

CASCADES FOR HIV PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS ELIGIBILITY AND USE BY AUSTRALIAN GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN

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Background:

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) use by Australian gay and bisexual men has rapidly increased over the last few years. Assessing levels of eligibility, awareness and use will become increasingly important to identify gaps in community awareness, interest, coverage and service delivery. We developed PrEP cascades from two studies to guide implementation.

Methods:

Data from HIV-negative and untested men in the 2014-17 Sydney Gay Community Periodic Survey (GCPS) and the national 2017 PrEPARE Project were used. The GCPS cascade has three nested steps: 1) eligible, 2) aware, and 3) using PrEP. The PrEPARE cascade has seven nested steps: 1) eligible, 2) aware, 3) willing to use PrEP, 4) discussed PrEP with a doctor, 5) using PrEP, 6) recently tested for HIV/STIs and 7) reduced HIV concern and increased sexual confidence because of PrEP. Eligibility was defined based on Australian prescribing criteria, including condomless sex, STI diagnoses or methamphetamine use. Trends were tested with logistic regression.

Results:

The Sydney GCPS cascade (n=10,475) showed that PrEP eligibility increased from 21.5% in 2014 to 37.0% in 2017, awareness from 6.9% to 30.2%, and use from 0.3% to 11.1% (all trends p<0.001). The 2017 PrEPARE cascade (n=1,038) showed that 54.3% of non-HIV-positive men were eligible, 52.8% aware, 35.6% willing to use PrEP, 26.2% had discussed PrEP with a doctor, 20.5% were using PrEP, 19.9% were recently tested and 15.1% had reduced HIV concern and increased sexual confidence.

Conclusion:

The GCPS showed rapid increases in PrEP eligibility, awareness and use, but fewer than a third of eligible men were using PrEP in 2017. PrEPARE showed higher levels of eligibility, awareness and use, but a third of eligible men were not willing to use PrEP and fewer than half had discussed PrEP with a doctor. Addressing concerns about PrEP among men at risk of HIV remains important as implementation expands.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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