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**LINKING SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND HIV INTERVENTIONS:
A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND META-ANALYSIS**

CAITLIN E. KENNEDY
UNITED STATES
ckennedy@jhsph.edu

OBJECTIVE

To review the evidence for interventions linking sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV.

METHODS

Systematic review and meta-analysis of both peer-reviewed studies and ‘grey’ non-peer-reviewed programme evaluations (“promising practices”) of SRH-HIV linkage interventions between 1990 and 2007. Systematic methods were used for searching, screening, and data extraction. Study design rigour was scored on a 9-point scale. Meta-analysis was conducted for key outcomes when a sufficient number of homogenous studies existed. Effect size estimates were converted to odds ratios and pooled using random effects models.

FINDINGS

Of over 50,000 citations identified, 225 studies were included in the review and 58 in the analysis (35 peer-reviewed studies and 23 promising practices). These 58 studies were heterogeneous with regard to interventions, populations, objectives, study designs, rigour, and measured outcomes. Interventions linking SRH and HIV were generally considered beneficial and feasible. The majority of studies showed improvements in all outcomes measured. While there were some mixed results, there were very few negative findings. Generally positive effects were shown for key outcomes, including HIV incidence, STI incidence, condom use, contraceptive use, uptake of HIV testing, quality of services, and cost. Three outcomes met the criteria for meta-analysis, which indicated positive effects of linkages on condom use and uptake of HIV testing, but no effect on contraceptive use.

CONCLUSION

Existing evidence provides support for linkages, although significant gaps in the literature remain. Policy makers, programme managers, and researchers should continue to advocate for, support, implement, and rigourously evaluate SRH and HIV linkages at the policy, systems, and service levels.