

Screening of sexually transmitted diseases: experience from Galliera hospital in Genoa

R. Prinapori¹, D. Fiorellino¹, S. Puppo¹, E. Blasi Vacca¹, N. Bobbio¹, S. Boni¹, F. Del Puente¹, M. Feasi¹, A. Parisini¹, S. Tigano¹, E. Pontali¹

¹ Infectious Disease Department, Galliera Hospital, Genoa, Italy

Introduction

- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are still a significant public health concern.
- To decrease circulation of STDs among attendees of our outpatient unit we have focused on increasing awareness, testing population based on individual risk and early treatment of incident infections.

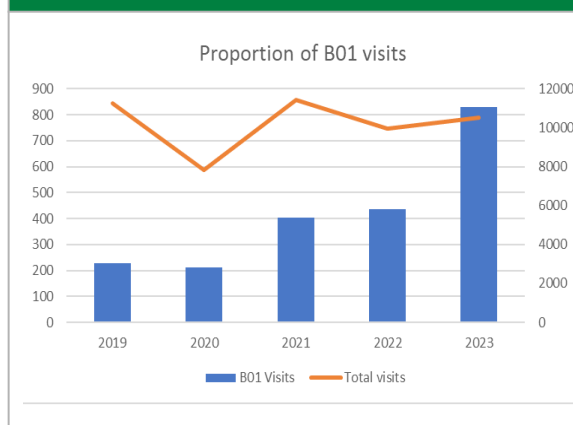
Methods

- Since most STDs are symptomless and underdiagnosed, we proactively proposed STDs testing with medical visit for sexual health education and pre-test counseling every morning, from Monday to Friday at our outpatient center.
- No reservation is required, free direct access for HIV and/or STDs testing is the rule. All outpatient visits were counted from 1st January 2019 to 31st December 2023.
- Visits were matched for exemption code (B01) and year. All positive tests for HIV, syphilis (TPHA) or urinary nucleic acid amplification test (uNAAT) for *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT), *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (GC), *Mycoplasma genitalium* or *hominis* (MG/MH) or *Ureaplasma urealyticum* were evaluated.

Results

- Out of 50,998 visits performed, 2106 (4.1%) were provided with B01 exemption code.
- In Figure 1 the proportion of B01 accesses by year is reported: the rate increased from 2% in 2019 to 7.9% in 2023.

Figure 1 Rate of B01 visits by year



The number of tested patients with the incidence of STDs by year is reported in Table 1

Table 1 STDs in B01 tested patients

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
HIV	9	6	1	5	5	26
TPHA	34	24	21	27	33	139
MG/MH	2	1	4	5	20	32
NG	1	1	0	8	9	19
CT	0	0	3	5	8	16
UU	2	2	4	8	24	40
Total	48	34	33	58	99	272
Incidence %	21	16	8	13	12	13

- During the observation period 272 STDs were diagnosed. Among tested patients, HIV infection was present in 1.2%, TPHA positive subjects were 6.6%, the positivity rate of uNAAT for CT, GC, MG/MH or UU was 0.7%, 0.9%, 1.5% and 1.9% respectively.

Conclusions

- In our cohort the proportion of accesses for HIV/STDs screening showed a progressive increase over the years.
- Activities related to STDs surveillance and prevention impact more and more on the daily workload of our outpatient unit. This fact can be explained by the offer of a very easy access with immediate testing and results in few days.
- Furthermore, the increased availability of information in different settings as medical checkpoints and sexual educational programs on the territory or via web leads to a greater awareness of patients to STDs testing and linkage to care.
- A role in increased STDs screening is also played by the increasing diffusion and implementation of Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) as HIV prevention strategy, especially since it became a reimbursable service