

Behaviour and sexually transmitted infections in men-who-have-sex-with-men attending a sex on premises venue vs. a sexual health clinical service.

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Background:

In Australia, men-who-have-sex-with-men (MSM) have higher rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV compared to other men. We compared demographics, behaviour and HIV/STI prevalence for MSM attending a sex-on-premises venue (SOPV) and MSM attending the local sexual health clinic (SHC) to assess key characteristics of men attending the SOPV.

Methods:

Asymptomatic men attending a SOPV during an onsite HIV/STI screening service from November 2015 for 12 months were invited to participate and compared to asymptomatic MSM attending a local SHC for screening. Each group completed a self-administered questionnaire and underwent STI/HIV testing. Data analysis was performed using SPSS.

Results:

We tested 84 men at the SOPV and 108 at the SHC. SOPV clients had a higher median age (47 years [range, 22-88] vs. 33 years [range, 19-71]; $p < 0.001$), were more likely to be Australian-born (63% vs. 56%; $p = 0.3$) and less likely to report previous HIV testing (73%, vs. 89%; $p < 0.01$), STI testing (60% vs 90%; $p < 0.001$) or be vaccinated for hepatitis A (32% vs 65%; $p < 0.001$) or hepatitis B (35% vs 73%; $p < 0.001$).

SOPV clients were more likely to be married, widowed or have a long term female partner (39% vs. 7%; $p < 0.001$) and to report sex with women in the previous year (58% vs. 18%; $p < 0.001$). SOPV clients had a higher prevalence of urethral and rectal chlamydia infections (7% vs 1%; $p = 0.02$ and 8% vs 2%; $p = 0.03$, respectively). There was no significant difference between the groups for syphilis (4% vs. 9%) gonorrhoea (5% vs. 9%) or HIV (1% vs. 0%).

Conclusion:

Men screened for HIV/STIs at a SOPVs carry a burden of STIs. They report higher rates of sex with female partners, which may facilitate STI/HIV transmission to heterosexual populations. Our findings have implications for HIV/STI service provision, contact tracing and local health promotion initiatives.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

No disclosures.