

CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background) Sex Industry Workers in SWSLHD (South Western Sydney Local Health District): A Health Promotion Perspective

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BACKGROUND

Evidence shows CALD sex workers are a vulnerable and marginalised population, and within this population group they can be isolated and have poor knowledge of STIs, protective factors and health services.

This is an issue in SWSLHD due to the high levels of stigmatisation, language barriers, cultural taboos and concern regarding immigration status and accessing government services.

Sex workers have been identified as a key priority population group in the NSW HIV and STI frameworks 2016 – 2020.

South west Sydney communities are culturally and linguistically diverse, with more than 40 per cent of people born overseas.

In the sex industry in SWSLHD, Chinese-speaking workers make up the majority of overseas born workers. This has changed from the 2008 – 2012 period when Thai-speaking workers were also predominant.



AIM

- Maintain the low rates of STIs among CALD sex workers in south west Sydney.
- Enhance the knowledge of STIs, HIV and protective factors, among CALD sex workers in south west Sydney.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage access to sexual health services e.g. screening, treatment, and information for CALD sex workers in south west Sydney.
- To identify the sexual behaviour and safe sex practices amongst this group
- Work in partnership with key organisations in Sydney and south west Sydney to overcome CALD specific barriers.



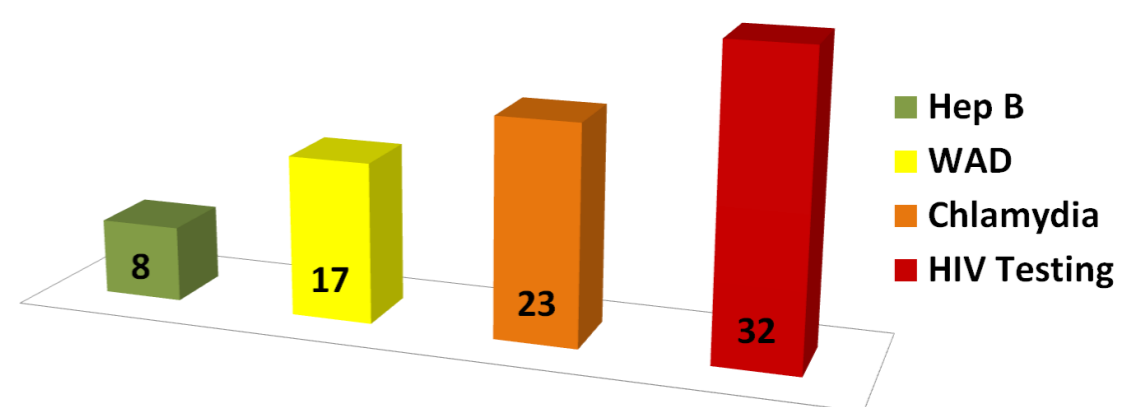
STRATEGIES

- Conduct workshops quarterly around key awareness weeks such as WAD, Youth/Sexual Health Week, HIV Testing Week and World Hepatitis Day
- To conduct education sessions with Chinese CALD sex workers, in language
- To distribute multi-language resources to CALD sex workers
- Distribute safe sex supplies
- Create a supportive environment for social connection between workers through informal settings and provision of morning tea and engagement resources.
- Work in partnership with SWOP, Liverpool Sexual Health Clinic, Women's Health Centre and parlours based in SWSLHD

RESULTS

- The results have shown CALD sex workers respond positively to the workshop program, which has also improved their knowledge of STIs, access to sexual health services and screening, and has improved their social connectedness.
- 4 workshops were held over a 12 month period (2015-2016) i.e. WAD, Youth/Sexual Health Week (Chlamydia), HIV Testing Week and World Hepatitis Day (Hep B and C)
- 80 CALD sex workers have attended the workshops.

Attendees per workshop



DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS

Holding the workshops quarterly throughout the year to coincide with key awareness weeks is beneficial for both services and clients. The informal sessions deliver an education component, and just as importantly involve a social support element to improve social connection and address social isolation.

Given the interest and attendance by the CALD sex workers at the workshop, the program will continue to be implemented for CALD sex workers in south west Sydney.



FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Consider other focus areas to include immigration support, legal issues and family support. An extended workshop program to be piloted in 2017.

Acknowledgements:

- SWSLHD Liverpool Sexual Health Clinic
- Sex Worker Outreach Project

KEY PARTNERSHIPS/STAKEHOLDERS

- HIV/AIDS & Related Programs Health Promotion Team
- Sex Worker Outreach Project (SWOP)
- SWSLHD Sexual Health Services
- Parlours within SWSLHD