



Young People's Views on Chlamydia Testing

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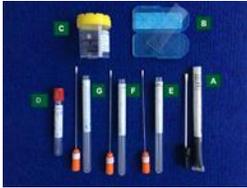


Figure 1: Testing kit for STI¹

Introduction

Chlamydia trachomatis is the most common sexually transmitted infection (STI) in Australia, with the highest proportion affecting those aged 15-29 years. With the prevalence increasing, there is a need for increased community awareness and testing.

Methods

A voluntary and anonymous survey was disseminated to university students seeking their knowledge, experiences and views towards testing for Chlamydia trachomatis. The survey received ethics approval.

Results

There were 2070 completed surveys. 73% were aged under 30 years and 91% of responders were at risk of transmission of Chlamydia trachomatis, reporting at least one sexual encounter where barrier protection was not used.

Only half of responders knew the method for testing for Chlamydia and less than half had ever undergone screening (45.8%). Women were more likely than men to have been screened (OR 2.5, p<0.001) as were those aged over 30 years (OR 1.34, p=0.004).

The barriers to testing included not believing they were not at risk (42%), being asymptomatic (40%) and a feeling of embarrassment at seeking testing (29%). 80% reported that the removal of cost would make them probably or definitely more likely to seek testing.

85% stated they would prefer screening at their GP, 81% at a sexual health clinic, 72% in a family planning clinic, 65% using a home-testing kit from a pharmacy, 42% using a home-testing kit over the internet.

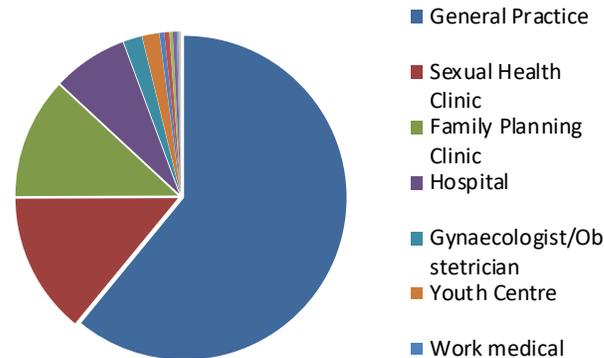


Figure 2: Settings for previous screening

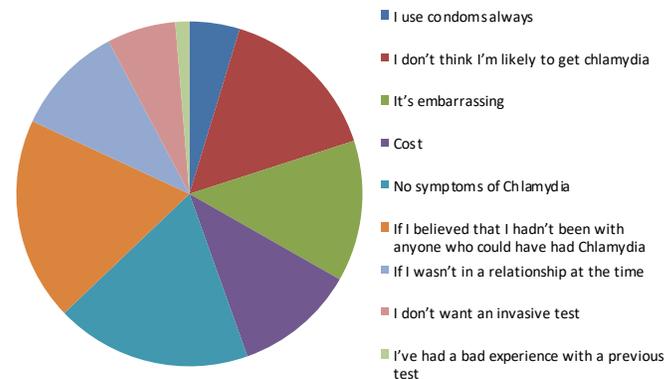


Figure 3: What prevents you from undergoing screening?

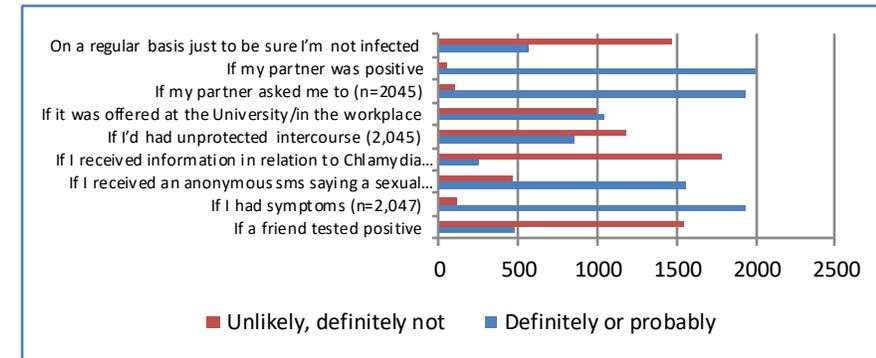


Figure 4: In what circumstances would you request screening?

Discussion

This survey supports the need for ongoing STI education. It highlights that young people are at risk of infection and have inadequate knowledge about STIs including testing methods.

Conclusion

Young people are at risk of transmission of Chlamydia trachomatis infection

There is a lack of general knowledge of prevalence, symptoms and testing for Chlamydia trachomatis

Whilst General Practice and Sexual Health Clinics are most popular sites to undergo testing testing, there is potential for other avenues such as chemists or online testing kits.

References

1. World Health Organisation, WHO Guidelines for the treatment of Chlamydia trachomatis, Geneva Switzerland 2016.
2. Department of Health, Silver Book – A Guide For Managing Sexually Transmitted Infections, Perth Western Australia 2019.

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