4.06 (2.78-5.71)

0.37 (0.04-1.32)

0.36 (0.10-0.93)

3.19 (0.66-9.04)



Reducing barriers to HIV testing – what influences testing offer and uptake? Lessons learned from the HIV in Europe Initiative

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OBJECTIVE

HIV in Europe is a pan-European initiative providing a platform for activities aiming to increase early diagnosis and care for people living with HIV across Europe. Research includes investigating indicator conditions associated with a risk of HIV and encouraging testing as a strategy within healthcare systems and investigating the impact of stigma on HIV test uptake.

METHODS

Through collaborative projects, conferences and advocacy, barriers to testing on provider, client and administrative levels are investigated. The HIDES study (HIV Indicator Diseases Across Europe Study) investigated HIV prevalence within possible indicator conditions in health care settings across Europe. Through the implementation of the People living with HIV Stigma Index, reasons for delay in HIV test seeking were investigated in 5 Eastern European countries.

RESULTS

The strategy to increase HIV testing through indicator condition guided HIV testing is feasible and (cost)-effective. Among 3588 individuals routinely offered testing in 17 clinics in 14 countries, eight indicator conditions associated with HIV were investigated and demonstrated an HIV prevalence of > 0.1%, a level determined to be cost-effective. Healthcare professional related barriers were concerned with time limitations, perception of HIV as exceptional in regard to consent process, and lack of training. In the Stigma Index (n participants = >2500) respondents from Eastern Europe reported many fears that could delay uptake of both testing and care.

CONCLUSIONS

Indicator condition guided HIV testing is a feasible and effective strategy to reduce the level of undiagnosed HIV infection in Europe. A strategy led by the HIV in Europe initiative is being developed to implement this novel public health initiative across Europe. Expanding HIV testing in health care settings requires training - including on stigma as a barrier to testing, political support on the national and European levels as well as auditing, monitoring and evaluation for impact. The results of the research are a good basis for advocacy.



HIV in Europe Copenhagen 2012 Conference 19-20 March 2012

More than 300 participants from 46 countries Clinicians 25%

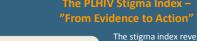
Community representatives 37%

Others (social scientists, epidemiologist, statisticians) 15%

The conference received funding from the European









stonia, Moldova, Poland,

urkey, Ukraine and Belarus

The stigma index reveals that fear of



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