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Introduction



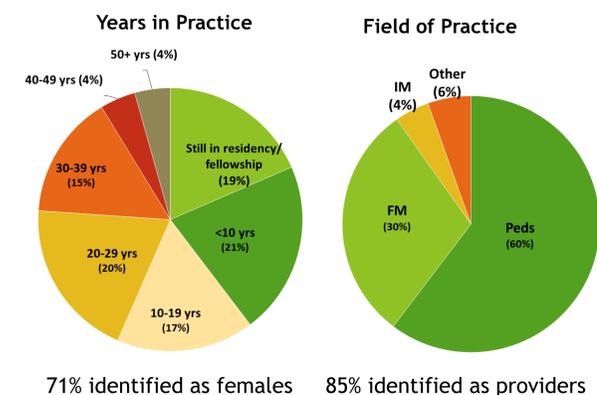
- School-based condom distribution programs have been well studied and shown to increase rates of condom use and decrease rates of gonorrhea and chlamydia [1] with no change in rates of sexual activities [2,3].
- However, very little has been published on the distribution of condoms to adolescents in the primary care setting outside of school-based health centers.
- **Purpose:** To identify the current range in providers' practices and beliefs regarding distribution of condoms to adolescents in primary care offices, as this could identify a potential venue for cultivating connections between providers and adolescents, and for further increasing adolescents' access to and use of condoms.

Methods

- We conducted an online survey of physicians and mid-level providers (MD/DO, NP/APRN, or PA) who provide primary care for patients aged 13-21 years.
- Surveys were distributed by professional organization regional email list-serves in Vermont and Northern New York in spring 2016
 - Vermont AAP and AAFP
 - NY AAP Chapter 1 (Northern New York)
 - Vermont NP Association
 - PA Academy of Vermont
- Surveys contained questions about demographics, current practices of distributing condoms and providing sexual health services to patients age 13-21, and beliefs about potential risks, benefits, and barriers to distributing condoms to adolescents in primary care offices.

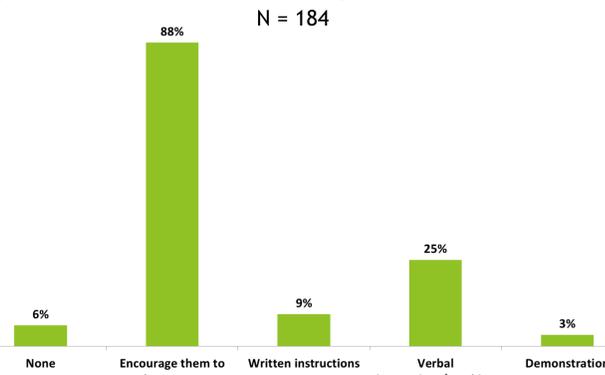
Results

Who responded to the survey? N = 184

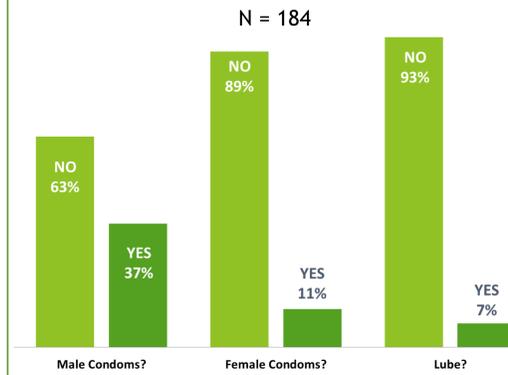


Results (continued)

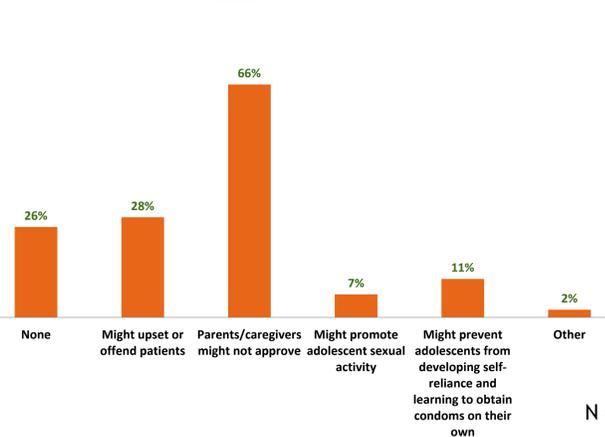
Type of condom instruction/teaching provided to adolescents N = 184



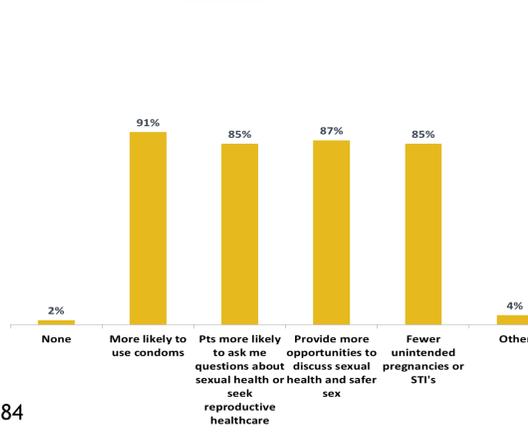
Distribution practices N = 184



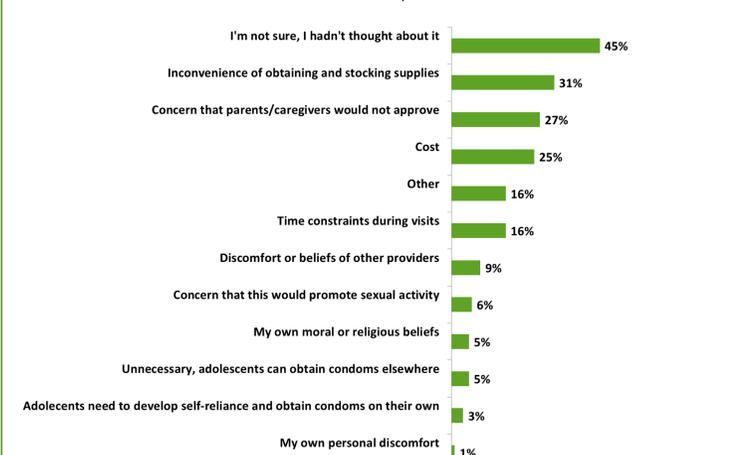
Perceived risks of condom distribution



Perceived benefits of condom distribution

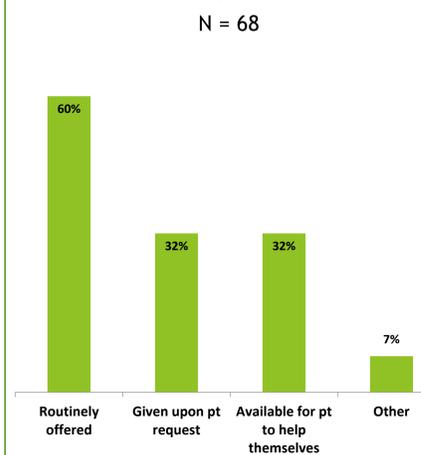


Of those who DON'T distribute condoms, what were the reasons? N = 116



63% of these individuals indicated that they would distribute condoms if they had help with organization and distribution!

Of those who DO distribute condoms, how are they distributed? N = 68



Results (continued)

- While 94% of providers reported providing instruction or teaching about condom use to adolescent patients, few currently distribute male condoms (37%) or female condoms (11%) to adolescents in the office setting.
- Most reported at least one potential risk of distributing condoms to adolescents in the primary care office, including potential for parent/caregiver disapproval (66%), potential of upsetting or offending patients (28%), possibility of preventing adolescents from developing self-reliance (11%), and potential of promoting sexual activity (7%).
- Despite identifying these potential risks, the vast majority of providers were able to identify at least one potential benefit to distributing condoms to adolescents
- Of those who did not already distribute condoms, the most commonly cited reasons for why they did not do so was "I'm not sure, I hadn't thought about it" (45%), followed by inconvenience (31%) and concern for parent/caregiver disapproval (27%), however 64% endorsed that they would consider office-based condom distribution if they had help with organizing and funding this service.

Future Direction

- Gather information on how VT providers and practices can obtain and order condoms and other safe sex material
- Investigate resources for practice in NY
- Reach out to VT and NY practices and share findings

Conclusion

In this study we found that most primary care providers are not currently distributing condoms to adolescents in the office setting, with the most commonly cited reasons being no reason at all and inconvenience. Despite this, most would be willing to consider distributing condoms if they had assistance with financing and organizing this service. These findings highlight an area of need for further resources and support for primary care providers, and identify the primary care office condom distribution as a potential means for cultivating connections between providers and adolescents and further increasing adolescents' access to condoms.

References

- [1] Wretzel, et al. "Condom Availability Program in an Inner City Public School: Effect on Rates of Gonorrhea and Chlamydia Infection." *J Adol Health* 49:324-326 (2011)
- [2] Schuster, et al. "Impact of a High School Condom Availability Program on Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors." *Family Planning Perspectives* 30:2 (1998)
- [3] Blake, et al. "Condom Availability Programs in Massachusetts High Schools: Relationships with Condom Use and Sexual Behavior." *Am J Public Health* 93:6 (2003)

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