How common is sex with a transgender person among males and females attending a sexual health clinic in Melbourne, Australia?

Eoin Cleere^{1,2}, Christopher K Fairley^{1,3}, Launcelot McGrath^{1,2}, Catriona S Bradshaw^{1,3}, Marcus Y Chen^{1,3}, Eric PF Chow^{1,3}

1.Melbourne Sexual Health Centre, Alfred Health, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
2.Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin, Leinster, Ireland
3.Central Clinical School, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

BACKGROUND

- Transgender and gender diverse (TGD) people are a group of people whose birth gender differs from their gender identity.
- It is reasonable to presume the risk of acquiring HIV/STIs may be higher in someone having sex with a TGD person.
- However a question asking about TGD partners has not been identified as an important question that should be routinely asked in a sexual health history.
- Last year the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre (MSHC) received feedback from patients which suggested adding a question on TGD partners to its computer assisted self-interviewing (CASI).
- In response to this feedback in August 2017 MSHC added a question to CASI for all male and female patients asking: “In the past 12 months have you had sex with a trans or gender diverse person?”

AIM

- To assess the number of patients who had had sex with a TGD person.
- To determine what demographic characteristics made a person more likely to have sex with a TGD person.
- To see if sex with a TGD person was a risk factor in contracting an STI.

METHODS

- This was a retrospective chart analysis of patients attending MSHC between August and December 2017 who responded to the new question regarding TGD partners.
- Patient responses were verified using clinicians notes.
- Univariable and multivariable logistic regression was performed to assess the association between having sex with a TGD person and patients’ characteristics.

RESULTS

Table 1. Factors associated with having sex with a TGD person among 6822 males attending the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre.

Factors	Number of individuals, N	Number of individuals who had had sex with a TGD person, n (%)	Crude OR (95% CI)	p Value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p Value
Age, years						
≤24	1627	13 (0.8%)	1	Ref	1	Ref
25-34	3222	46 (1.4%)	1.80 (0.97-3.34)	0.063	1.78 (0.96-3.30)	0.068
≥35	1973	33 (1.7%)	2.11 (1.11-4.03)	0.023	2.17 (1.14-4.14)	0.019
Country of birth						
Overseas	3214	38 (1.2%)	1	Ref		
Australia	3333	46 (1.4%)	1.17 (0.76-1.80)	0.478		
Injecting drug use						
No	6,552	86 (1.3%)	1	Ref		
Yes	117	2 (1.7%)	1.31 (0.32-5.38)	0.710		
Sexual orientation						
Gay or bisexual	3962	58 (1.5%)	1.17 (0.77-1.80)	0.461		
Heterosexual	2720	34 (1.3%)	1	Ref		
Sex workers						
No	6690	90 (1.4%)	1	Ref		
Yes	32	1 (3.1%)	2.37 (0.32-17.52)	0.399		
Number of partners						
≤3	2589	26 (1.0%)	1	Ref	1	Ref
>3	4233	66 (1.6%)	1.56 (0.99-2.47)	0.056	1.59 (1.01-2.51)	0.047
Urogenital chlamydia						
Negative	5,870	80 (1.4%)	1	Ref		
Positive	295	2 (0.7%)	0.49 (0.12-2.02)	0.326		

Table 2. Factors associated with having sex with a TGD person 3278 females attending the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre.

Factors	Number of individuals, N	Number of individuals who had had sex with a TGD person, n (%)	Crude OR (95% CI)	p Value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p Value
Age, years						
≤24	1,166	6 (0.5%)	1	Ref		
25-34	1,570	10 (0.6%)	1.24 (0.45-3.42)	0.679		
≥35	542	3 (0.6%)	1.08 (0.27-4.32)	0.918		
Country of birth						
Overseas	2,017	7 (0.3%)	1	Ref	1	Ref
Australia	1,162	12 (1.0%)	3.00 (1.18-7.63)	0.021	1.74 (0.66-4.59)	0.267
Injecting drug use						
No	3,208	18 (0.6%)	1	Ref	1	Ref
Yes	20	1 (5.0%)	9.33 (1.18-73.44)	0.034	2.73 (0.31-24.12)	0.365
Sexual orientation						
Heterosexual	2,852	6 (0.2%)	1	Ref	1	Ref
Lesbian or bisexual	401	13 (3.2%)	15.89 (6.01-42.06)	<0.001	13.69 (5.06-37.02)	<0.001
Sex workers						
No	2,411	10 (0.4%)	1	Ref	1	Ref
Yes	783	9 (1.1%)	2.79 (1.13-6.90)	0.026	2.39 (0.94-6.10)	0.069
Number of partners						
≤3	1,929	8 (0.4%)	1	Ref		
>3	1,349	11 (0.8%)	1.97 (0.79-4.92)	0.144		
Urogenital chlamydia						
Negative	2,867	18 (0.6%)	1	Ref		
Positive	196	0 (0%)	-	-		

- Of the 10,100 consultations, the overall proportion who reported having sex with a TGD person was 1.0% and was higher among males (1.3%) than females (0.6%) (p=0.001).
- 66.9% of responses reporting sex with a TGD person were validated on chart review and this was also higher in males (75.2%) than females (45.2%) (p<0.001).
- Among females those who were sex workers (81.8%) were far more likely to answer correctly compared with females who were not sex workers (33.3%) (p=0.006).
- There was no association between chlamydia positivity and sex with a TGD person.

CITATION

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CONTACT

Eoin Cleere
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
E-mail: eoincleere@rcsi.ie

@MSHCRsearch