HEALTH KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOUR IN AN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH SERVICE IN QLD

Authors: Ford B1, Williams S2, Leedie F3, Harrod ME1, Jamil MS1, Saunders M2, Donovan B1, Mooney-Somers J3, Kaldor J1

Affiliations: 1 Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales; 2 Goondir Health Services; 3 National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation; 4 Centre for Values, Ethics and the Law in Medicine, University of Sydney

INTRODUCTION

- Chlamydia is the most commonly notified infectious disease in Australia and if left untreated can have serious long-term morbilities.
- Goondir Health Service (Goondir HS) is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) providing primary health care services to approximately 5000 clients over 160, 000 square km in the South East and South West QLD.
- Previous surveys have examined knowledge and sexual behaviour of young people. This study looks at knowledge, self-reported behaviours and chlamydia testing and positivity.

This work is part of the Research Excellence in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health (REACCH) collaboration. REACCH is a NHMRC-funded Centre for Research Excellence led by the Kirby Institute and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

RESULTS

- A total of 76 participants aged between 16 – 29 years have completed the survey, with an overall participation rate of 82.6%.

Demographics

Most participants were female, Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander and heterosexual. Nearly half were in a closed relationship. (Table 1)

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<tr>
<th>Total Participants (n=76)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>82.5</td>
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STI Knowledge

- Few participants identified HPV and Trichomoniasis as STIs. Only 2 participants correctly identified all STIs, the mode was 5 correct answers (37% of the total sample) with an average score of 4. (Figure 2)
- Most participants correctly answered questions about STIs and their consequences. The mean score for these questions was 4.5 correct responses (Figure 3).

HPV Vaccination

- A third of women reported vaccination against HPV, with those aged >21 years having higher self-reported vaccination (40%).
- Around half of participants correctly identified the purpose of the HPV vaccine. Vaccinated women had the most understanding, with 84.2% correctly identifying the purpose.

CONCLUSION

Our results provide an insight into STI knowledge and behaviours of young people attending Goondir HS, which allows the service to better frame health promotion for this group.

- Aboriginal Medical Services are a suitable place for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to access Sexual and Reproductive healthcare.
- Targeted education for young people may improve their knowledge of STIs, in particular HPV and Trichomoniasis, and increase condom use
- HPV vaccination uptake was very low. While women aged <21 years were eligible for school-based HPV vaccination, the majority reported they had not been vaccinated. Further investigation into the uptake of HPV vaccination and how to promote safer sex in local young people may be warranted.

Acknowledgements

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