Hook-up Apps Partly Blamed for Rhode Island's Uptick in STIs

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The use of dating and hook-up apps such as Grindr, Scruff and Tinder are partially responsible for a recent surge in new sexually transmitted (STI) infections in Rhode Island, argue state health officials. Between 2013 and 2014, HIV and STI infection rates rose considerably in the state.

The rate of new syphilis diagnoses rose by 79 percent, gonorrhea cases by 30 percent and HIV diagnoses by almost 33 percent. Both syphilis and HIV rates are increasing among men who have sex with men (MSM) at a faster rate than in other risk groups. African Americans, Latinos and young adults are disproportionately affected by all STIs.

"These data send a clear signal that despite the progress we have made in reducing STDs and HIV over the years, there is more work to do," Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH, director designee at the Rhode Island Department of Health, said in a press release. "We are fortunate in Rhode Island to have great partnerships among state agencies, community-based organizations and health care providers to continue to educate, test and treat for sexually transmitted diseases. This trend reminds us that we cannot become complacent."

The rise in STIs follows a national trend, which the Rhode Island health department notes has been attributed in part to increased testing as well as to various high-risk behaviors, including using social media to arrange casual sex, condomless intercourse, having sex with multiple partners, and having sex under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

To read the press release, click here.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/hookup-apps-STIs-27302-4834