

Disclosure of Interest Statement (example):

The Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine recognises the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.

For an example of a disclosure of interest statement please see below

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