Sexual Health

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A survey of general practitioners (GPs) in NSW found inconsistent involvement by GPs in taking sexual histories, which was lower (<10%) for young or heterosexual patients. About one in five GPs never took a sexual history from Indigenous or lesbian patients. Perceived barriers in eliciting sexual histories by GPs are reported.

Why has there not been more effective action around the high rates of sexually transmitted infections in Indigenous communities? The authors examined mainstream newspaper articles from 1986 to June 2004 to investigate the nature and trends of Australian print media coverage of sexually transmissible infections in Indigenous Australians. The negative, stigmatising nature of reporting, lack of human interest stories, predominance of government/academic viewpoints and lack of Indigenous voices meant stories were generally dry, heavy and unengaging.

In Thailand, sexually transmissible infection (STI) rates decreased rapidly between 1989 and 1996 but have increased since 2002. This study investigated patients with an STI attending major treatment venues and the quality of treatment in rural Thailand. The study found 60% of patients sought treatment from pharmacies and health centres, which unfortunately have the facilities least capable of accurately diagnosing and treating STI. The study calls for improvement in quality of STI services in Thailand.

Contact tracing or partner notification is a vital strategy in controlling sexually transmissible infections because it encourages people who may be unaware that they have been exposed to an infection to be tested and treated. In this study, contact tracing procedures for sexual health clinics (SHC), public health units (PHU) and general practitioners (GP) in NSW were reviewed. Chlamydia was the most commonly traced by SHC and GP, whereas HIV was most commonly traced by PHU.

This study found that the implementation of an accelerated hepatitis B vaccination schedule at the Kirketon Road Centre, a primary health care centre in Kings Cross, Sydney, improved vaccine completion rates in a client population of injecting drug users and sex workers. However these completion rates were still unacceptably low despite the availability of an effective vaccine and innovative service approaches specifically targeting this high-risk population. Additional efforts to further improve completion rates are therefore warranted.

The changes in notification rates of HIV in Australia are described. The study used notification data on HIV and AIDS-related deaths published by the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research for the period of 1998–2004. The study found that although there was an increase in HIV notifications between 2000 and 2004, the notification rate per 100 people living with HIV remained relatively stable.

Reasons for the recent upsurge in HIV infections in homosexual men in Australia were examined in this case-control study. Unprotected anal sex, number of partners, level of alcohol consumption and meeting more partners at sex venues were all risk-factors for incident HIV infection.

Recently adenoviruses have been reported to be present in samples obtained from men presenting with non-gonococcal urethritis (NGU). This study examines the adenovirus types present in heterosexual and homosexual men presenting with NGU from Melbourne, Australia.
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<td>The study examined risk factors for having ever contracted a sexually transmitted infection (STI) among homeless youth in midwestern USA. Results revealed that time on the street, sexual practices, and subsistence strategies are important correlates of STIs and females and non-whites are particularly vulnerable among this high-risk population.</td>
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<td>This paper discusses the impacts of gender norms on the sexual life and experience of young Vietnamese people. Premarital sex was more acceptable for young people in a serious, loving relationship with certain commitment to marriage. Young people's sexual life is shaped and constrained by gender norms through political interventions, sexual education and moral judgements. Under the pressure of these norms, young people face many difficulties in order to fulfill a safe and satisfying sexual life.</td>
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<td>In a study of human papillomavirus vaccine acceptance among college-aged women, those having vaginal sex (past 12 months) were nearly four times more likely to indicate acceptance. Additionally, those reporting ever having a sexually transmitted disease and those indicating ever having an abnormal Pap test were more likely to indicate acceptance. Thus, three forms of 'exposure' may be linked to vaccine acceptance among young women attending universities.</td>
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<td>Addressing sexually transmissible infection in HIV-positive patients. A clinical audit</td>
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<td>This audit examines rates of sexual history taking and sexually transmissible infection (STI) screening, as well as STI rates in HIV positive patients attending a regional Australian sexual health clinic. It raises awareness of the need for national guidelines addressing STI identification in the HIV-positive population.</td>
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<td>Factors prompting men subsequently diagnosed with chlamydia to use a sexual health service</td>
<td>Y. Brandenburger, M. J. Currie and F. J. Bowden</td>
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<td>The records of all men diagnosed with chlamydia at a sexual health centre over a period 2 years were reviewed. The primary reason for attendance was the presence of symptoms (e.g. urethritis), followed by having partner(s) with a sexually transmissible infection, and lastly, a recent history of unprotected sex.</td>
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<td>The presentation of anogenital cancers as sexually transmissible infection: a case for vigilance</td>
<td>A. R. Markos</td>
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<td>Three cases are presented in this report that were diagnosed as anogenital warts by medical practitioners, which were later diagnosed as vulval, penile and anal cancers. Even though these type of cancers are relatively rare, genito urinary physicians and general practitioners need to be aware of this type of presentation, for correct diagnosis and referral.</td>
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