

# **Mpox knowledge, vaccination and intention to reduce sexual risk practices among men who have sex with men and transgender people: a cross-sectional study in Victoria, Australia.**

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## **Background:**

The first mpox case was reported in May 2022 in Australia. Most cases have been diagnosed in men who have sex with men (MSM). This study aimed to examine community understanding of mpox, attitudes towards vaccination, and potential changes in sexual practices surrounding the mpox outbreak among MSM and transgender people in Victoria, Australia.

## **Methods:**

Participants were recruited from sexual health clinics and communities in Victoria, Australia, in August-October 2022. Participants were asked about their understanding and knowledge of mpox, vaccination uptake and intentions to change sexual practices. Univariable and multivariable logistic regression was performed to examine the factors associated with mpox vaccine uptake.

## **Results:**

Most participants (97.8%, 525/537) had heard about mpox and 10.5% (55/525) knew someone who had had mpox. Of the 12 mpox knowledge questions, the median score of correct answers was 10 (IQR=8-11) out of a maximum of 12. More than a third (36.6%, 191/522) had been vaccinated against mpox. MSM who had an STI diagnosis (aOR=1.72; 95% CI: 1.09-2.70), and attended sex on premises venues (aOR=1.66; 95% CI: 1.05-2.62) in the past 12 months had higher odds of receiving mpox vaccine. To prevent mpox, half reported they would reduce having sex with casual partners, stop having chemsex, stop attending SOPV, and stop having group sex. A quarter reported they would increase condom use for anal sex.

**Conclusions:** One-third of high-risk participants and a substantial proportion of participants intended to reduce or stop certain practices which may explain the large reduction in mpox cases.

## **Disclosure of interest statement**

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