

STI Clinics as an Important Entry Point for HIV Prevention in Egypt: A Model for the Middle Eastern Region

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BACKGROUND

- In 2000, the Egyptian Ministry of Health (MOH) and FHI conducted a study to evaluate selected curable STIs among various Egyptian population groups in Greater Cairo. The STI prevalences were found to be high.

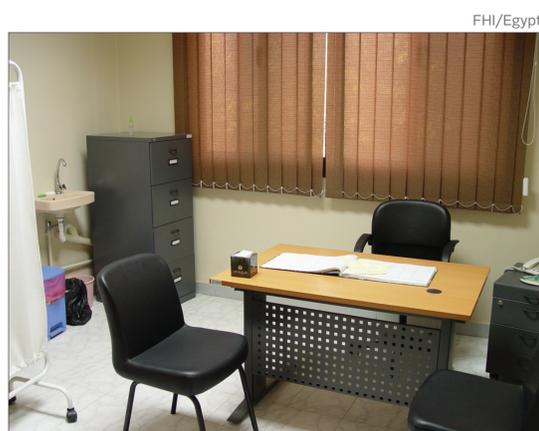
Table 1: Prevalence of selected curable STIs among various population groups in Greater Cairo, 2000

	Female Sex Workers (n=52)	Men Who Have Sex with Men (n=80)	Drug Users (n=150)	Female Attending Antenatal Care Clinics (ANC) (n=604)	Female Attending Family Planning Clinics (FP) (n=108)
Syphilis (TPHA)	5.8%	7.5%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Gonorrhea	7.7%	8.8%	2.7%	2.0%	2.8%
Chlamydia	7.7%	8.8%	2.7%	1.3%	2.8%
Trichomoniasis	19.2%	1.3%	0.7%	0.7%	2.8%
At least one of the STIs	36.5%	23.8%	5.3%	4.0%	8.3%

- Data from the Cairo VCT center indicate that 5% of the detected HIV cases were referred from the nearby STI clinic (El Haud El Marsoud Hospital)
- However, a lack of sexual health-seeking behavior requires immediate action to prevent the spread of STIs, including HIV

NATIONAL STI SERVICES IN EGYPT

- The Egyptian MOH partnered with FHI and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to provide STI services using the enhanced syndromic approach, adapted to the local context

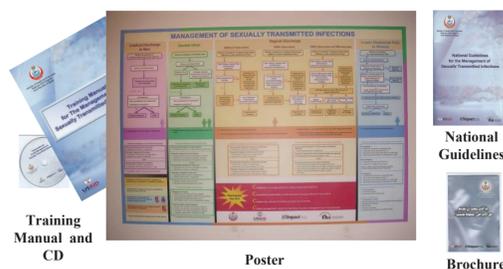


FHI/Egypt

Establishing STI clinics and linking them with the Egypt VCT network

STI PACKAGE IN EGYPT

STI Package in Egypt



Training Manual and CD

Poster

Brochure

Tools adapted to the local context based on WHO recommendations

STIs TRAINING

Development of the STI training package

- STI case management
- HIV background
- Communication skills
- Infection control
- Monitoring and evaluation

Participants

- Physicians, nurses, and laboratory technicians within STI clinics
- Physicians and nurses providing STI services to outreach most-at-risk populations (MARPs) at Comprehensive Care Centers
- Other staff (orientation sessions)



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First group of STI trainers



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Integrated STI clinic within El Haud El Marsoud Hospital

PROMOTING STI SERVICES



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Awareness sessions



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Launch events

CLIENTS VISITING THE STI CLINIC

- From June 2006 to December 2009, a total of 1,746 clients and their sexual partners visited the STI clinic (44.9% males and 55.1% females)
- Clients accompanied with partners were common among females (24.1% females vs. 10.2% males)
- Female clients intended to share STI status with their partners more than males (71.7% females vs. 57.7% of males)

Table 2: How STI clients learned about the services

	MALES n=784	FEMALES n=962
From their relatives and friends	70.8%	34.4%
From another health facility	14.2%	50.4%
From sex partners	2.0%	3.4%

FINDINGS

- Urethral discharge was detected in 52.7% of males and vaginal discharge in 13.7% of females
- Venereal warts was the most common presenting condition, due to the fact that they are not perceived as an STI (76.3% of females vs. 33.2% of males)

STI SERVICES: AN ENTRY POINT TO REACH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

- 1.4% reported drug injection
- 6.5% reported MSM activity
- About one third of the male clients had more than one female sex partner
- 90.3% of males reported never using a condoms with a non-steady partner in the last six months

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve health-seeking behaviors by decreasing stigma
- Integrate STI services within health facilities
- Use peers and friends to promote the services
- Identify innovative approaches to promote condoms use