

Acknowledgements

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JOURNAL REVIEW

Trends in sexually transmitted infections (other than HIV) in older persons: analysis of data from an enhanced surveillance system. Bodley-Tickell AT, Olowokure B, Bhaduri S, White DJ, Ward D, Ross JD, *et al.* *Sex Transm Infect* 2008; **84**: 312–317

There are few data concerning sexually transmitted infections (STIs) that are specific to those aged 45 years and over and this age group is often excluded from studies as researchers and policymakers focus on young people. This Health Protection Agency study in the West

Midlands compared STI attendances in different age groups and found that rates for five STIs (i.e. syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, herpes and genital warts) in those aged over 45 years were significantly higher in 2003 compared to 1996, and the cumulative rate of infection in this group more than doubled from 16.7 per 100 000 in 1996 to 36.3 per 100 000 in 2003. Also, the increase in rates was greater in those aged 45 years and over than in people aged less than 45 years. The authors suggest that these trends are likely to continue, and may increase over time as successive cohorts with

more liberal sexual attitudes and behaviours age and as older people are increasingly likely to be single due to divorce or separation. The authors suggest that education programmes around STIs should cater for all age groups, not just the young.

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Women's Health Concern Appeal

Women's Health Concern is launching an appeal to raise funds for its free and confidential telephone health advice and personal e-mail response services, via specialist nurses. This helpline is for women who do not seek help from their general practitioner because of embarrassment or other reasons. These health problems can impact on their partner, family and ability to go to work. The charity offers help and advice to women on a wide variety of gynaecological, sexual health and reproductive issues, promoting knowledge and awareness of specific diseases and medical conditions and has a range of fact sheets to download from their website.

Source: www.womens-health-concern.org

Cervical Cancer Prevention Week 18–24 January 2009

The European Cervical Cancer Association (ECCA) in partnership with the European Cancer Organisation, the Association of European Cancer Leagues and the International Union against Cancer are collecting signatures for the STOP Cervical Cancer Petition (www.CervicalCancerPetition.eu). This calls on the European Commission and national governments to support the implementation of organised cervical cancer screening programmes across Europe. The objective of the petition is to obtain 1 million signatures and then use it to draw attention in the European Parliament to the issue of cervical cancer

prevention. Although the UK screening programme has been very successful, the UK is among a small minority of countries that benefit from organised screening programmes. Every year in Europe 50 000 women develop and 25 000 women die from cervical cancer. Effective prevention programmes could prevent the vast majority of these cases; sign the petition and help to bring this fact to the attention of politicians across Europe.

Source: www.CervicalCancerPetition.eu

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