

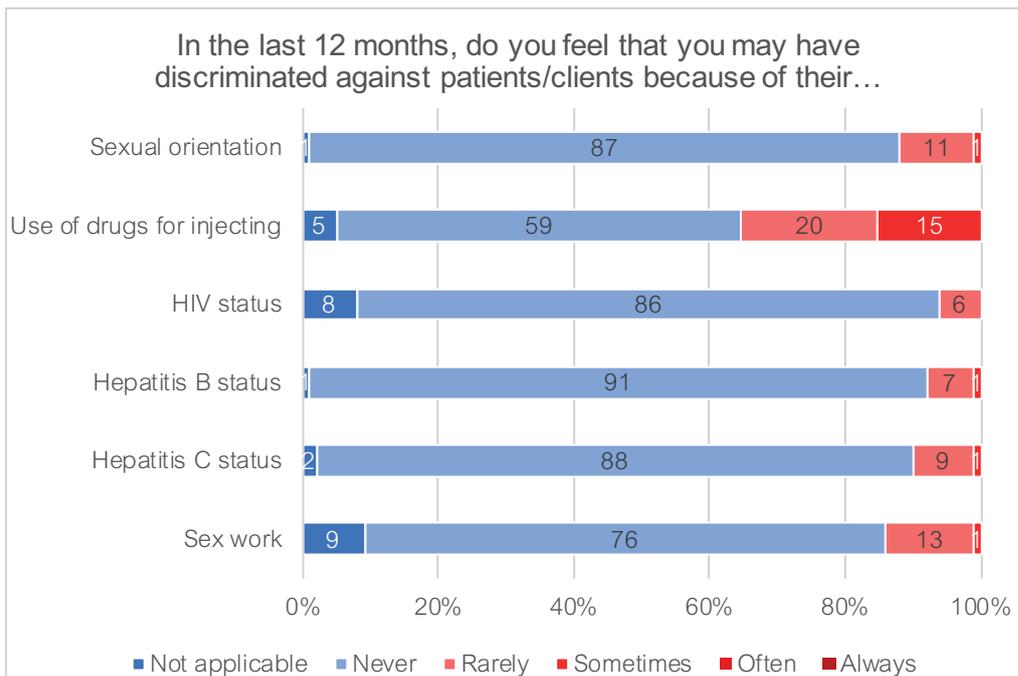


Australia's
Global
University

Stigma Indicators Monitoring Project Health workers



Stigma has a major impact on health outcomes for people living with blood borne viruses and sexually transmitted infections. Australia has five national strategies addressing HIV, viral hepatitis, and sexually transmitted infections, each with a clear goal to eliminate the negative impact of stigma and discrimination on people's health. In 2016, an online survey of health workers was conducted to investigate the extent to which they believed they had stigmatised patients due to certain attributes addressed by the national strategies.



This question was originally worded "In the last 12 months, to what extent have you treated patients/clients differently to other people in relation to their..." but was changed part way through data collection to clarify that it referred to discriminatory behaviour. 255 people completed the first version, and 98 people completed the second version. Responses before and after this change showed similar trends.

353 people

completed the survey

72%

female

74%

straight/heterosexual

41%

worked in a nursing role

30%

worked in a medical role

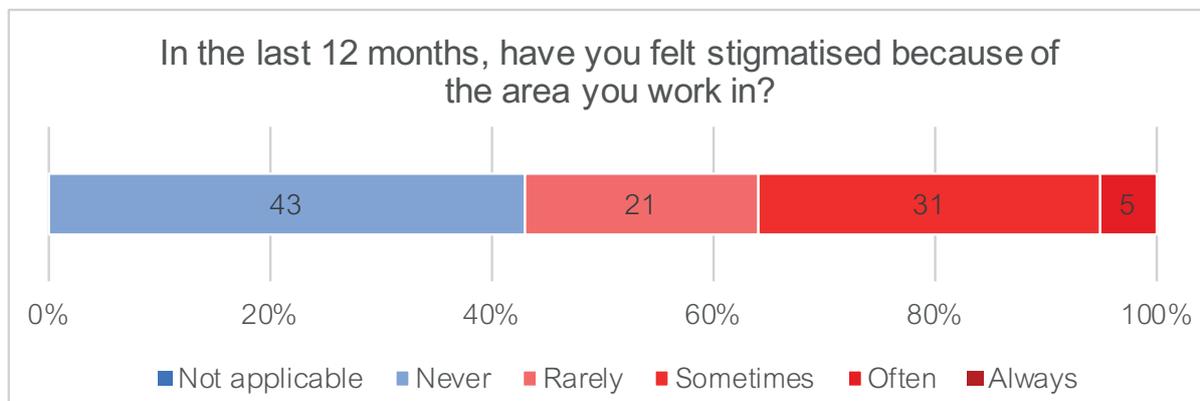
78%

had been working in their field for over 10 years



Centre for Social Research in Health

While participants reported infrequent instances of discrimination against people with any of the attributes listed (generally 6-14%), discrimination against people who inject drugs was more common than any other group (35%). It should also be noted that participants were recruited through the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM), so it is likely that these results are an underrepresentation of stigma expressed by health workers more generally. Health workers were asked the extent to which they had felt stigmatised because of the area in which they were employed. While 43% of participants did not feel this was ever the case, 36% did report 'sometimes' or 'often' feeling stigmatised.



The next phase of this project will expand data collection about expressed stigma by health workers towards these clients. A revised survey is currently being developed and second round data collection will be conducted in 2018. Being able to quantify the expressed stigma towards these groups among health care workers is an important first step towards introducing evidence-based strategies to eliminate its negative effects.

If the results presented here have upset you in any way, we encourage you to seek support from Lifeline (13 11 44).



This project was supported by a grant from the Australian Government Department of Health. We would like to acknowledge the invaluable support of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) in assisting with recruiting survey participants. We would also like to thank everyone who completed the survey for their willingness to participate in this project.

For more information on this project, please see the full report available at: <http://bit.ly/stigma-indicators>