

Epidemiology of Syphilis and Gonorrhea in Taiwan, 2005–2016

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Abstract

World Health Organization (WHO) set a goal of reducing the incidence of syphilis and gonorrhea by 90% and less than 50 cases of congenital syphilis per 100,000 live births in 2030 by adopting the United Nations 17 sustainable development goals. In order to understand the long-term trends of sexually transmitted diseases in Taiwan to formulate the prevention and control policies to achieve the WHO 2030 target, we analyzed the cases of syphilis and gonorrhea in Taiwan from 2005 to 2016. The results show: (1) Both incidence rates per 100,000 population were increasing year by year, and the ascending trend was most obvious after 2013; (2) The sex ratio of syphilis increased year by year, but gonorrhea decreased between 2015 and 2016; (3) The main infection age group of syphilis and gonorrhea was 20–39 years of age, but number of cases of 10–19 years of age rose between 2015 and 2016; whereas the congenital syphilis is declining year by year; (4) The incidence rates of syphilis were highest in Taipei region, Eastern region, Northern region and Kaohsiung-Pingtung region, while the highest rates of gonorrhea were in Taipei region, Northern region and Eastern region. We suggested: (1) to maintain current achievement on the prevention and control of congenital syphilis and towards the goal of eradication; (2) put more emphasis on sex education to adolescent, and provide more private counseling; and (3) to investigate the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases in high-risk groups, in order to understand the trends and disease burden.

Keywords: Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Sexually transmitted diseases, Congenital syphilis

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