

INITIATION OF PREP AMONG GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN WHO MET THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PREP

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Background:

Eligibility criteria for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for gay and bisexual men (GBM) include both receptive condomless anal intercourse with casual partners (R-CLAIC) and methamphetamine use. More GBM remain eligible for PrEP than have yet commenced it.

Methods:

By December 2017, 1263 non HIV-positive GBM provided up to 24-months follow-up in the Flux prospective cohort study. We identified factors associated with not commencing PrEP among PrEP-eligible men.

Results:

At baseline, 25.4% of all men were eligible for PrEP and a further 22.3% met the behavioural eligibility criteria at some time during follow-up. Of the 602 men who ever met the eligibility criteria, 53.1% were eligible at baseline and 63.9% at 24 months. By 24 months follow-up, 195 of the 602 PrEP-eligible men (32.4%) had initiated PrEP.

In univariate analysis, compared with PrEP-eligible men who initiated PrEP, those who did not initiate PrEP were younger, less educated, and less socially engaged in gay community. They were also less likely to have engaged in R-CLAIC or used drugs for sex, and reported fewer partners during both the previous and current survey periods (in which they initiated PrEP, or most recent period for those who did not initiate PrEP).

In multivariate analysis, only R-CLAIC (aOR=0.14; 95%CI 0.09-0.23), using drugs for sex (aOR=0.52; 95%CI 0.34-0.78), and social engagement in gay community (aOR=0.54; 95%CI 0.43-0.66), all during the current survey period, were independently associated with PrEP non-initiation.

Conclusion:

Despite meeting formal eligibility criteria for PrEP, PrEP-eligible men who did not initiate PrEP were less sexually active and less socially connected than were those who initiated PrEP, particularly during the same period as when PrEP initiation occurred. Some men may assess their risk as being currently insufficient to warrant using PrEP. Also, less connection to gay community may restrict access to information about PrEP.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The Kirby Institute, and the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, are supported by the Australian Government Department of Health. ACON is supported by the NSW Government Department of Health. The Flux study was funded by an Australian Research Council Discovery Project. Gilead has provided funds to support aspects of the conduct of this study in 2018.