

## Clinical Tips: STIs and Blood-Borne Infections in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Compared with the general population, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have;

- higher rates of STIs, particularly Gonorrhoea (declining), Syphilis (increasing) and Chlamydia (declining slowly).
- higher rates of new HIV diagnosis, largely in people aged 35 years and over. A higher percentage of HIV infections are attributed to injecting drug use and heterosexual contact than for the general population.
- higher rates of newly acquired and newly diagnosed Hepatitis C with rates of diagnosis increasing by around 12% per year. Programs with highly effective, recently PBS listed medications have been initiated at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island health centres, but the uptake status is unknown.
- higher rates of Hepatitis B, but which appear to be decreasing. The vast majority of new diagnoses are in those older than 30 years, most likely representing access to vaccination for the younger population and higher levels of screening in older populations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people may also experience additional [barriers to condom use](#).

More information can be found in [Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice](#).

### References

The Kirby Institute. Bloodborne viral and sexually transmitted infections in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Annual Surveillance Report 2016. The Kirby Institute, UNSW Australia, Sydney NSW 2052.

Stephen Bell, Peter Aggleton, James Ward & Lisa Maher (2017): Sexual agency, risk and vulnerability: a scoping review of young Indigenous Australians' sexual health, Journal of Youth Studies