Mpox Among Group Sex Event Attendees — Seattle, Washington, 2023

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Background: In September 2023, Public Health – Seattle & King County was notified of a group sex event where attendees were infected with monkeypox virus (MPXV). We investigated epidemiologic and clinical characteristics of MPXV transmitted at this event to prevent future transmission.

Methods: Interviews were attempted for all attendees provided on a list by the event host to gather demographic characteristics, sexual exposures and practices, and medical history. We reviewed medical records for clinical presentation and diagnostic testing and to supplement demographic information for those not interviewed. Mpox vaccination dates and laboratory results were confirmed through state immunization registry and the University of Washington laboratory, respectively.

Results: The group sex event was attended by 12 men and 1 nonbinary person. Attendees heard about the event through the host or social media. Nine (69%) attendees were interviewed; however, information was reported on all attendees. Attendees were aged 23–55 years, and none reported prior symptoms or prior mpox diagnosis. Six (46%) were fully vaccinated with 2-dose JYNNEOS series ≥2 weeks before the event, 3 (23%) were partially vaccinated, and 4 (31%) had no mpox vaccination. Four (31%) received an mpox diagnosis after the event, with symptom onset ranging 3–10 days after the event. Three of the four were fully vaccinated for mpox from 6 weeks to 12 months before illness onset. One of the four with an mpox diagnosis had virally

suppressed HIV. Clinical symptoms varied from isolated genital to diffuse body lesions. No patient was hospitalized.

Conclusions: This mpox outbreak, associated with a group sex event among predominantly fully vaccinated attendees, highlights need for safe sex practices and vigilance for symptoms of mpox regardless of vaccination status after similar exposure. Examination of time elapsed between vaccination and diagnosis of mpox is needed to establish potential waning immunity after vaccination.