



Highlights from this issue

doi:10.1136/sextrans-2018-053564

Jackie A Cassell, *Editor in Chief*

Domestic violence and abuse (DVA) is a growing concern in a range of health settings, and it is increasingly recognised that enquiry by healthcare practitioners can enable pathways to earlier intervention and support. We have published a growing range of research and guidance on domestic and intimate partner violence in recent years, as practitioners have grappled with the best way to broach a sensitive issue in a busy clinical setting. This month Lyus and Masters provide a thoughtful overview¹ in relation to two studies published in this issue. Sohal *et al* report a feasibility study of a training, support and referral intervention for DVA in two sexual health clinics², while Horwood *et al* describe the staff experience of participating in a pilot of routine enquiry.³

Starting from a different standpoint, Mathews *et al* explore the relationship between intimate partner violence (IPV) and partner notification (PN) for STI in a South African setting.⁴ Though concern about the possibility of IPV is often voiced by health practitioners in relation to PN, there is limited evidence to guide practice. In this study, within a wider trial of a behavioural intervention, the authors followed PN prospectively in relation to IPV perpetration and victimisation, and partnership type. The results are worth reading in detail, with some surprises beyond the key finding—against the authors' expectations—that PN was no less likely in partnerships with IPV.

Whole genome sequencing (WGS) is offering new opportunities to understand patterns of transmission in STIs, which are exploited in a number of studies this month. Peters *et al* describe several networks of individuals with gonorrhoea of mixed serostatus, including behavioural risk factors⁵ including chemsex, and use of geospatial apps. In a study of male couples⁶, Kwong *et al* report high levels of concordance, including antibiotic resistant strains, even within multi-site infections. This has implications for the choice of antibiotics

in sexual partners. Li *et al*'s study of the HIV-1 recombinant HIV-1 virus, predominant among men who have sex with men (MSM) in China explores transmission lineages across different groups and regions.⁷

Trichomonas (TV) in developed world settings has increasingly fallen off the radar, as nucleic acid based tests (NAATs) and self-sampling have become the predominant tests. Nicholls *et al*⁸ report TV prevalence of 4.5% in GUM clinics, and 1.7% in primary care among women tested for *N gonorrhoeae* and *Chlamydia trachomatis*, and estimate the cost per case for NAATs versus conventional methods. Also on the topic of vaginal microbiology, Houdt *et al* report a case control study of *Lactobacillus inters*-dominated vaginal microbiota in relation to acquisition of chlamydia.⁹

A decade on, Dahlberg *et al* report an update on the fate of 'new variant' *Chlamydia trachomatis* which emerged in Sweden in 2006 and led to the rapid development of reconfigured NAAT tests.¹⁰ Tuite *et al*¹¹ report modelling different strategies for the control of syphilis in MSM, showing that screening men with high partner numbers outperformed other strategies.

Finally, the new world of HPV screening continues to generate novel approaches to sampling, including mailed specimens as reported by Anderson *et al*.¹² Most fascinating this month is a study where both MSM and their partners were taught digital anorectal examination (DARE) for the detection of nodules and masses, demonstrating good concordance with physician examination.¹³

Handling editor Jackie A Cassell

Twitter @jackiecassell

Competing interests None declared.

Provenance and peer review commissioned; not peer reviewed.

© Article author(s) (or their employer(s) unless otherwise stated in the text of the article) 2018. All rights reserved. No commercial use is permitted unless otherwise expressly granted.

REFERENCES

- Lyus L, Masters T. Routine enquiry for domestic violence and abuse in sexual health settings. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:81–2.
- Sohal AH, Pathak N, Blake S, *et al*. Improving the healthcare response to domestic violence and abuse in sexual health clinics: feasibility study of a training, support and referral intervention. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:83–7.
- Horwood J, Morden A, Bailey JE, *et al*. Assessing for domestic violence in sexual health environments: a qualitative study. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:88–92.
- Mathews C, Kalichman MO, Laubscher R, *et al*. Sexual relationships, intimate partner violence and STI partner notification in Cape Town, South Africa: an observational study. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:117–23.
- Peters J, Cresswell F, Amor L, *et al*. Whole genome sequencing of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* reveals transmission clusters involving patients of mixed HIV serostatus. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:145–50.
- Kwong JC, Chow EPF, Stevens K, *et al*. Whole-genome sequencing reveals transmission of gonococcal antibiotic resistance among men who have sex with men: an observational study. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:151–7.
- Li X, Gao R, Zhu K, *et al*. Genetic transmission networks reveal the transmission patterns of HIV-1 CRF01_AE in China. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:111–6.
- Nicholls JE, Turner KME, North P, *et al*. Cross-sectional study to evaluate *Trichomonas vaginalis* positivity in women tested for *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and *Chlamydia trachomatis*, attending genitourinary medicine and primary care clinics in Bristol, South West England. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:93–9.
- van Houdt R, Ma B, Bruisten SM, *et al*. *Lactobacillus inters*-dominated vaginal microbiota is associated with increased susceptibility to *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection in Dutch women: a case-control study. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:124–30.
- Dahlberg J, Hadad R, Elfving K, *et al*. Ten years transmission of the new variant of *Chlamydia trachomatis* in Sweden: prevalence of infections and associated complications. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:100–4.
- Tuite AR, Shaw S, Reimer JN, *et al*. Can enhanced screening of men with a history of prior syphilis infection stem the epidemic in men who have sex with men? A mathematical modelling study. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:105–10.
- Anderson C, Breithaupt L, Des Marais A, *et al*. Acceptability and ease of use of mailed HPV self-collection among infrequently screened women in North Carolina. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:138–44.
- Nyitray AG, Hicks JT, Hwang LY, *et al*. A phase II clinical study to assess the feasibility of self and partner anal examinations to detect anal canal abnormalities including anal cancer. *Sex Transm Infect* 2018;94:131–7.