

Lifetime Burden of Incarceration and Violence, Internalized Homophobia, and HIV/STI Risk among Urban Men who Have Sex with Men in the HPTN 061 Study

Abstract

Black men who have sex with men (BMSM) have disproportionate HIV/STI acquisition risk. Incarceration may increase exposure to violence and exacerbate psychosocial vulnerabilities, including internalized homophobia, which are associated with HIV/STI acquisition risk. Using data from HIV Prevention Trials Network 061 (N=1553), we estimated adjusted prevalence ratios (APR) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for associations between number of lifetime incarcerations and HIV/STI risk outcomes. We measured associations between incarceration and HIV/STI risk outcomes with hypothesized mediators of violence and internalized homophobia. Incarceration burden was associated with selling sex (1-2 incarcerations: APR: 1.52, 95% CI: 1.14–2.03; 3-9: APR: 1.77, 95% CI: 1.35–2.33; ≥ 10 : APR: 1.85, 95% CI: 1.37-2.51) and buying sex (≥ 10 incarcerations APR: 1.80, 95% CI: 1.18 – 2.75). Compared to never incarcerated, one to two incarcerations appeared to be associated with chlamydia (APR: 1.47, 95% CI: 0.98 – 2.20) and 3-9 incarcerations appeared to be associated with syphilis (APR: 1.46, 95% CI: 0.92 – 2.30). Incarceration was independently associated with violence, which in turn was a correlate of transactional sex. Longitudinal research is warranted to clarify the role of incarceration in violence and HIV/STI risk in this population.