

Sexual Health Clinic follow up of Emergency Department results - it works!!

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Background

The NSW Ministry of Health endorses the notification of positive sexually transmissible infection (STI) results to sexual health clinics to enable follow up of patients tested in local Emergency Departments (ED).

In March 2015, the Chief Health Officer for NSW issued correspondence providing clarification to Northern Sydney Local Health District on notification and the management of patient information when testing for HIV and STIs

We describe the implementation process and initial evaluation of a novel STI results pathway that was subsequently developed between Clinic 16 Northern Sydney Sexual Health and Royal North Shore Hospital Emergency Department.

Methods

An automatic notification system was developed by the Department of Microbiology Pathology North, to upload positive STI results from ED onto an electronic '**positive results list**' accessible to Clinic 16 staff.

Tests included were *Chlamydia trachomatis* PCR, *Neisseria gonorrhoea* culture and PCR, syphilis serology and *Treponema pallidum* PCR, herpes simplex virus (HSV) PCR, lymphogranuloma venereum PCR, *Mycoplasma genitalium* PCR, *Trichomonas vaginalis* PCR

HIV tests were not included as a separate notification system for these results was already in place.

Local policy and procedure guidelines were implemented:

- **Emergency Department** An STI testing protocol was developed and uploaded to the departmental intranet. ED staff were educated to inform patients they would be contacted by Clinic 16 in the case of a positive STI result.
- **Clinic 16 Northern Sydney Sexual Health.** Clinic 16 staff accessed the positive results list daily. The hospital electronic medical record (eMR) interfaces directly with the community health outpatient care (CHOC) eMR used by Clinic 16. In the case of a positive result staff could easily review the medical record and contact the patient to arrange follow up directly.

A separate auto-populating spreadsheet was developed by Pathology North to capture all STI tests performed in the ED, to enable accurate auditing.

We conducted an audit to determine whether all positive STI results were identified and followed up appropriately.

Results

STI results from tests performed in ED 1st November 2015 to 30th April 2016 were analysed:

- 8/242 (3.3%) tested positive for chlamydia
- 3/213 (1.4%) tested positive for gonorrhoea

All 11 positive results, from 10 patients, were notified to Clinic 16 via the positive results list

- six (60%) patients were contacted by Clinic 16, of these five (50%) required treatment and/or health promotion interventions.
- three (30%) had received treatment elsewhere and required no additional input
- one (10%) was a false positive result
- Patients were contacted a median of 6 days after testing
- Median age was 29
- nine (90%) were male

In addition, 23/167 (13.8%) HSV tests were positive, of these 15 were anogenital and 6 required Clinic 16 input.



Conclusions

A novel pathway enabling timely follow up by a specialist clinic of ED positive STI results has been established involving an electronic notification system and CHOC eMR

All positive STI cases received appropriate follow up