

## **Desquamative inflammatory vaginitis in a trans-man: a case report**

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### **Background**

Desquamative inflammatory vaginitis (DIV) is an under recognised cause of abnormal vaginal discharge and discomfort. Oestrogen deficiency is thought to be a key risk factor. Trans-men on testosterone therapy for gender affirming care are therefore more likely to experience DIV. Published research regarding DIV in trans-men is markedly limited. We present a case report outlining a trans-man who presented with recurrent symptoms of vaginal discharge and discomfort with repeated negative testing for STI pathogens or bacterial vaginosis (BV) who was subsequently diagnosed with DIV.

### **Approach:**

A 42-year-old trans-man presented on several occasions with vaginal discharge and pain where STIs, BV and thrush were excluded. He was initially treated for pelvic inflammatory disease and 3 months later for presumptive gonorrhoea. With ongoing, recurrent symptoms and negative results for STI pathogens, thrush or BV, he was diagnosed and treated for DIV. He responded well to the recommended treatment. File review revealed at least two previous presentations with similar symptoms and negative laboratory results that were treated presumptively with oral and intramuscular antibiotics not indicated for DIV.

### **Impact:**

This case highlights how DIV should be considered as a differential for trans-men who present with recurrent vaginal discharge and vaginal pain/vaginitis particularly when other causes of vaginitis have been excluded, or if treatment for other causes has not led to symptom relief.

### **Significance:**

It is still unclear what the long-term prognosis is for DIV, and whether long-term remission is achievable. Case studies suggest that long-term maintenance therapy is often required to prevent recurrences, with retrospective cohort studies finding 35 - 58% were dependent on maintenance treatment. Further research into DIV in trans-men is required to understand its epidemiology, and effective treatment options.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

We have no conflicts of interest to declare.