

Demographic, Sexual Health and Provider Related Characteristics of Women using PrEP in Ontario: a descriptive study from the ON-PrEP Cohort

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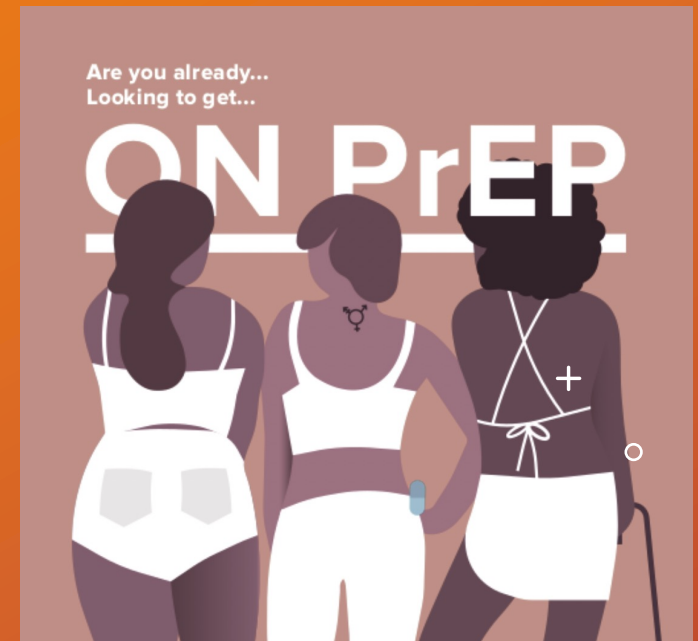
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Background

- Despite ongoing rollout of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) in Ontario, only 3% of users are female.¹
- Although the PrEP-to-need ratio (number of PrEP users to number of new HIV diagnoses) increased for both sexes in Ontario between 2016-2019, the increase in males was 12 times that of the increase in females over this period.¹
- The circumstances surrounding PrEP use in women are understudied in the context of Ontario's HIV epidemic.

Objective

- We describe woman enrollees in the Ontario PrEP Cohort Study (ON-PrEP) to understand the characteristics of those reached with this prevention technology to date.

Methods

Results

Data source

- ON-PrEP is a cohort of HIV-negative individuals using/initiating PrEP throughout Ontario. Data on biological, sexual activity and healthcare utilization outcomes were collected using 6-monthly electronic questionnaires. In this analysis we used baseline data only.

Eligibility

- All cis, trans and non-binary women enrolled into ON-PrEP by Dec/2021.

Analysis

- Descriptive statistics were used to characterize the participants. We used measures of central tendency and dispersion for continuous variables; and used frequencies and proportions for categorical variables.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of 20 women on PrEP

Demographic Characteristics	n (%)
Gender	
Cisgender women	12 (60%)
Transgender women	9 (45%)
Queer, non-binary or other	2 (10%)
Age (Median, [range])	38 [32,41]
Preferred language for use with providers	
English	19 (95%)
Other	1 (5.0%)
Sexual orientation	
Bisexual	9 (45%)
Heterosexual	6 (30%)
Lesbian or other	5 (25%)

Results cont.

PARTICIPANTS' SEXUAL PARTNERSHIPS

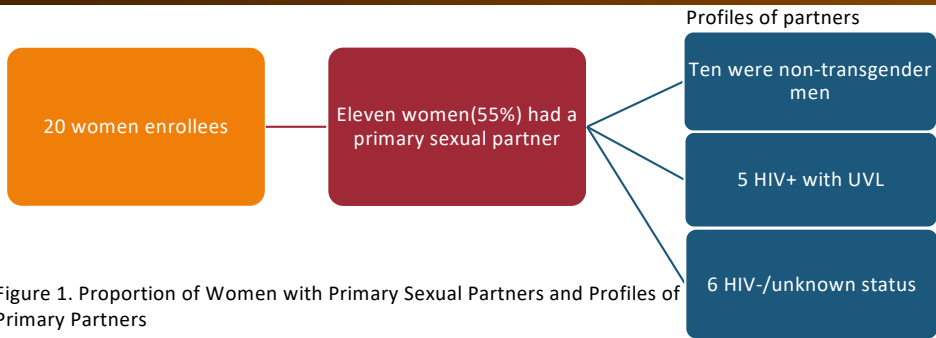


Figure 1. Proportion of Women with Primary Sexual Partners and Profiles of Primary Partners

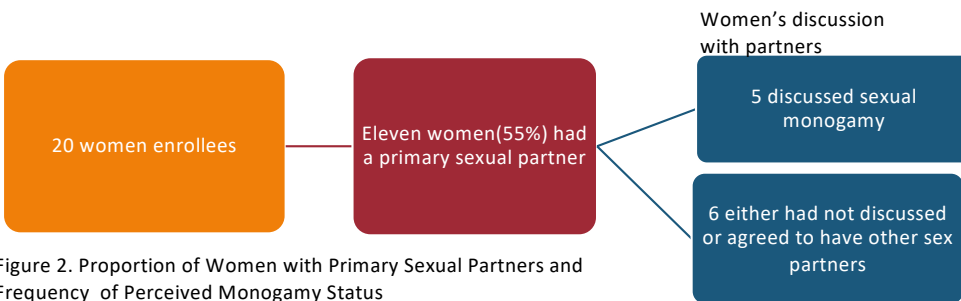


Figure 2. Proportion of Women with Primary Sexual Partners and Frequency of Perceived Monogamy Status

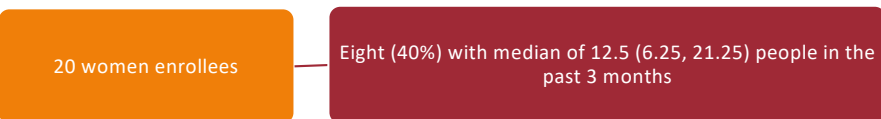


Figure 3. Participants who Exchanged Sex for Commodity/Money

PARTICIPANTS' HEALTH SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

Table 2. Participants' non-PrEP-related healthcare visits and testing patterns

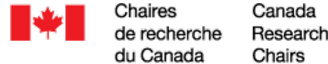
Type of healthcare service	Percentage of participants (%)
Family doctor's office for immediate care of minor health problems	74% (fourteen)
Specialist for regular healthcare	35%
Pharmacists	30%
Mental health professionals	30%
Other family doctors	30%
HIV test (>1 in the past year)	60%
Equally frequent or more frequent STI testing than HIV testing	80%

Conclusions and future directions

- Preliminary data suggest that PrEP-using women in Ontario represent diverse gender identities, sexual orientations, and patterns of sexual and health-seeking behaviours.
- Multiple strategies are needed to expand PrEP uptake in Ontario women, and to enroll such women in PrEP research studies to better understand their needs and experiences.
- If numbers allow, future ON-PrEP research will seek to explore whether PrEP-related outcomes among women vary according to key participant characteristics, and whether outcomes among PrEP users overall vary by sex and gender.

Salary Support and Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of ON-PrEP study team



To: D.H.S Tan, S. Mishra and A. Burchell

Reference(s):

HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in Ontario, 2020 | The Ontario HIV Treatment Network. Accessed April 12, 2022.

<https://www.ohntn.on.ca/hiv-pre-exposure-prophylaxis-prep-in-ontario-2020/>