



Public Health
England



UCL

Understanding continuing high HIV incidence: sexual behavioural trends among MSM in London, 2000-2013

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Background

- Over the last decade, the annual number of new HIV diagnoses among MSM in the UK has increased; an all-time high with 3250 diagnoses in 2013
- Modelling studies indicate HIV incidence has remained unchanged or slightly increased, despite increases in HIV testing and ARV treatment coverage.
- An increase in sexual risk behaviours, including serosorting, among MSM has been observed in numerous countries



Aims and methods

Aim

- to examine trends in sexual behaviours among MSM
- to explore potential transmitters and acquirers of HIV

Methods

- Gay Men's Sexual Health Survey: 10 serial cross-sectional surveys between 2000 and 2013 among MSM in London gay social venues
- Self-completed questionnaires
- HIV antibody testing using OraSure oral fluid collection devices





Definitions

Undiagnosed:

Positive orasure specimen and either:

“had never had an HIV test”

“believe current status negative or don’t know”

“result of my last HIV test was negative”

Casual partner:

- Partner with whom UAI only once

Serosorting:

- assumed told by the partner, UAI with partner of *‘presumed’* same status

Sexual health survey of men 2011





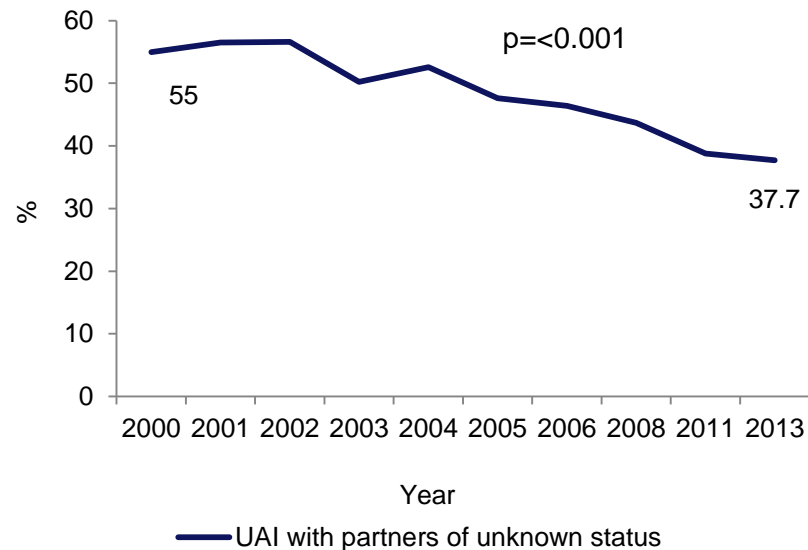
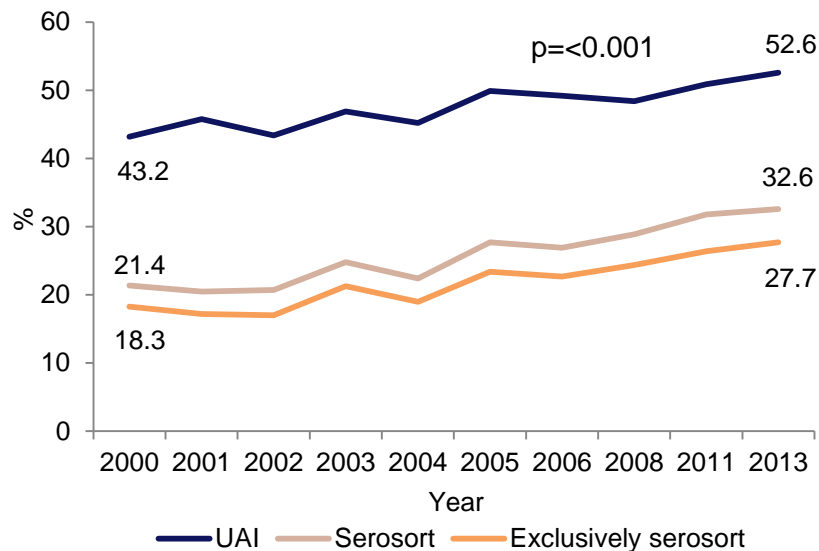
HIV positivity by recruitment venue type, 2000-2013 (n=11,876)

		All	Bars	Clubs	Saunas
HIV negative		87.2%	87.2%	88.6%	78.0%
HIV positive	diagnosed	8.3 %	8.5%	6.8%	12.0%
	undiagnosed	4.5 %	4.3%	4.6%	10.0%

- No overall significant trend in HIV positivity, between 9%-18% over the period
- Median age: HIV- 33.9 yrs , HIV+ diagnosed 37.9 yrs, HIV+ undiagnosed 34.8 yrs
- White ethnicity: 87%



Trends in UAI and serosorting, 2000-2013





MSM who are potential 'transmitters' and 'acquirers' of HIV

Transmitters

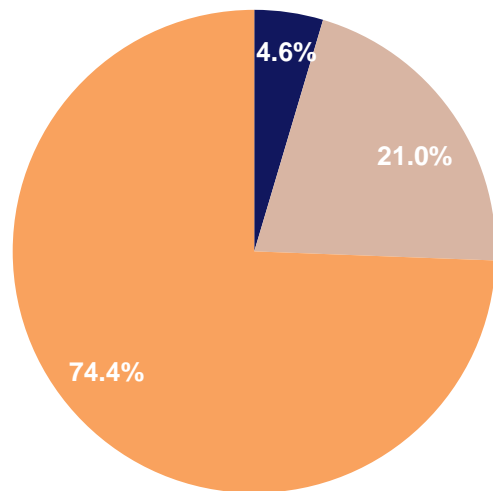
- HIV+ *undiagnosed* reporting unprotected anal intercourse in the last year
- or
- HIV+ diagnosed reporting UAI and *not exclusively serosorting*

Acquirers

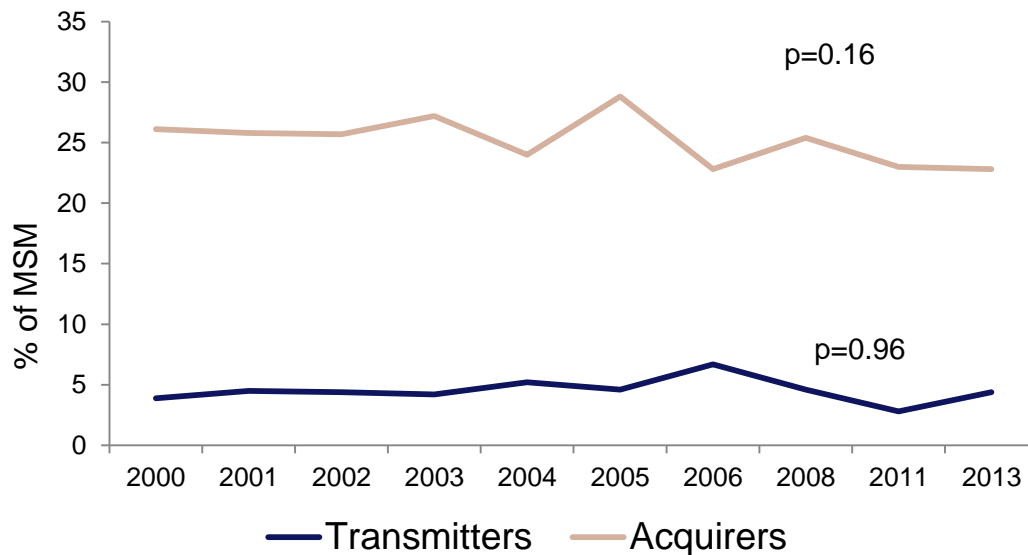
- HIV- reporting unprotected anal intercourse *1+ casual partner* in the last year
- or
- HIV- reporting UAI and *not exclusively serosorting* with any partner type



Proportion of MSM who are potential 'transmitters' and 'acquirers' of HIV

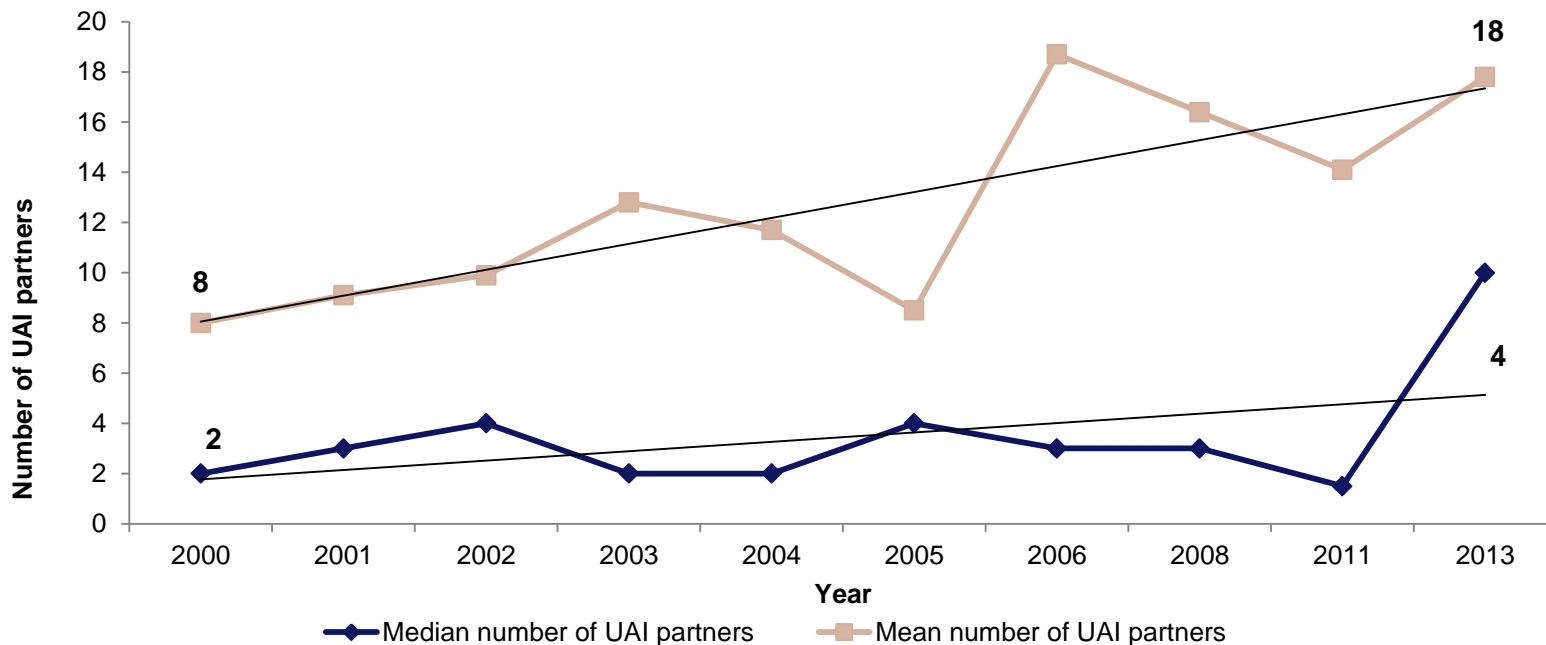


■ Transmitters ■ Acquirers ■ All other MSM





Trends in UAI partner numbers in the last year of potential 'transmitters'





Summary

- UAI increasing but the type of UAI partners is changing with more serosorting
- Up to 1 in 20 MSM could be at risk of transmitting HIV
- Subgroup of MSM at risk of transmitting HIV are reporting increasing partner numbers
- 1 in 5 HIV negative MSM at risk of acquiring HIV infection.



Limitations

MSM at risk of transmitting HIV

- No viral load or ARV adherence data to determine what fraction of diagnosed MSM are virally suppressed
- Potential overestimating % at risk of transmitting



Limitations

Survey design

- Convenience samples, lack of generalisability
- Validity of self reported data, recall bias
- Disclosure
- Changing profile of people attending gay social venues



Conclusions

- Changes in sexual risk behaviour, increase in UAI and serosorting
- Importance of core groups in HIV infection among MSM in the UK
- **Increasing partner numbers of core groups may explain the sustained HIV incidence despite increases in testing and ARV coverage.**



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