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SEXUAL HEALTH OUTCOMES AND WELLBEING OF SEX WORKERS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

THE LASH 2.0 STUDY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting, the Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar Nation and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

LASH 2.0 STUDY OVERVIEW

Aim

- To investigate the impact of the law on WA sex workers; their health and safety; and the intersections between WA sex workers, service providers and police.

Objectives:

- Describe the size and types of sex worker services in WA including parlours, escort services, private workers, workers from non-English speaking backgrounds, male and transgender workers.
- Assess the health of sex workers including sexual health, mental health, injuries and violence.
- Assess the access of sex workers working in a range of settings to health promotion and health and safety resources.
- Enumerate and describe police and court charges for sex workers, their managers and their support services
- Describe the interactions and experiences of WA sex workers with service providers and the police.
- Compare the situation in 2016 to what was described in the 2007 LASH Study.

RESEARCH TEAM & FUNDING

- **Associate Professor Linda Selvey:** School of Public Health, Curtin University
- **Dr Roanna Lobo:** School of Public Health, Curtin University
- **Dr Jonathan Hallett:** School of Public Health, Curtin University
- **Ms Kahlia McCausland:** School of Public Health, Curtin University
- **Professor Basil Donovan:** Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales
- **Ms Julie Bates:** Principal of Urban Realists
- **Associate Professor Sam Winter:** School of Public Health, Curtin University

- **Funded by:** Sexual Health Blood-Borne Virus Program, Department of Health WA

WHY IS THE STUDY BEING CONDUCTED?

- Due to the potential occupational risk, sex workers remain a priority population because of the ongoing potential for HIV and STI transmission.
- People who engage in sex work experience significant barriers to health service access, including social stigma and legal discrimination.
- This research will contribute to decisions about the provision of services to sex workers, identify gaps in, and improve service delivery, assist with the continuation of service provision, and inform any future legislation relating to sex work in WA.

ADVISORY GROUP MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- Magenta
- Sexual Health Quarters
- Sexual Health Blood-Borne Virus Program, Department of Health WA
- WA AIDS Council
- Royal Perth Hospital
- Fremantle Sexual Health Clinic
- WA Substance Users Association
- People for Sex Worker Rights In WA

METHODS

1. Environmental scan
 - Perth, Bunbury & Kalgoorlie
 - challenges
2. Sex worker survey
 - peer researchers
 - survey translation
3. In-depth interviews
 - key informants
 - sex workers
4. STI/BBV prevalence study
 - retrospective data
 - prospective data
5. Venue audit
 - OH&S
6. Police charges and court outcomes
 - DotAG

TIMELINE

Done

- ✓ Recruit project coordinator
- ✓ Establish Project Advisory Group

In progress

- ✓ Seek Curtin Ethics clearance – awaiting decision
- ✓ WA Health Ethics application for clinic data
- ✓ Request police records data from Department of Justice

Moving forward

- ✓ Recruit and train peer researchers (Aug)
- ✓ Data collection (Aug - Sept)
- ✓ Data analysis (Sept – Nov)
- ✓ Prepare report for WA Health (Dec – Mar)
- ✓ Deliver final report to WA Health (Apr)
- ✓ Write manuscript for peer-review journal (Mar – Apr)



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ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact A/Prof Linda Selvey

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www.siren.org.au/lash