PRECARIOUS LEGAL IMMIGRATION STATUS LINKED TO CLIENT CONDOM REFUSAL AMONG SEX WORKERS IN METRO VANCOUVER (2010–2018)

Bronwyn McBride*, Kate Shannon, Minshu Mo, Melissa Braschel, Shira Goldenberg. Centre for Gender and Sexual Health Equity, Vancouver, Canada

Methods Longitudinal data were drawn from AESHA, a community-based cohort of 900+ sex workers in Vancouver (2010–2018). A multivariable confounder model using logistic regression with generalized estimating equations was developed to model the independent effect of precarious status (any immigration status that is revocable under criminal charges: permanent residency, temporary residency, and undocumented) on recent client condom refusal (forcing unprotected sex or intentionally breaking the condom) over the study period. A second multivariable confounder model examined the moderating effect of precarious status on the relationship between condom refusal and the post-PCEPA law reform period.

Results Over the 8-year study (n=758), 9.1% of participants had precarious status and 16.5% experienced condom refusal, with a total 196 events of condom refusal reported. In a multivariable analysis adjusted for confounders, precarious status was independently associated with increased odds of facing condom refusal (adjusted odds ratio [AOR] 2.53, 95% confidence interval [CI] 1.37–4.68). In a second multivariable confounder model, legal status moderated the relationship between condom refusal and the post-PCEPA law reform period (2015–present).

Conclusion Laws criminalizing sex work among im/migrants in Canada enhance vulnerability among those with precarious status through presenting barriers to safer sex and increasing HIV/STI risk, highlighting urgent need for sex work and immigration policy reforms.

Disclosure No significant relationships.