

Disclosure rates of potential HIV transmission risks to physicians and dentists by U.S. Black gay and bisexual men

*Cochran, Susan D. * Mays, V.M. ***

**California State University, Northridge, CA, USA*

***University of California, Los Angeles, CA, USA*

Objective: U.S. research on sexual orientation disclosure to health care providers suggests that many homosexually sexually active White males seek and receive medical care without revealing same-sex sexual behavior to their provider. Findings from a study of Black lesbians suggest that Blacks may also be reluctant to provide such information. However, knowledge of a high risk individual's HIV status may be relevant to both physicians and dentists in order to diagnose health complaints.

Methods: Questionnaires were completed by 844 homosexually active Black men (84% self-identified as gay, 15% bisexual) recruited nationally. Included were questions about disclosure of sexual orientation, recent health care utilization, questions about HIV infection and physician diagnosis of HIV disease.

Results: Approximately 74% reported talking to their physician about gay-related health problems. Nearly 63% indicated that their physician knew of their same-sex activities. In contrast, only 27% reported that their dentist knew, $X^2(1) = 98.40$, $p < .001$. Men who had never been tested for HIV antibodies or who did not consider themselves to be gay were significantly least likely to inform their physicians or dentists.

Conclusion: Disclosure of HIV-related sexual risk history is more likely if the target is a physician rather than a dentist and the disclosure is a self-identified gay man who has taken an HIV antibody test regardless of the outcome of the test.

Cochran, S.D. & Mays, V.M. (1992). Disclosure rates of potential HIV transmission risks to physicians and dentists by U.S. Black gay and bisexual men. Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference on AIDS (p.159; abstract no. PuC 8039), Amsterdam, Netherlands.