

RESOURCES TO EMPOWER PEER-LED PARTNER NOTIFICATION

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Background/Purpose:

In 2015 Positive Life NSW (PLNSW) conducted a Partner Notification (PN) survey to gauge community experience of PN. Of 210 participants, 52 were people living with HIV (PLHIV). Of 145 participants who had been part of a previous PN discussion, 47 found the notification process “difficult” or “very difficult”. Survey responses highlighted the need for more supportive targeted resources and information, practical advice on how to contact partners and what to say, and a peer to provide support during PN.

Approach:

PLNSW augmented existing PN services by developing a peer-based approach using mobile digital technology in partnership with NSW Ministry of Health and Sydney Sexual Health Information Link. *RypI*, a mobile app and companion website, provides support for PLHIV when notifying their sexual and injecting partners about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and blood-borne viruses (BBVs).

The development incorporated a peer-led approach to PN and recognition of the different nature of relationships or partnerships in its delivery. *RypI* offers information about STIs and BBVs, checklists of ‘things to consider’, suggestions for ‘what to say’, a directory of NSW STI testing sites, and a contact point to receive peer-led support from PLNSW Treatment Officers. Personal data collected on the individual’s mobile device is not accessible by PLNSW or third parties, and the website avoids capturing any personal data.

Outcomes/Impact:

RypI supports and builds the confidence and skills of individuals as they disclose to partners with dignity and respect. The contact tracing component of the app supports and promotes testing, diagnosis and subsequent treatment.

Innovation and Significance:

The *RypI* app/ website utilises mobile digital technology to support and empower community members through PN, in line with NSW Health’s strategy to reduce transmission of HIV and other STI and BBV infections.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

No disclosure of interest.