

WILLINGNESS TO USE PREP AMONG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN IN QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA: DIFFERENCES ASSOCIATED WITH HIV RISK, PATTERNS OF TESTING AND LOCATION OF RESIDENCE

Authors

Dean J¹, Lui CW¹, Scott M², Lemoire J³, Howard C³, Mutch A¹, Gilks C¹, Williams O¹, and Fitzgerald L¹

¹ University of Queensland, ² Queensland AIDS Council, ³ Queensland Positive People

Background

Gay and bisexual men (GBM) at high risk of HIV are a priority population for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). This study explored GBM's awareness of and willingness to use PrEP in the six-month period prior to the launch of Queensland's PrEP demonstration project (QPrEPd).

Methods

A convenience sample of ≥18 years GBM completed an anonymous on-line survey. Respondents, recruited via advertising on community organisation websites and social media platforms, were classified into HIV risk, testing pattern and location of residence categories. Trends of and associations between PrEP awareness and willingness to use were examined using logistic and univariate multinomial logistic regression.

Results

Of the 241 respondents, 85% (203) were gay men, 54% (130) were classified high-risk, 51% (122) optimal-testers and 13% (31) never-testers. Fifty-eight (24%) lived in regional Queensland. Compared to optimal-testers, never-testers were more likely to be bisexual, transgender or straight (OR= 0.20; CI 0.05-0.76, p<0.05), born overseas (OR=0.35, CI=0.15-0.83, p<0.05) and were significantly less likely to be aware of PrEP (OR = 0.26, CI 0.10-0.71, p<0.01) or use PrEP (OR=0.25, CI=0.11-0.58, p<0.01). Prior/current PrEP use was associated with being at high-risk (OR = 0.11.02, CI 2.52-48.21, p<0.01), and over 30 years old (OR = 3.11, CI=1.28-7.54, p<0.05). High-risk respondents were more likely than low-risk to have condomless anal intercourse more frequently because of PrEP (OR=24.85, CI=3.26-187.52, p<0.01). Location was not found to influence awareness or willingness to use.

Conclusion

GBM who are cognizant of their HIV risk and linked into testing services are aware of and willing to use PrEP. Targeting this group should remain a priority; however, this research underlines the need to focus on never-testers, Medicare ineligible, transgender people and others at risk of HIV. These findings highlighted key factors to be monitored during the implementation of PrEP.

Disclosure of Interest Statement

This project was funded by an HIV Foundation Queensland Research Grant.

Theme: C

Presentation Type: Research-based oral presentation