



**The emergence of undetectable viral load as a HIV risk reduction strategy by Australian gay and bisexual men who have condomless sex with casual partners**

Martin Holt, Toby Lea, Limin Mao, Iryna Zablotska, Garrett Prestage, John De Wit

Never Stand Still    Arts & Social Sciences    Centre for Social Research in Health

Background

- Gay Community Periodic Surveys are repeated, community- (& online-) based behavioural surveillance of gay men
- Conducted in 7 states and territories
- Questions on *deliberate* use of non-condom-based HIV risk reduction strategies during condomless sex with casual partners included since 2011
  - e.g. 'I made sure we were the same HIV status before we fucked without a condom'
- This analysis looks at frequent use of different strategies by HIV status
- Abstracts includes 2013 data; this presentation is updated to focus on 2014 data plus change in last 2 yrs.



HIV risk reduction strategies



- Condoms
- Serosorting (matching HIV status) before anal sex without condoms
- Strategic positioning during anal sex without condoms with partner of unknown/discordant status
  - HIV-positive partner takes receptive position
  - HIV-negative partner takes insertive position
- Withdrawal before ejaculation during anal sex without condoms (unknown/discordant status partner)
- Taking anti-HIV medication before or after sex (PrEP/PEP)
- Undetectable viral load
  - HIV-positive participant knew he had an UVL before condomless sex
  - HIV-negative participant asked about UVL before condomless sex
- We classified participants as *often/always* or *occasionally/never* practising each strategy in the six months prior to survey (*frequent* vs. *infrequent* use)

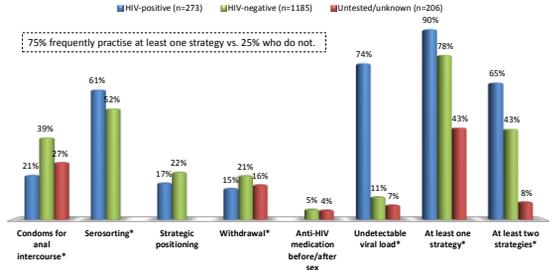
Sample derivation (2014 GCPS data)

	HIV-positive (9%)	HIV-negative (76%)	Untested/UK (15%)	Total
CAIC past 6 mths	274 (41%)	1189 (21%)	212 (19%)	1675 (23%)
Total	668	5644	1114	7426

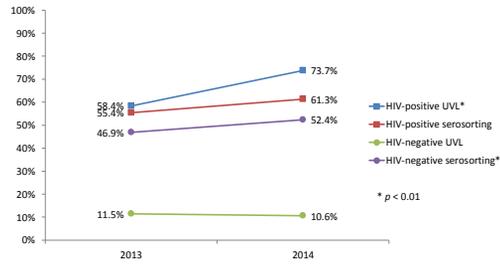
Men who had CAIC (n=1675)	HIV-positive (16%)	HIV-negative (71%)	Untested/UK (12%)	p value
Mean age	42 yrs	35 yrs	31 yrs	<0.001
Anglo-Australian	67%	56%	48%	<0.001
Full-time employed	61%	66%	47%	<0.001
University degree	45%	44%	30%	0.001
Gay-identified	95%	91%	86%	0.001
Recruited at gay event or venue	68%	80%	75%	<0.001



Frequently used strategies among men who had CAIC, by HIV status



Frequent use of selected strategies, 2013-14





## Summary



- 1 in 5 gay men have condomless sex with casual partners
  - 41% HIV-positive, 21% HIV-negative, 19% untested men
- 75% of men who have CAIC frequently practise HIV risk reduction
  - 90% HIV-positive, 78% HIV-negative, 43% untested men
- Most common strategies:
  - HIV-positive men: undetectable viral load (↑), serosorting
  - HIV-negative men: serosorting (↑), condoms
- Prevention priorities:
  - 25% of men who do not frequently reduce risk during CAIC
  - Promoting HIV testing to untested men who have CAIC
  - Shifting HIV-negative men from serosorting to PrEP?



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