

Implementing a Mini Clinical Audit to Increase STI Testing in Primary Care

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Background/Purpose:

Australia continues to see an increase in notifications in STIs, most notably, there has been increase in congenital and infectious syphilis cases in Australia and NSW, particularly in women of reproductive age and a multi-jurisdictional outbreak in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Health departments have identified the need to increase STI testing in primary care to curb increasing notification rates.

Approach:

To support health professionals to increase testing, ASHM collaborated with SA Health to develop a Mini Clinical Audit on STI Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI) Screening and Management in General Practice. The audit aimed to support clinicians to complete STI tests in their practice and accurately record patient data. Clinicians completed a Sexual Health Fundamentals Online Learning Module, reviewed the Australian STI management Guidelines for Use in Primary Care, undertook the audit using the Auditing Tool, developed a quality improvement plan, reflection activity and evaluation.

ASHM also collaborated with SESLHD to develop a Mini Clinical Audit on increasing syphilis screening. The SESLHD audit included additional resources to educate clinicians on how to accurately complete NSW Health Syphilis Notification Forms following a diagnosis.

Outcomes/Impact:

23 and 13 participants for SA Health and SESLHD completed the post-project survey, respectively. 72% of overall participants (n=26) reported that they were “very satisfied” with the overall activity design. 100% of participants (n=36) reported that the course learning outcomes were met.

Innovation and Significance:

The audits supported clinicians to comprehensively screen for, provide appropriate STI management and fulfil reporting requirements, with participants noting positive self-reported changes in awareness about STI and syphilis screening and management. Participants (n=3) reported that the auditing tool was useful and that they would screen more patients (n=5). The format of the audit demonstrated a new model to translate education into practice. A mandatory post-audit survey ensures that change to clinicians’ practice is observed.

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Disclosure of Interest Statement (example):

The Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine recognises the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.

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