

Crew health: Advice for safe sex

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are extremely common – it is estimated that up to 75% of sexually active people will contract an STI of some kind in their life time. For seafarers, the likelihood of contracting an STI is further increased, due to their unsettled lifestyles and a lack of access to necessary precautions.

A gap in knowledge

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Maritime Affiliates recently carried out an extensive survey concerning the sexual health and wellbeing of 608 seafarers across 30 different countries. The results identified a distinct gap in knowledge with regards to safe sex and the transmission of STIs. Among the findings, the survey reported that 46% of respondents from India and 40% from the Philippines falsely believed that HIV/Aids could be transmitted via food and drink. Similarly, 17% of crew from India were misinformed on the beneficial usage of condoms in preventing STIs and considered them 'ineffective', this was also the case for 53% of crew from the Ukraine and 40% from Madagascar. It is imperative that pertinent information is shared with the seafaring community to address these gaps.

Guidance and materials to use on board

The Club has partnered with the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) to raise awareness of crew health and to assist our Members in mitigating against related incidents. To that end, we are able to offer our Members two publications which are available to download and assist in providing help and information on STIs. These guidelines can be downloaded from the right hand side of the page or by clicking the links below:

- [Guidelines for the prevention of sexually transmitted infections](#)
- [Advice for safe sex](#)

ISWAN has also produced three posters to remind seafarers of the precautions that can be taken to avoid STIs. These posters can be downloaded from the right hand side of the page or by clicking the links below:

- [Seafarers for safe sex](#)
- [Stop AIDS, keep the promise](#)
- [There are many ways to be infected](#)

This article is the eighth in a series of articles in which the Club shares guidance and practical tips to our Members to promote good crew health on board. [All articles in this](#)

[series can be viewed here.](#)