

Opt-out HIV testing within intensive care in a large urban hospital: an innovative testing initiative

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Background

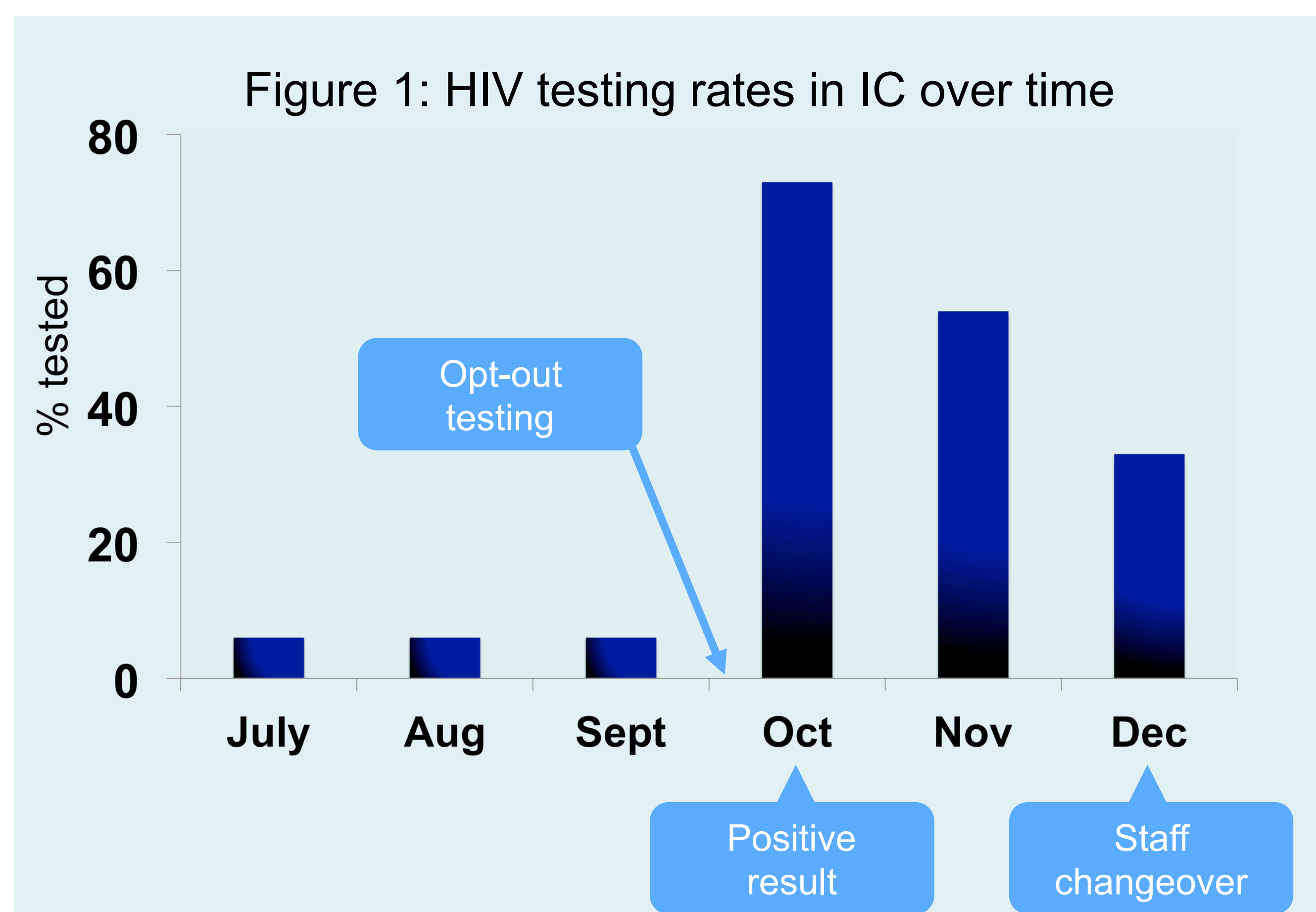
- UK guidelines advise opt-out HIV testing in a range of medical settings in areas of high prevalence¹.
- Routine HIV testing in intensive care (IC) is rare.
- There is evidence of missed opportunities for HIV diagnosis in IC patients², many of whom present with HIV indicator diseases.
- Our local HIV prevalence is high at 5.95 per 1000³ and opt-out HIV testing exists within our hospital's acute medical admissions unit.
- We present preliminary data from the first three months of the programme.

Methods

- The opt-out HIV testing programme in IC was launched in October 2012.
- All patients admitted non-electively to IC or the high dependency unit (HDU) are informed that they will be tested for HIV unless they opt out.
- Those lacking capacity to consent are tested in their best interests.
- The HIV testing team (comprising an HIV consultant, registrar and nurse facilitator) worked with IC to develop the protocol and provided training and support.

Results

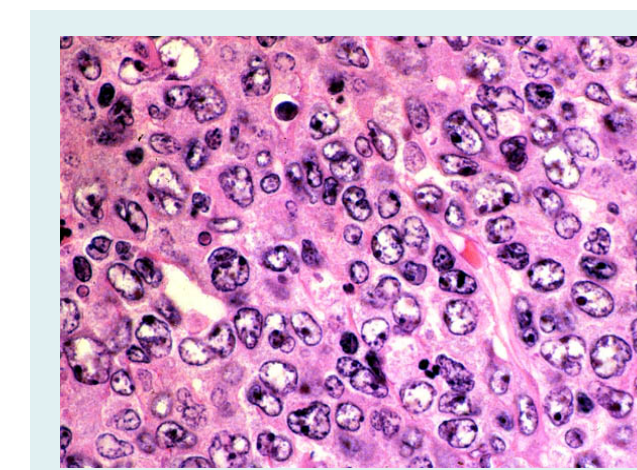
- Of the 461 patients admitted to IC/HDU in October - December 2012, 59.7% (n=275) were tested for HIV.
- In the three months prior to opt-out testing the testing rate was (28/423; 6.9%; $p < 0.001$; figure 1).



One positive HIV test result.



The patient was diagnosed in 2006 but did not return for follow up. He did not disclose his status on admission.



After his HIV test result he was found to have CD4=115 cells/mm³. A biopsy revealed B-cell lymphoma.



He was subsequently discharged home after starting antiretroviral therapy and chemotherapy.

Conclusions



- This is the first routine opt-out testing programme in IC in the UK to our knowledge.
- It is a sustainable model with HIV staff providing training and support, and IC staff delivering HIV testing.
- The programme has led to significantly increased HIV testing rates in IC.
- Routine testing will continue to guide life-saving management in those who test HIV positive.

References: 1. British HIV Association/British Association of Sexual Health and HIV/British Infection Society. *UK National Guidelines for HIV Testing*. 2008.
2. M Dodd and A Pryce. *A national survey of HIV testing in intensive care: moving forward*. JICS Volume 13, No 2. April 2012
3. Health Protection Agency. *HIV in the United Kingdom: 2012 Report*. November 2012.

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