

HEPATITIS B STATUS IS SIGNIFICANTLY ASSOCIATED WITH SEXUALLY TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTION POSITIVITY – A CASE CONTROLLED STUDY AT A PUBLICLY FUNDED SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICE IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Authors:

VARMA R^{1,2}, LAU I¹, MERRICK S¹, WAND H², MCIVER R¹, KNIGHT V^{1,2}, FOSTER R^{1,2}

¹Sydney Sexual Health Centre, PO Box 1614, Sydney City, NSW 2001, Australia,

²Kirby Institute, The University of New South Wales, Kensington, NSW 2052, Australia.

Introduction:

Publicly funded sexual health services (PFSHS) in NSW are funded to see clients from specific population groups as defined by the NSW Strategies for Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI) and HIV. There is an overlap between the clients seen in PFSHS, and the priority populations defined in the NSW Hepatitis B (HBV) Strategy, however few data exist describing the population of people living with Hepatitis B attending PFSHS

Methods:

We performed a cross sectional review of cases of confirmed HBV through a search of our electronic database and review of the clinical file. We expressed descriptive data for these cases as proportions, medians and interquartile range (IQR). We assessed the impact of HBV status on STI positivity using a case control analysis. Controls (2:1 for cases) were matched for age and gender over a five year period. Unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) were calculated.

Results:

227 cases were identified; 111 (48.9%) male, 109 (48.0%) female, 7 (3.1%) transgender. 97 (42.7%) were sex workers (SW), 91 (40%) men who have sex with men (MSM), 7 (3%) were both MSM and SW. Median age was 32 (IQR, 27-38). The majority 216 (95.1%) had been born overseas; 79 (34.8%) in Thailand, 61 (26.9%) China, 18 (8%) Vietnam. STI screening was performed in 195 (85.9%). Significantly more MSM were screened for STI compared to non-MSM cases (93.3% vs 79.7%, $p=0.003$). 44 (22.6%) of those screened returned a positive STI test result. Hepatitis B positive cases were significantly more likely to have a positive STI test than the negative controls (aOR 2.45; 95% CI 1.66-3.62, $p<0.001$) after adjustment for age and sex.

Conclusion:

HBV status is significantly associated with STI positivity in patients attending this urban PFSHS, and may indicate the need for targeted public health interventions.