

“Support for UKHSA mpox studies”

Findings from: [Provision of methodological support for UKHSA mpox studies](#)

Related publications:

<https://doi.org/10.1177/09564624241273778>

<https://doi.org/10.1136/sextrans-2024-056358>

<https://doi.org/10.3201/eid3005.230676>

What was the study about?

As part of its response to the mpox (formerly known as monkeypox) outbreak in 2022, UKHSA started several studies to understand how mpox spreads. For each study, we were approached to provide support and expertise to help start the studies and to help with sharing study results.

Why is this important?

It is important that studies are supported by people with the relevant experience and that the results are shared in a way that people can understand. This means that the study results can be used to help inform public health planning and responses to future outbreaks.

What did we do?

We provided support for three studies:

- 1) An online survey for men who have sex with men, which collected information on sexual health and wellbeing, the use of sexual health services and sexual behaviours before/during the outbreak.
- 2) Mpox infection where there were no symptoms (called asymptomatic infection).
- 3) Collecting samples from men who have sex with men attending sexual health services both before and during the outbreak, to better understand the timing of the outbreak and how many people were infected.

Key findings

- Results from the online survey showed around half of participants were changing their sexual behaviours to avoid mpox.
- Around two-thirds of people who completed the survey who were eligible to receive the mpox vaccine were offered it and had at least one dose of the vaccine.
- One of the major reasons people did not get the vaccine was because they were not offered it.
- Men who were bisexual, were less educated and were unemployed were less likely to take the mpox vaccine.

What do these findings mean?

Groups that are less likely to take the mpox vaccine can be targeted to ensure as many people take the vaccine as are eligible. We need to make sure that people who are eligible to receive the vaccine are offered it, to increase the number of people who are protected against mpox to stop future outbreaks. These findings will be used to help inform public health planning and responses for any future outbreaks.