Male reproductive health in regional Australia: are the differences putting rural men at risk?
The Men in Australia Telephone Survey (MATeS)

Carol Holden on behalf of Andrology Australia Longitudinal study group
“Few men with urinary or erectile difficulties seek medical help for their problem”
Male reproductive health

- No accurate data in Australia, with estimates based largely on overseas studies
- Significant numbers of men affected
- Significant effect on quality of life and relationships
- Links with age and co-morbid disease (e.g., diabetes)
- With ageing population, more men likely seek help

MATeS (Men in Australia Telephone Survey)

A national survey of the reproductive health and concerns of middle-aged and older Australian men

www.andrologyaustralia.org
Features of MATeS

- Cross-sectional, population based study
- Random selection of households (eligible male, 40+ yrs)
- Whole of nation sample (stratified by age and State/Territories)
- No upper age restriction
- 20-min computer-assisted telephone interview administered by Hunter Valley Research Foundation, NSW
- High response rate (5990 men, 78% response rate)

Secondary analysis of MATeS data

To determine reproductive health differs depending on geographical location
How common are male reproductive health problems in Australia?
MATeS: Prostate disease and cancer

% of all men

Age range (years)

prostate disease
prostate cancer

all ages 40-49 50-59 60-69 70+

14% 3%
16% of all men had moderate to severe LUTS

19% of all men had nocturia

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MATeS: Erectile dysfunction (ED)

21% of all men reported moderate to severe ED. Erectile function was lower in older age groups.
The frequency of ED was higher in men with diabetes, cardiovascular, cerebro-vascular and hypertensive disease.
Male Reproductive Health Disorders

About one in three men are affected by a reproductive health problem, being more common in older men.
MATeS: Prevalence of male reproductive health disorders across regions

Prevalence of ED and PD is similar across regions

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Are men concerned about sexual and reproductive health problems?
57% of all men were concerned about prostate cancer
80% of men are concerned about losing erectile function. Level of concern reduced in older men and men with poorer erectile function.
Do men seek help for reproductive health disorders?
Prostate disease & Erectile dysfunction

- Many men affected
- No regional differences
- High level of concern
- ↑ with age
- ‘Link’ with other disease
Help-seeking behaviours and age

- GP visit last year
- Ever had PSA test
- ED talk (% ED)
- Ever treated ED
- Ever treated PD

Adjusted Odds Ratio

Age group (yr)
40- 50- 60- 70+
40- 50- 60- 70+
40- 50- 60- 70+

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GP Visits in last 12 months

Controlled for Age

Never married

Location

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PSA testing

Talking to a doctor about ED

Controlled for Age

Marital Status

Location
Controlled for Age

Treated for prostate disease

Treated for ED

Location

NESB
Summary

Compared to men in major cities, men living in regional/remote areas:

- Less likely to visit a GP
- Similar rates of PSA testing and treatment for prostate disease
- Less likely to speak to a doctor about erectile problems
- Less likely to be treated for erectile problems
Conclusion

- While prevalence of reproductive health issues is similar across regions, treatment rates differ between health issues and regions.
- Discrepancies may be related to:
  - availability of services and/or
  - education and awareness
- Opportunities to identify early stage chronic disease may be missed.
- Need for community and health professional education.
MATeS highlights the need for larger, longitudinal cohort studies to gain a better understanding of incidence and progression of disease and determine risk factors and help-seeking behaviours that may contribute to the onset of health disorders in older men.
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