

LET'S TALK ABOUT PREP – DISCLOSURE OF PREP USE AMONG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN

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Background: Understanding how gay and bisexual men (GBM) in Australia communicate with sexual partners about PrEP is vital to better understanding contexts of PrEP use and for ongoing efforts to promote PrEP.

Methods: Disclosure of HIV status and PrEP use by GBM were measured in a NSW-based online cross-sectional survey conducted from late 2016.

Results: Of 651 respondents, 66.5% were HIV-negative and 14.9% HIV-positive. Mean age was 36 years. Among HIV-negative men, 17.8% (n=77) were current PrEP users, of whom 88.5% had engaged in condomless anal intercourse with casual partners in the previous six months. Among PrEP users, 50.0% described themselves to partners as a non-condom user, and 55.4% reported being 'pressured' by sex partners to use condoms. Conversely, 35.1% of HIV-negative GBM not on PrEP reported being pressured by sex partners to not use condoms.

The majority of the sample regardless of HIV or PrEP status agreed that men on PrEP should always tell partners their PrEP status and that they felt safe with guys on PrEP. 9.8% of HIV-positive and 16.9% of HIV-negative men rejected PrEP users for being on PrEP. However, 39.6% of PrEP users reported having been rejected by partners because they were taking PrEP. In various circumstances, the majority of PrEP users reported disclosing their PrEP status to sex partners. They also often asked their partners about their HIV status and were very likely to disclose their HIV status.

Conclusions: GBM on PrEP actively engage with their sexual partners in conversations about HIV and PrEP use. While some PrEP users may experience pressure to use condoms or even rejection, most are communicating their status freely across a diversity of settings and partner types. The circumstances that accompany PrEP use may also facilitate more effective disclosure and communication about risk reduction strategies and HIV status.

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