



## Sex work and the public health impacts of the 2010 Olympic Games.

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Abstract: The authors examined the impact of exposure to the 2010 Winter Olympics time period on outcomes measuring disruption of local sex work environments in Vancouver, Canada.

The authors conducted a before-and-after study, using multivariable logistic regression, to assess the relationship between exposure to the Olympics period (19 January-14 March 2010) versus the post-Olympics period (1 April-1 July 2010) and outcomes.

This study included 207 youth (14+ years) and adult sex workers (SWs) (Olympics: n=107; post-Olympics: n=100). SWs in the two periods were statistically similar, with an overall median age of 33 years (IQR: 28-40), and 106 (51.2%) of indigenous ancestry or ethnic minority. In separate multivariable logistic regression models, the Olympics period remained statistically significantly associated with perceived heightened police harassment of SWs without arrest (adjusted ORs (AOR): 3.95, 95% CIs 1.92 to 8.14), decreased availability of clients (AOR: 1.97, 95% CIs 1.11 to 3.48) and increased difficulty meeting clients due to road closures/construction (AOR: 7.68, 95% CIs 2.46 to 23.98). There were no significantly increased odds in perceived reports of new (0.999), youth (0.536) or trafficked SWs (zero reports) in the Olympic period.

To reduce potential adverse public health impacts of enhanced police harassment and displacement of local sex work markets, results suggest that evidence-based public health strategies need to be adopted for host cities of future events (eg, the London 2012 Olympic Games), such as the removal of criminal sanctions targeting sex work and the piloting and rigorous evaluation of safer indoor work spaces.

Notes:

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