The association between intentional overdose and same-sex sexual intercourse amongst a cohort of PWID in Melbourne, Australia

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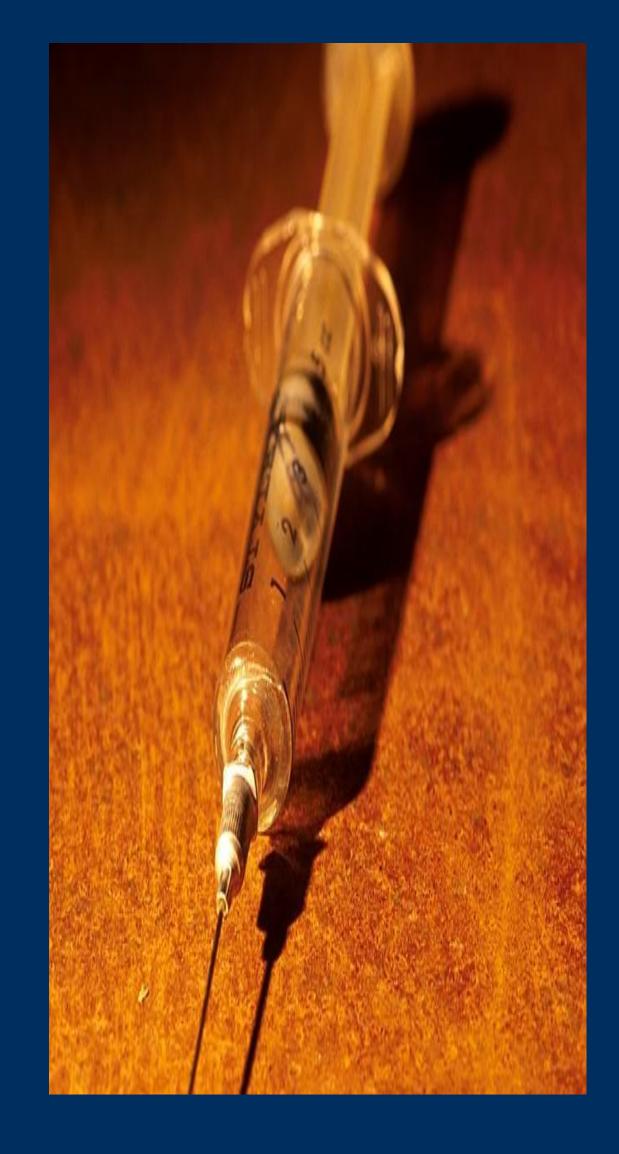
Introduction

- Both lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people and people who inject drugs (PWID) experience poorer physical and mental health than the general population. Both groups are also at disproportionately high risk of self-harm and suicidal behaviours
- LGB people have been shown to have twice the lifetime risk of suicide attempt as heterosexuals. It is estimated that 3-10% (1) of deaths among heroin users is due to suicide and that 17-47% (2) of PWID report lifetime history of attempted suicide
- Many PWID have life circumstances/histories that predispose them to suicide ideation and attempt

Methodology

- In this paper, we investigate the predictors of life time experience of intentional overdose amongst a cohort of PWID
- Data is drawn from the Melbourne Injecting Drug User Cohort (MIX) study (N=757, final sample for analysis: N=529)
- We specifically investigated the association between sexual orientation, (ever) formal diagnosis of a mental health condition and intentional overdose
 - In the absence of a specific sexual orientation question, we inferred orientation based on sexual behaviour

- Homophobic prejudice and discrimination increase suicidal risk for LGB individuals
- However, there is little evidence as to the compounded risk of suicide among LGB PWID



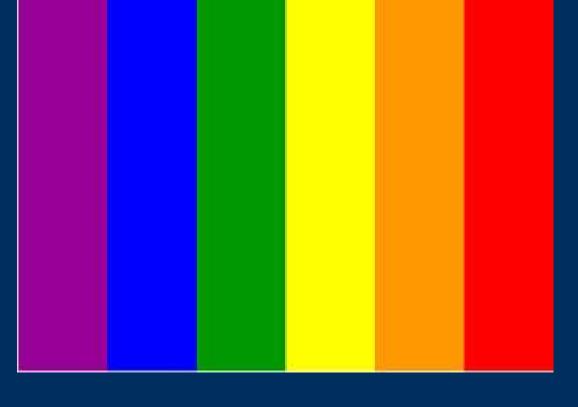
Regression results

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* p-value = <0.05, ** p-value = <0.01, *** p-value = <0.001				/ 5 (60)		2.77 (1.31, 4.00)

- We inferred non-heterosexual orientation if participants reported same-sex sexual intercourse (SSI) at any interview.
- Predictors were tested via logistic regression. Significance was set at < 0.05

Results

- 41 (8%) participants reported having sexual intercourse with a same-sex partner at any time across interviews
- 360 (68%) participants reported ever being formally diagnosed with a mental health condition
- 91 (17%) participants reported lifetime intentional overdose



Discussion

- We tested the association between SSI, (ever) diagnosis of a mental health condition and lifetime intentional overdose via logistic regression.
- The heightened odds for SSI individuals, who are also PWID, a population known to have increased likelihood of suicide, represents compounded risk

• It has previously been asserted that "being a LGBT PWID is a qualitatively different" experience to being a heterosexual PWID" (3). Due to potential isolation from both LGB and PWID communities, LGB PWID may reside in a "no-man's land" (3) of peer

• Up to their most recent interview, 15 SSI participants (37%) reported lifetime intentional overdose, compared with 68 participants (16%) who reported

heterosexual sexual intercourse

- Up to their most recent interview, 32 SSI participants (78%) also reported ever being diagnosed with a mental health condition, compared with 295 participants (68%) reporting heterosexual sexual intercourse
- In the regression, diagnoses of a mental health condition (AOR=2.47) and SSI (AOR=2.79) significantly increased the odds of lifetime intentional overdose

support

- Interconnectedness of family and support units have been shown to be preventative factors against suicide for LGB individuals (4). Interventions to facilitate such supports may help to reduce the high risk of intentional overdose seen in this study
- Co-affiliated services targeting concurrent LGB PWID individuals could ideally assist in this regard

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