Increased knowledge and use of doxycycline postexposure prophylaxis (doxyPEP) in King County, Washington

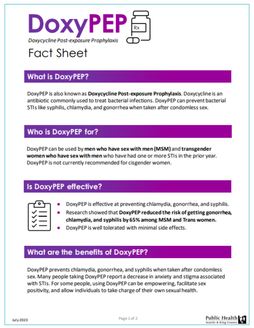
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Background

- Following evidence of doxycycline postexposure prophylaxis (doxyPEP) efficacy to prevent chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis among cisgender men and transgender women who have sex with men, Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC) released initial provider guidance in June 2023.
- Data on community knowledge and use of doxyPEP are limited.
- We utilized data from PHSKC's annual Pride Survey to assess changes in knowledge and self-reported doxyPEP use among sexually active respondents from King County in the year after release of local guidelines.



Knowledge and use of doxyPEP increased among GBMSM, with the highest knowledge and use among GBMSM using PrEP.

In our small sample of transgender women, knowledge of doxyPEP was lower, representing an important opportunity for both community and provider education to improve knowledge of and access to doxyPEP.

Methods

- The Pride Survey is an annual, cross-sectional, online, anonymous, sexual health survey open to Washington residents who identify as LGTBQ+. It is advertised at Pride events and through social media, local news sources, and posters at LGBTQ+ venues throughout June-August.



- Among the subset of respondents from King County, we used descriptive statistics to compare doxyPEP knowledge, interest, and use in 2023 versus 2024 among transgender women and cisgender gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) who reported sex with a male-identifying partner in the past year (priority populations for PHSKC's initial guidelines).
- Given the historic and ongoing impacts of structural racism on healthcare access and engagement, we also assessed doxyPEP knowledge and use by self-reported race and ethnicity among 2024 survey respondents.

Results

- A total of 232 respondents in 2023 and 287 in 2024 were included in this analysis.
- Respondent characteristics were similar between years; when aggregated across years: 92% were HIV-negative, 43% were currently using PrEP and 13% reported an STI in the past year.

	2023 N=232	2024 N=287
Age in years (median (IQR))	35 (29, 43)	34 (30, 42)
Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM)[1]	222 (94%)	265 (92%)
Transgender women[1]	10 (6%)	22 (8%)
Race and ethnicity[2]		
American Indian/Alaska Native	13 (6%)	12 (4%)
Asian	34 (15%)	42 (15%)
Black	10 (4%)	20 (7%)
Latinx (all races)	33 (14%)	57 (20%)
Middle Eastern or North African	--	4 (1%)
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	9 (4%)	7 (2%)
White	171 (74%)	199 (69%)
Living with HIV	15 (6%)	27 (9%)
Currently using PrEP[3]	104 (48%)	117 (45%)
STI in the past year	37 (16%)	31 (11%)

[1]All respondents reported sexual activity with a male-identified partner in the past 12 months.

[2]Racial categories are not mutually exclusive, thus percentages may sum to >100%.

[3]Among people who were not living with HIV. Three and seven trans women reported PrEP use in 2023 and 2024, respectively.

- DoxyPEP knowledge and use increased, especially among GBMSM using PrEP; knowledge of doxyPEP was lower among trans women.
- Among those who had not used doxyPEP in the 2024 survey, interest in use was high among GBMSM (56%), GBMSM using PrEP (73%) and trans women (70%).
- DoxyPEP knowledge, use and interest was qualitatively similar by self-reported race and ethnicity.

Figure 1. Awareness and use of doxyPEP among GBMSM, GBMSM using PrEP and transgender women by year

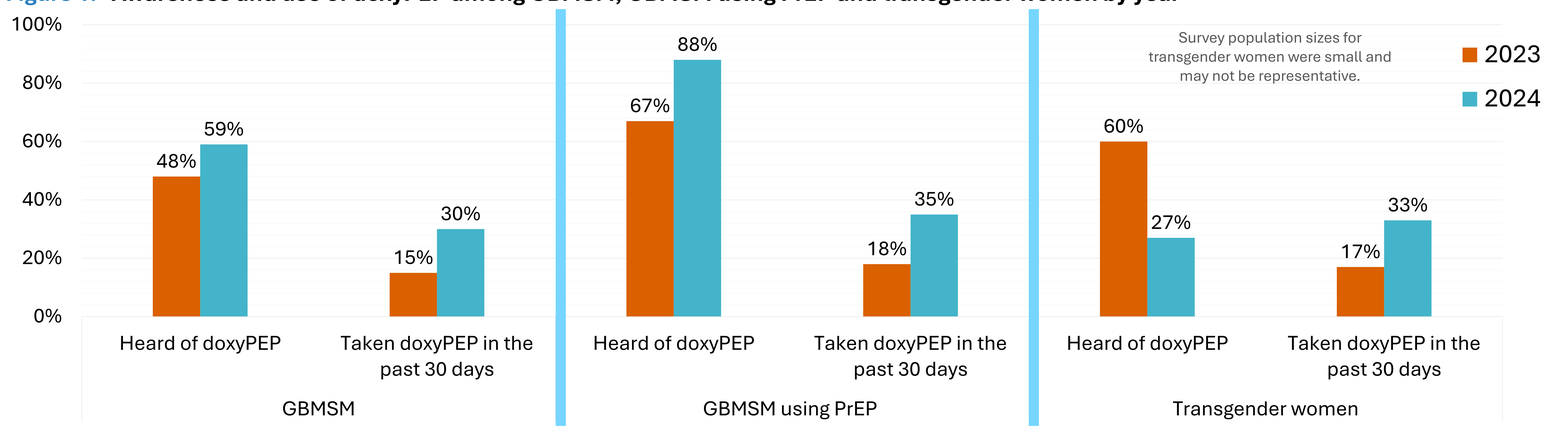
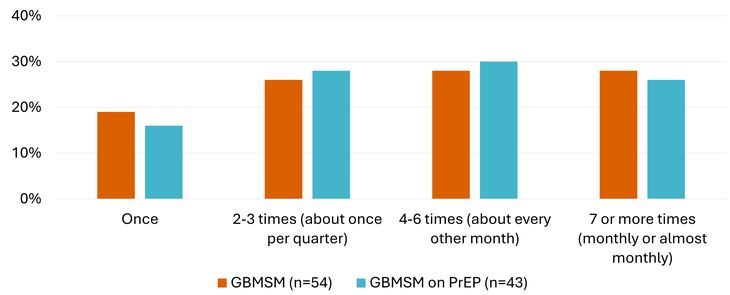


Figure 2. Frequency of doxyPEP use over the past year among GBMSM who reported any use in the past 12 months, 2024



Discussion

- Among King County Pride Survey respondents from 2023 to 2024, knowledge and use of doxyPEP use increased among GBMSM, with the highest knowledge and use among GBSMS using PrEP.
- Knowledge of doxyPEP was lower among 2024 respondents who identified as transgender women, representing an important opportunity for both community and provider education to improve knowledge of and access to doxyPEP in this priority population.

PHSKC DoxyPEP Guideline: https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dph/health-safety/disease-illness/hiv-sti-hcv/medical-providers
Pride Survey: https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dph/health-safety/disease-illness/pride-survey