



Gay and bisexual men's perceptions of PrEP in Australia

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Methods and Sample

- The Flux Study
- Data from HIV-positive, HIV-negative, and HIV-unknown men both using and not using PrEP were collected in 2017
- 1395 men responding to two questions:
 - **Would you like to tell us what you think about using PrEP? (n=1383)**
 - **If you weren't using PrEP when you last completed the survey, and you've used PrEP since then, would you like to tell us why? (n=86)**
- Thematic Analysis
 - Investigators each took a sub-set of the entire sample and created their own codes
 - Investigators met to discuss their codes and create a thematic framework for the entire set
 - Responses were coded to one or multiple themes

Theme	Example	n
Generic positive	"Easy and safe"	317
Positive normative	"I think everyone who is neg should get on PrEP"	196
Overcoming fear, anxiety, and inhibition	"Certainly has taken a weight off my mind"	180
Enhancing sexual pleasure and opportunity	"It's making gay sex great again"	98
PrEP is an additional line of protection	"It's a great safety net, I'm very thankful for it"	58
Makes sex safer, but it's not safe	"PrEP is a great thing but I worry about the proliferation of STIs"	219
Negative normative	"It's giving guys an excuse to practice unsafe sex"	191
Relevance and necessity	"Am a top so transmission risk not high"	152
Awareness, availability, and access	"Where do I get it?"	114
Don't know/not sure/don't know enough	"I have no thoughts on the matter"	88
Reasons for uptake	"Wanted the added level of protection"	63
Unclear/insufficient/ambiguous	"Nothing"	43
Navigating uncertainty	"PrEP has changed the landscape for casual sex"	41
Adherence and dosing	"Easy to take a pill daily with my vitamins at breakfast"	27

Overcoming fear, anxiety, and inhibitions

"It's managed to alleviate a lot of my stress during sex. Prior to PrEP I used to take risks and have major anxiety about doing so (I find condomless sex a lot more of a turn on for me) and now I feel free to explore the type of sex I enjoy without being a wreck afterwards"

(34, NSW)

Enhancing sexual pleasure and opportunity

“Very liberating and offers peace of mind. Enables more authentic sex”

(50, VIC)

“Condom use is not natural to humanity, the use of PrEP can assist everyone to stay HIV negative while having natural ‘unsafe’ sex”

(36, NSW)

Negative normative

“Overall I think it’s valuable but I worry that people will take **unnecessary risks** and put themselves in **even more danger**. It’s not a 100% prevention tool allowing you to undertake **constant risky behaviour**, but more of a tool that can assist for slip ups. Some of those using PrEP don’t reflect our community well to the wider community, and it doesn't help the individuals using PrEP either if it's used to **take even greater sexual health risks**”

(28, VIC)

Some thoughts

- Celebrate the good stuff!
- What constitutes a risk in the biomedical era?

Thank you

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All 3253 participants

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