



STIs and HIV Are on the Rise in London Gay Men

October 20, 2014

Gay and bisexual men in London, England, are in the middle of rising twin epidemics of HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), aidsmap reports. A Public Health England report on the sexual health of men who have sex with men (MSM) in the capital finds that although MSM are less than 2 percent of London's adult population, they account for 24 percent of local STI diagnoses in the past year.

Sixty-five percent of London's gonorrhea diagnoses and 84 percent of syphilis cases were among MSM. These STIs are on the rise among MSM, a phenomenon that may be due in part to improvements in testing technologies. The recent past has also seen outbreaks of STIs such as lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV), shigella and sexually-transmitted hepatitis C virus among London MSM.

HIV diagnoses rose by 28 percent among London MSM between 2003 and 2012. Today, 51 percent of new diagnoses are among MSM. While 1 in 34 of MSM in the United Kingdom are living with the virus, in London that figure is 1 in 12.

In the report, Public Health England examines various contributing factors to these epidemics. A significant minority of MSM in London have a high number of sexual partners. About half of the city's MSM report engaging in anal sex without a condom. Serosorting is common, and the condomless intercourse between HIV-positive men is leading to very high rates of STIs among them. Recreational drug use also likely plays a part in fueling the spread of STIs and HIV. Also, too few men are getting tested for HIV frequently enough.

To read the aidsmap story, [click here](#).

To read the report, [click here](#).
