

# DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE DISPENSED HIV PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PrEP) IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, 2018-2022

## Authors:

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## Background:

HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) became fully funded for those at elevated risk of HIV in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) in 2018. It has been estimated that even under restrictive criteria, almost 6000 people would be eligible for PrEP. However, monitoring PrEP uptake has been limited. Using administrative data, this study aimed to monitor uptake over time, describe the demographic characteristics of people dispensed PrEP in NZ, and assess potential inequities.

## Methods:

Annual estimates of PrEP users were derived for 2018-2022 using administrative data accessible through NZ's Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI). People who had at least one oral emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF/FTC) prescription, and no HIV diagnosis or treatment, were considered PrEP users. Demographic characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), and geographic location (urban/rural)) of PrEP users were compiled for each year.

## Results:

The number of people accessing funded PrEP increased from 1,491 in 2018 to 4,125 in 2022. For each year, >98% of PrEP users were male and >90% lived in an urban location. By age, PrEP use has consistently been highest among the 25-39 age group (57% of PrEP users in 2022). PrEP use has increased for all ethnicities, with the largest increase among Asians (n=195 to 825). Māori and Pacific peoples appear underrepresented (9.6% and 3.6% of 2022 PrEP users, respectively). Across all years, the lowest and second lowest PrEP use was among the lowest and the highest SES levels, respectively. The middle SES levels had the highest PrEP use.

## Conclusions:

PrEP has had strong uptake in NZ since being funded yet is suboptimal compared to estimates of people who would benefit most. Differences are observed for several demographic variables, including ethnicity and SES. These data provide a basis for monitoring over time and indicate where inequities exist for further research.

## Disclosure of Interest Statement:

This study was funded by Massey University and NZ Lottery Health Research. No pharmaceutical/industry grants were received for this study.

These results are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the IDI which is carefully managed by Stats NZ. For more information about the IDI please visit <https://www.stats.govt.nz/integrated-data/>.