Men who have sex with men (MSM) report high use of club drugs which is associated with high risk sexual behaviour

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“There has been a change in gay culture, social and sexual networks”
(The Guardian, 9 Apr 2014)
Background

- **US data:** LGBT are more vulnerable to substance misuse than heterosexuals and it is associated with high risk sexual behaviour (Warner *et al*, 2004; Clatts *et al*, 2005)

- **UK data:** Club drugs are frequently used by men who have sex with men (MSM) ...more common in HIV-positive MSM (Measham *et al*, 2011; Kirby, 2013)

- **ASTRA:** Cross-sectional study of 2,248 HIV-positive MSM - polydrug use associated with condomless sex and poor adherence to ARVs (Daskalopoulou *et al*, 2014)

- Brighton & Hove has a large LGBT population, estimated at 40,000 people (21% of the adult population) (Brighton& Hove City Council, 2009)
Aims

1. To quantify club drug use in MSM locally
2. To examine differences by HIV status
3. To identify any association between club drug use and sexual behaviour
METHODS

• Patient survey
• January – March 2014

• 4 venues:
  2 secondary care STI clinics
  1 NGO – Terrence Higgins Trust
  1 primary care walk-in clinic

• Inclusion criteria: male, ≥18 years of age, identified as gay/bisexual
• Club drugs considered in this study: cocaine, ecstasy, MDMA, ketamine, GBL/GHB, crystal meth

• IBM SPSS Statistics 21 used for data analysis
RESULTS

- N=246
- Median age 34

Age distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>HIV positive</th>
<th>HIV negative</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Never tested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
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Surveys completed

- Secondary care: 62.6%
- NGO: 24.8%
- Primary care: 12.6%

HIV status

- HIV positive: 12.7%
- HIV negative: 61.6%
- Unsure: 20%
- Never tested: 5.7%
Club drug use in MSM

- **Cocaine**: 52.4% ever used, 21.5% recent use
- **MDMA**: 49.4% ever used, 17.1% recent use
- **Ecstasy**: 47.2% ever used, 8.3% recent use
- **Mephedrone**: 37.7% ever used, 19.3% recent use
- **Viagra**: 36.4% ever used, 19.9% recent use
- **Ketamine**: 35.5% ever used, 10.5% recent use
- **GBL/GHB**: 24.2% ever used, 11% recent use
- **Legal highs**: 19.5% ever used, 8.8% recent use
- **Crystal meth**: 10.4% ever used, 2.8% recent use

**Recent use** = used club drugs in the past month
IVDU (‘slamming’) in MSM using club drugs by HIV status

- HIV-negative/unknown: 2.5%
- HIV-positive: 22.2% (p<0.05)
UAI (in last 6 months) in MSM using club drugs by HIV status

HIV-negative/unknown: 57.1%

HIV-positive: 87.1* (p<0.05)
- 72.9% are less likely to use condoms when on drugs
- 75% are more likely to do things sexually that they would not do sober
- 35.5% believe that their drug use has negative effect on their life
Club drug use in HIV-positive MSM
ASTRA study vs Brighton

ASTRA
Brighton

IVDU
Mephedrone
GBL/GBH
MDMA
Ketamine
Cocaine
PDE5i

Proportion

NB: ASTRA – used in the previous 3 months; Brighton – used in the previous 1 month

Take home messages

- Club drug use among MSM is worryingly high locally and these MSM are more likely to engage in unprotected anal intercourse.

- The highest prevalence of club drug use, intra-venous drug use and unprotected anal intercourse is among HIV-positive MSM.

- Sexual health services and drug services should work in partnership.
Acknowledgments

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• Claude Nicol Centre, RSCH
• Lawson Unit, RSCH
• Terrence Higgins Trust, Brighton
• Brighton Station Health Centre