

Dirty jokes the best medicine

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Queensland comics Joel Bryant, Damian Power and Steven J Whiteley are part of a project to deliver men's sexual health information through vulgar stand-up comedy.

When it comes to men's sexual health, dirty jokes may just be the best medicine. A QUT researcher is helping Family Planning Queensland (FPQ) use comedy and YouTube to deliver sexuality education to young Australian men.

FPQ has recruited 11 Queensland comics to discuss key sexual health

issues through stand-up comedy, including Mike van Acker, Sean Choolburra and Lindsay Webb.

The acts will be filmed, edited and posted on YouTube.

"Historically, sexual health has tended to focus on women and there are many ways young women can and do access that information," said Anthony Walsh from FPQ.

"But we've found that's not the case with young men.

"We're hoping the YouTube comedy videos will help normalise sexual health - showing young men that it's okay to talk about it with both friends and health professionals, and that it's okay to have a bit of fun when they do talk about it."

Sexual health in young people has never been more important.

[Chlamydia](#) rates in Australia have more than tripled in the past decade and 82 per cent of people diagnosed in 2011 were aged between 15 and 29.

Teenagers aged 15-19 saw the biggest increase in Chlamydia rates. Between 2001 and 2011 the rate among young men jumped five-fold from 150 diagnoses per 100,000 population to 714 per 100,000.

Gonorrhoea rates have also jumped in recent years, from 44 diagnoses per 100,000 population in 2009 to 65 per 100,000 in 2011.

"We still don't know how much of this is due to unprotected sex and how much is due to improved screening," Mr Walsh said.

"However, it's a real concern that Chlamydia and other sexually

transmitted infections are on the rise when they are so easily detected, treated and prevented."

FPQ has enlisted the help of QUT Creative Industries researcher Professor Alan McKee, whose self-proclaimed job is to "keep the content vulgar".

Professor McKee's research into how young people access media shows vulgar comedy is a primary source of information for young men.

"Sexual health information is traditionally presented in ways your mother would approve of - and [young men](#) simply don't respond to that," Professor McKee said.

"But they are online and they are responsive to dirty jokes.

"This project is about testing new ways to make sexual health personal by putting some context around it - it's about taking [sexual health](#) out of the laboratory and making it a part of our everyday lives."

The project launches on Wednesday night, May 22, with the [Let's talk about sex comedy gala](#) at the Paddo Tavern's Sit Down Comedy Club, where the acts will be filmed for Youtube.

The 18+ event doubles as a fundraiser for the project, which has received some sponsorship from Ansvr Insurance and Andrology Australia.

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

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