

Relationship between high-risk behaviour and pre-exposure prophylaxis awareness among young adults in Alor Setar, Kedah

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This study examines the relationship between high-risk behaviours and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) awareness among young adults in Alor Setar, Kedah. PrEP is a preventive measure against HIV infection, recommended for individuals at high risk of infection. Despite global efforts to promote PrEP, its awareness and adoption remain low in many regions, including Malaysia. **Material and Methods:** This cross-sectional study involved 141 participants aged 20-29, using a structured questionnaire to assess sociodemographic factors, risk behaviours, and awareness levels regarding PrEP. Pearson correlation and One Way ANOVA test were used to study the relationship between high-risk behaviours and awareness on PrEP. The findings revealed that 54.6% of participants engaged in high-risk behaviours, with a significant portion demonstrating good awareness of PrEP (58.9%). A statistically significant and moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$) was found between high-risk behaviour and PrEP awareness, indicating that individuals engaging in higher-risk behaviours are prone to have a better understanding of PrEP. However, the study also identified gaps in awareness among those at lower risk, suggesting the need for more inclusive public health strategies. Additionally, there were no significant differences in PrEP awareness across different relationship statuses or gender identities. **Conclusion:** This research underscores the importance of broadening awareness campaigns to include both high and low-risk populations, thereby ensuring a more comprehensive approach to HIV prevention. The results highlight the need for tailored interventions that address the specific needs of various risk behaviour groups, ultimately contributing to better health outcomes within the community.