

Awareness of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in the black and minority ethnic (BME) community; a questionnaire survey in Leeds, UK

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Background

- The efficacy and recommendation of Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV prevention is well established in high-risk groups.
- Men who have sex with men (MSM) and people from sub-Saharan Africa living in the UK are the two largest groups with newly acquired HIV infection in the UK.

Figure 1. New HIV diagnoses in the UK, by risk group, 2007-2016, United Kingdom

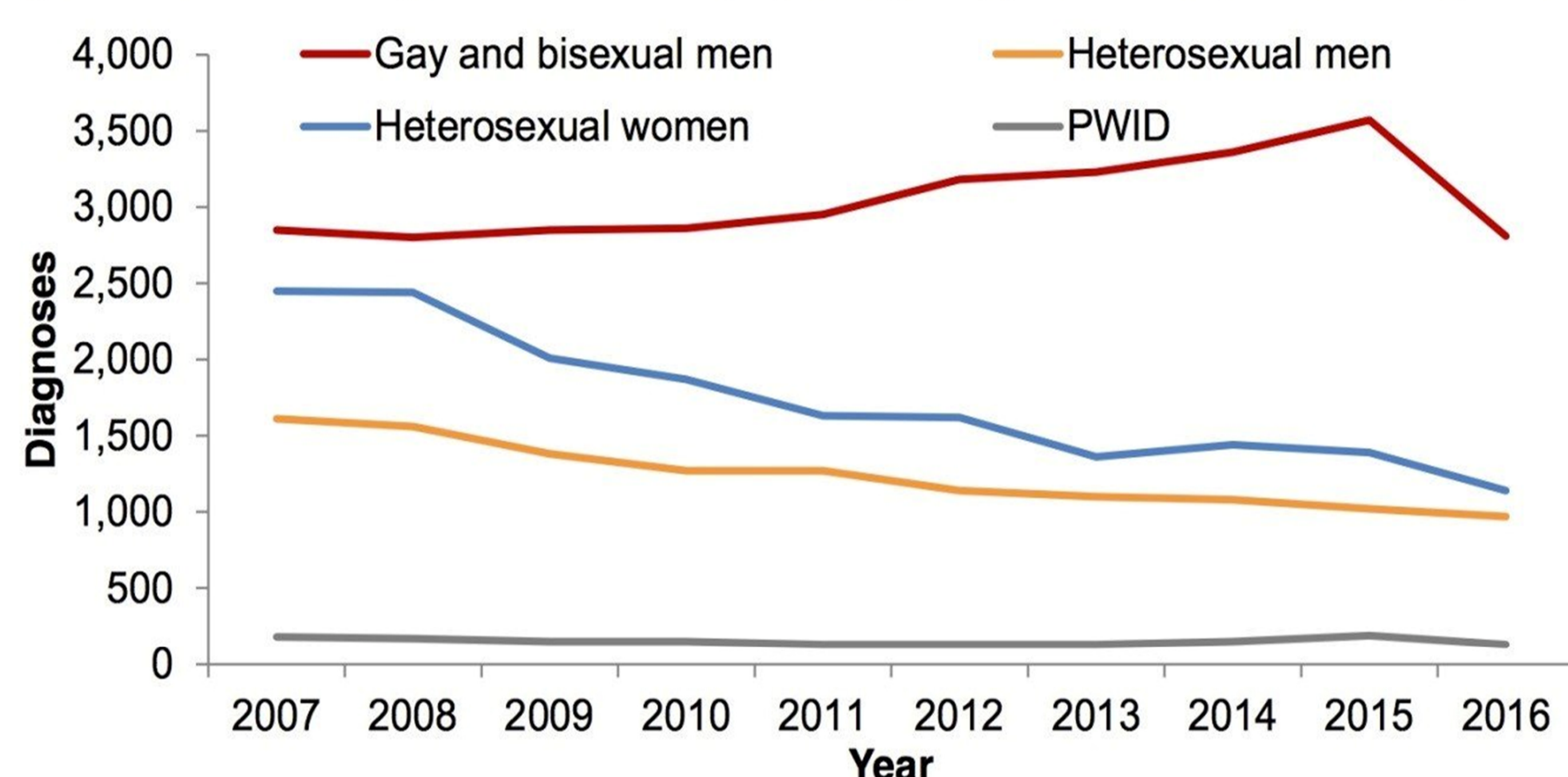


Figure 1: HIV incidence in the UK by risk groups. PHE (1)

- In addition to treatment as prevention and safer sex, PrEP has been publicly promoted as another means to reduce the transmission of HIV infection.
- Eligibility criteria for the PrEP impact trail includes a woman or man reporting sex without a condom with partner(s) from countries with a high prevalence of HIV and intending to continue doing so (2).

Aims

- To determine the awareness of PrEP in attendees of 2 football tournaments that fit the criteria of being from a community with high HIV incidence in the UK.
- To determine their willingness to take PrEP if offered both by the NHS and if they had to self fund privately.

Methods

- Questionnaires were circulated to attendees of two football tournaments in summer 2017:
 - Leeds African cup of nations (LACON)
 - Leeds refugee football tournament
- Questions about demographics, high-risk sex in the preceding 12 months, prior knowledge of PrEP and willingness to take PrEP both if they had to pay privately or if offered by the NHS were asked.
- They could complete the questionnaire on paper or an electronic version.
- They had privacy to complete the questionnaires.
- Data was entered into Microsoft excel spreadsheet for analysis.

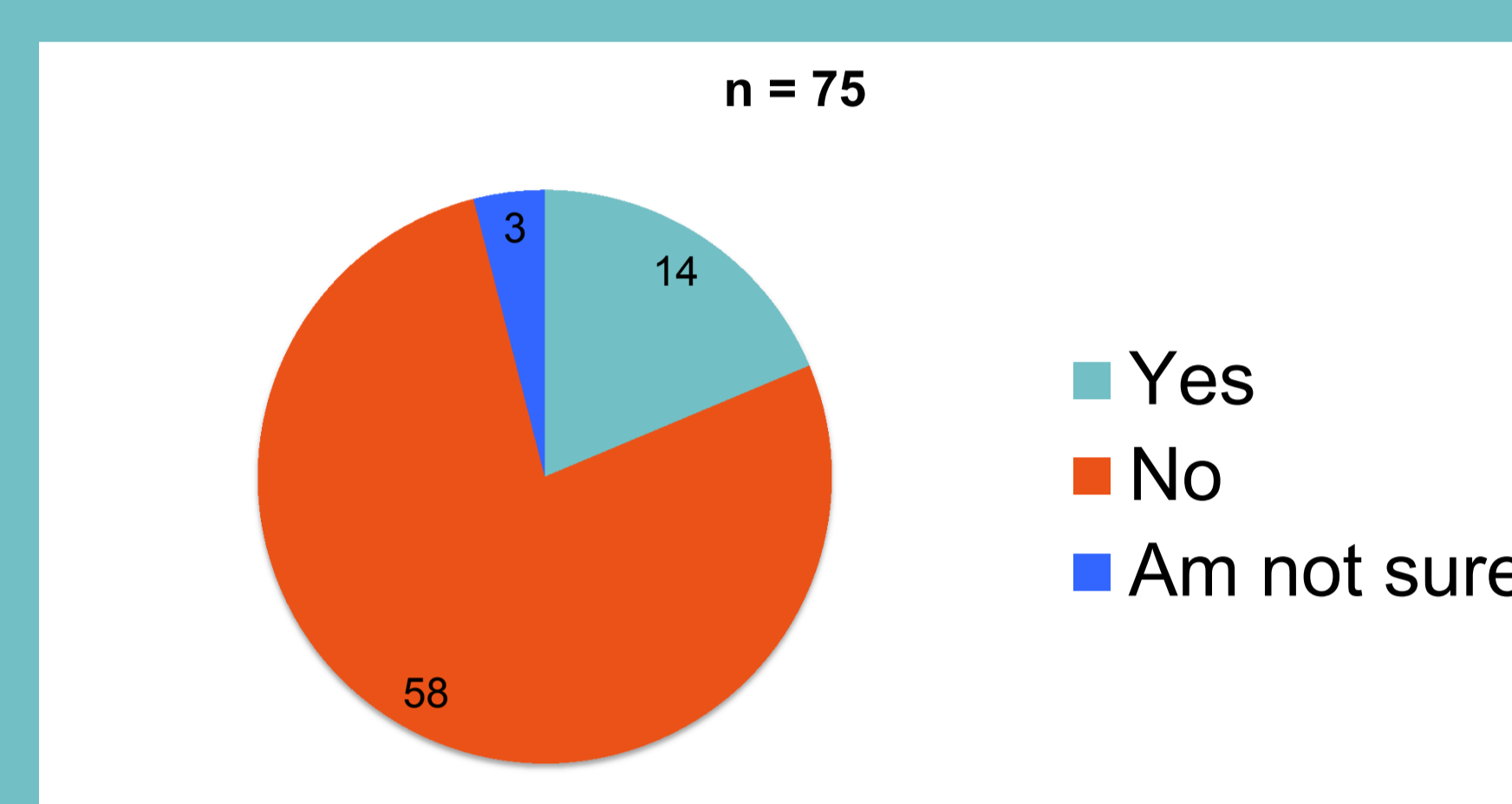
References

- Public Health England, HIV in the United Kingdom: decline in new HIV diagnoses in gay and bisexual men in London, 2017 report. Advanced Access report 11 (35): 3 October 2017.
- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/spec-services/npc-org/blood-and-infection-group-ff03/prep-impact-trial-questions-and-answers/#what-are-the-eligibility-criteria> (accessed 26th March 2018)

Results

- 75 completed questionnaires were returned during the 2 events (42 and 33 respectively).
- 95% were male and 5% female. 52% were in the 15 – 24 years age group (age ranged from 15 – 74).
- 77% were black African, 8% identified as black British, 4% as white British and 11% as other.
- 93% were heterosexual, 4% bisexual male and 3% declined to state their sexuality

Response to 'have you ever heard of PrEP?'



Including am not sure, 81% have never heard of PrEP before.

Response to 'would you take PrEP if provided by the NHS?'

- With further explanation about PrEP, 60% (45/75) would take PrEP if provided by the NHS. 18% would take PrEP on the NHS only if their sexual risk changed.
- Of the 60% who would take PrEP on the NHS, 51% of them would not self-fund.

High risk behaviour in the preceding 12 months	Yes (%)
Had sex with a partner from a country considered as high risk for HIV	19
Man having sex with another man	4
Had sex with a known HIV positive partner	3
Paid for sex or been paid for sex	3

- Everyone in these highest risk behaviour groups said they would take PrEP if offered by the NHS.
- 5% of the respondents had used post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) in the preceding 12 months and 41% of the respondents did not know what PEP was.

Discussion

- Awareness of PrEP and PEP was lacking in this group of young majority black African males.
- When told about PrEP they showed interest as well as surprise of never having heard of this preventative measure.
- There are ongoing concerns about low recruitment of black African heterosexuals in the PrEP impact trial.
- Awareness campaign strategies that are effective in the LGBT communities are not effective in the BME communities.
- Better targeting of HIV prevention messages including PrEP is needed to BME communities.
- Such as attending local BME events to disseminate information and working in partnerships with local churches and mosques to raise awareness.