Effectiveness of a pilot Partner Notification Programme (PN) for new HIV cases (NHIV) in Málaga, Spain.

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Background
- HIV epidemic is not stabilized and almost half of Spanish NHIV are still late diagnosis (<350 cells/mm³).
- Recommendation voluntary assisted PN services should be offered as part of a comprehensive package of testing and care to people with HIV (strong recommendation, moderate quality of evidence).
- PN represents an excellent strategy to control the AIDS epidemic, enabling the detection of new cases and decreasing the hidden infections rate.

Objective
- To determine the acceptability and effectiveness of a proactive PN in NHIV.

Methods
- Type of study: longitudinal prospective pilot study.
- Patients and period of study: all new HIV cases that attended our center between October 2017 and May 2018 and agree to participate in the study by signing the informed consent.
- Notification to partners was made through the index case (IC) or by the Physician (Ph).
- Acceptability was estimated as the number of IC accepting to participate and the effectiveness as the number of NHIV detected from partners tested.
- Demographic and clinical data as well as sexual behaviour in the last 12 months or since last HIV negative test, were collected in both IC and their partners and registered in a questionnaire.
- A rapid HIV test as well as screening tests for other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (syphilis, chlamydia, gonococcus, HCV, HAV, HBV) were done in all cases.

Results
- 59 NHIV were attended in our hospital during the study period and 48 were offered to participate in PN, accepting all of them. Acceptability was 100%
- 20 NHIV (41.7%) presented another concomitant STI and 45% were asymptomatic: 1 HBV, 1HCV, 15 Syphilis, 5 Chlamydia (1 faringal and 4 anal), 3 N. Gonorrhoeae (1 faringal, 2 anal).
- 18 HIV-positive known: 37 HIV-negative or unknown.
- 2 NHIV were diagnosed: Effectiveness was 10%.

Baseline Characteristics N (%)  
Men 46 (95.8)  
MSM 42 (87.5)  
Age in years (mean ± SD) 35.3 ± 9.6  
Origin  
-Spanish 33 (68.8)  
-Latinoamerican 7 (14.6)  
-Other 8 (16.7)  
Level of studies  
-None or Primary 7 (14.6)  
-Secondary 20 (41.7)  
-University 21 (43.8)  

Sex behaviour N (%)  
Stable partner 18 (37.5)  
Condom use  
-Always 6 (12.5)  
-Nearly always 29 (60.4)  
-Sometimes 10 (20.8)  
-Never 3 (6.3)  
-Have been Sex worker 3 (6.3)  
-Have payed for sex 6 (12.5)  

Type of sex  
-Insertive anal sex 36 (75)  
-Receptive anal sex 37 (77.1)  
-Vaginal sex 11 (22.9)  
-Oral sex 48 (100)  

Previous STI 21 (43.8)

Partner Notification Program:  
132 traceable contacts  
55 contacts were located  
43 by IC  
22 by Ph  
77 were not located  

Conclusions
- The acceptability of partner notification in our cohort was very high, but the effectiveness moderated.
- Almost half of the new HIV cases included had previous STIs, although 25% had never been tested for HIV.
- The PN expands the screening coverage, reaching a larger high-risk population.

References: