Observations from the opening Plenary

Changing ‘safe sex’ in gay men

It is now clear that CLAI when the HIV positive partner has UVL is a form of safe sex.

While we cannot say that a transmission with UVL is absolutely impossible, the risk is negligible to non-existant.

There are still questions to be answered like ‘How soon is it safe to have CLAI after ART initiation?’

ASHM 2017

For gay men in serodiscordant relationships:

- Use condoms or PrEP in the first six months after ART initiation and until UVL has been readily achieved.
- Monitor STIs if non-monogamous.
- Use PrEP if the HIV-Neg partner has CLAI with outside partners.

The mixture of effects of UVL, PrEP, condom use, and other risk reduction are difficult to tease out and need further dialogue.

Gay Men’s understandings of UVL as safe sex

Relying on UVL among serodiscordant couples is becoming normalised – this should be supported by a negotiated safety-like, step by step process for these couples.

Relying on UVL appears to be increasing in casual sex contexts.

It is not clear yet if the upward trend among HIV-negative men is being driven by UVL alone, or by men on PrEP combining PrEP with UVL for extra safety.

Gay Men’s understandings of UVL as safe sex

The U = U message may have some utility in bridging the serodivide and reducing HIV stigma. PrEP may have a stronger effect for HIV-negative men. There is still a long way to go.

What do we in the HIV sector think about “Prevention by Proxy”, and how should we respond? We need to ensure that context is not forgotten in the biomedical prevention era.

Who is left behind?

When attempting to hit our 90–90–90 target what does that mean for those in the other populations who chose not to engage and find themselves isolated. CALD communities, Aboriginal people and heterosexual men all struggle for a variety of reasons to connect. Now is the time to think creatively about engagement with these populations to ensure that 90–90–90 is not just achieved gay men with HIV, but for all people with HIV in Australia.
Thank you!