

WILLINGNESS TO USE HIV PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS OR HAVE SEX WITH SOMEONE USING IT: RESULTS OF REPEATED NATIONAL, ONLINE SURVEYS OF AUSTRALIAN GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN

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Background: HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) access is expanding in Australia. We have been monitoring community acceptability of PrEP among gay and bisexual men (GBM), measuring willingness to use PrEP since 2011 and willingness to have sex with GBM using PrEP since 2015.

Methods: National, anonymous, online surveys of Australian GBM were conducted in 2011, 2013 and 2015. Willingness to use PrEP among HIV-negative/untested men was measured using a 7-item scale. Willingness to have sex with GBM using PrEP (among all participants) was measured using a 3-item scale (including willingness to have sex without condoms). Independent associations with both scales were identified using multivariate logistic regression.

Results: During 2011-15, 3850 GBM participated. Their mean age was 32.4 years, 94% identified as gay and 74% lived in a capital city. Willingness to use PrEP did not change significantly between 2011 and 2015 (28.2–31.7%, $p=0.13$). In 2015, willingness to use PrEP was associated with younger age, having an HIV-positive regular partner, condomless anal intercourse with casual partners (CAIC), a higher number of male partners, ever taking post-exposure prophylaxis, and having fewer concerns about PrEP. In 2015, 39% of respondents were willing to have sex with GBM using PrEP. This was associated with being HIV-positive, a university education, reporting CAIC, a higher number of male partners or using party drugs for sex. Men who had a positive experience in using condoms were less willing to have sex with GBM on PrEP.

Conclusions: Willingness to use PrEP did not increase noticeably between 2011 and 2015, and remains concentrated among a minority of GBM at increased risk of HIV. Willingness to have sex with GBM using PrEP is reported by two-fifths of men (who tend to report higher risk practices). How this impacts upon PrEP users negotiating sex with partners requires further investigation.

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