

RESEARCH INTO THE OPTIMAL SETTING FOR CHLAMYDIA SCREENING IN IRELAND

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Background and Research Aims

The aim of this study is to:

- Build a focused evidence base of public and professional perspectives of Chlamydia testing
- Design appropriate service models based on identified enablers and barriers to service uptake in Ireland
- Pilot these models in a number of varied non-STI specialist such as general practices (rural and urban), Student Health and family planning clinic settings.
- Assess the feasibility and response uptake of the screening and community based partner notification programmes in these settings.

Methods

The project had two phases:

Phase 1 composed of a series of interlinked baseline research studies with potential users and service providers of the opportunistic screening. Findings of Phase 1 studies were used to inform the design of opportunistic screening models in primary care settings.

Phase 2 was the pilot screening programme conducted in both healthcare and non-healthcare settings in Galway city and county. The non-health care settings included 'pee-in-a-pot' days in higher education institutions.

An economic analysis of the Chlamydia screening was also being conducted using a stochastic, individual based, dynamic sexual network model developed to simulate sexual behaviour and Chlamydia transmission in Ireland. The impact of the opportunistic screening strategy compared to no screening was modelled in terms of the effect on annual Chlamydia prevalence. A health economic model was constructed to estimate the costs of acute infection, the number of complications and their associated costs, and the costs of the alternative screening strategies under consideration. The results from the transmission dynamic model and the health economic model were combined to conduct a cost effectiveness analysis of the opportunistic screening strategy.

Progress to Date

The screening pilot and all data collection has been completed. The draft final report has been submitted to the funders.

Dissemination

Several papers have been accepted for publication and others are being written.