

Poor HCV Literacy among Men who have Sex with Men as a Barrier to HCV Elimination

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October 11-13, 2022 | Barceló Sevilla Renacimiento



Background

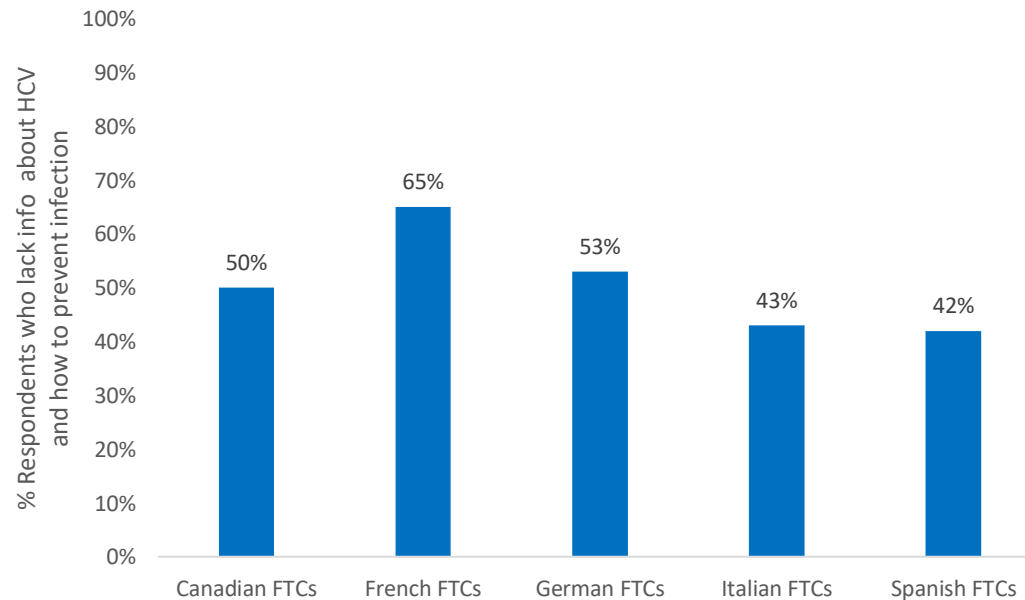
- An estimated 58 million people have chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection, and an estimated 1.5 million new HCV infections occur annually.
- Although direct-acting antiviral regimens lead to sustained viral suppression (cure), the world is off-track to meet the World Health Organization (WHO) goal of eliminating HCV by 2030, particularly among key populations, including men who have sex with men (MSM).

Methodology

- An online survey was fielded in six countries: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United States
- Respondents self-declared as MSM and were aged ≥ 18 years of age.
- The survey's aim was to gauge MSM perceptions about HCV and literacy regarding HCV testing and treatment (N=1,400).
- Analyses were conducted of data from 44 Fast-Track Cities (FTCs) across the six countries (Canada [3], France [3], Germany [4], Italy [2], Spain [4], and the United States [28]). City data were aggregated by country.

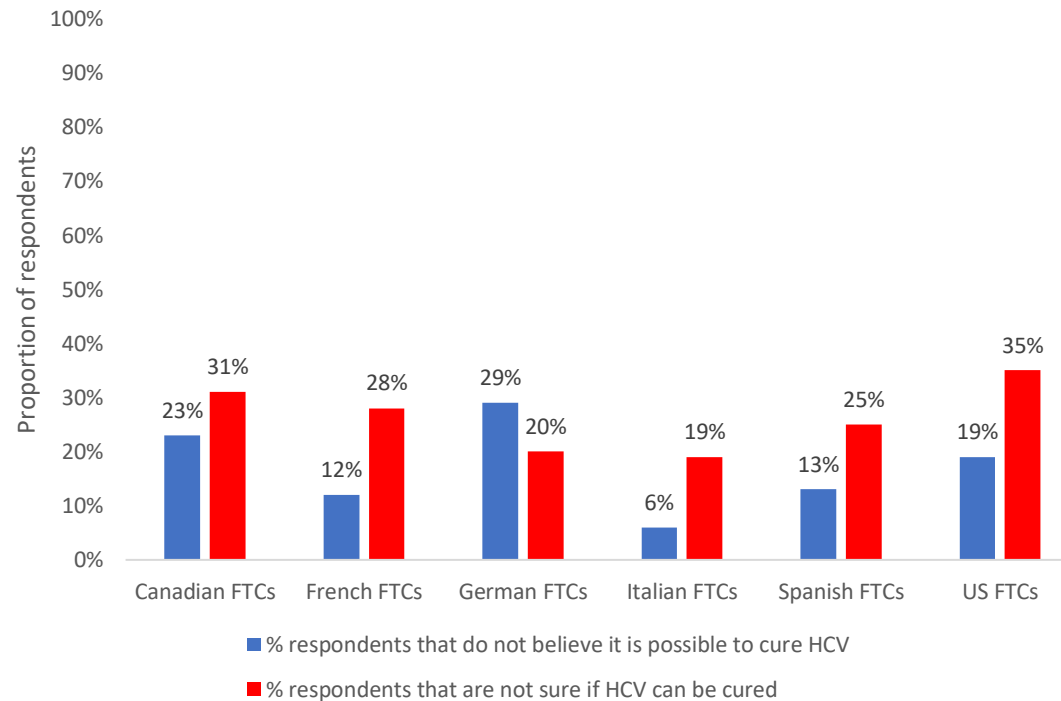
Results

More than half (53%) of global respondents said they lack information about HCV and how to prevent infection.



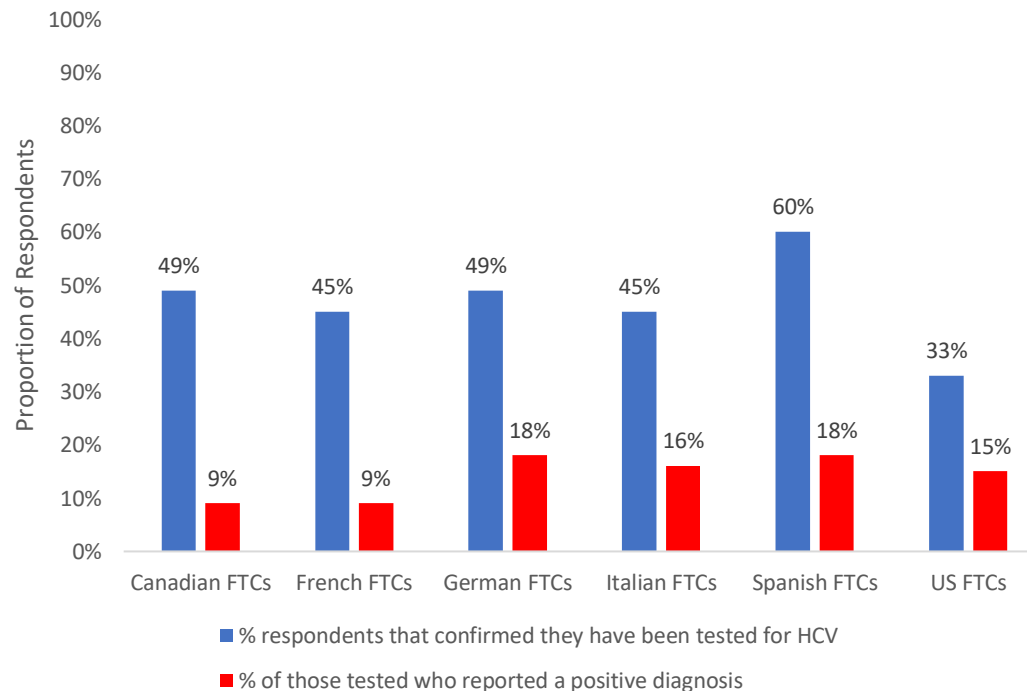
Results

Although successful HCV treatment can lead to cure, 18% and 26% of global respondents do not believe it is possible to cure HCV or not sure whether HCV can be cured.



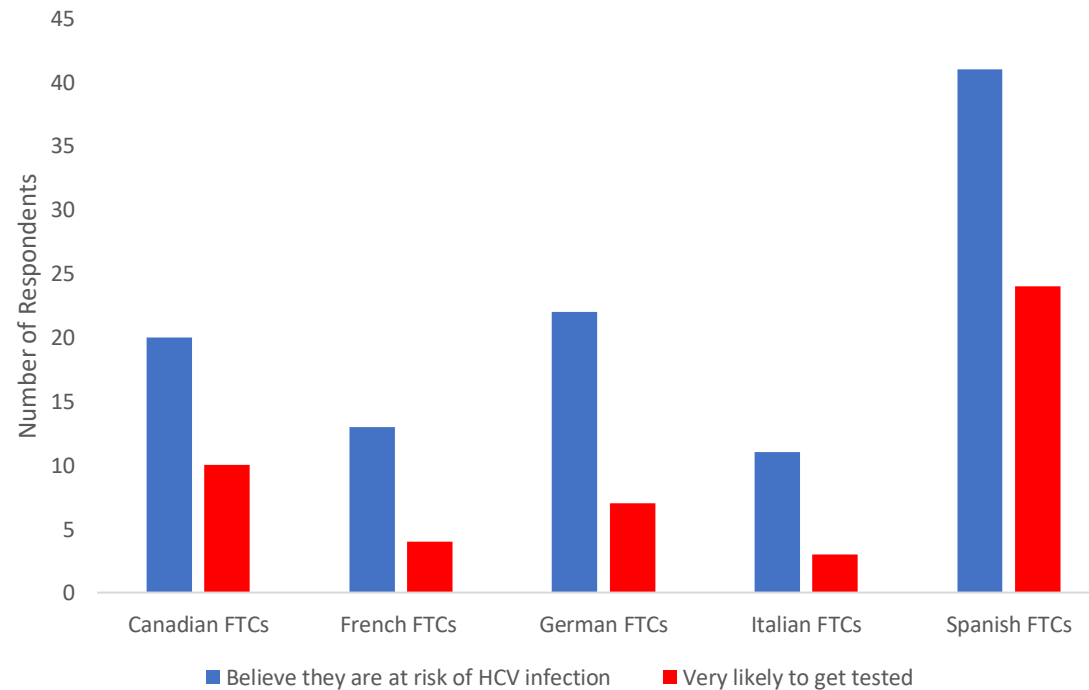
Results

Almost half (49%) of global respondents confirmed they have been tested for HCV, and of those 22% reported a positive diagnosis.



Results

Of the 294 respondents who believe they are at risk of HCV infection, only 50% said they “very likely” to get tested if they thought they had been exposed to HCV.



Conclusions

- Poor HCV literacy among MSM is contributing to suboptimal levels of testing and treatment among this key population of people vulnerable to HCV infection.
- The WHO targets for diagnosing 90% of people living with HCV and treating 80% of those by 2030 cannot be met without closing gaps across the HCV care continuum for MSM.

Acknowledgements

- Jessica Hicks, World Hepatitis Alliance
- Cary James, World Hepatitis Alliance
- José M. Zuniga, IAPAC; FTCI

The survey was a joint collaboration between Gilead Sciences Europe Ltd, World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA), and International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC). The survey was funded by Gilead Science Europe Ltd. The abstract was prepared by IAPAC and WHA, both of which maintained full editorial control.