DR GOOGLE, PORN AND A FRIEND-OF-A-FRIEND: WHERE ARE YOUNG MEN REALLY GETTING THEIR SEXUAL HEALTH INFORMATION?
Dr Amy Litras, Dr Sarah Latreille, Assoc Prof Meredith Temple-Smith
General Practice and Primary Health Care Academic Centre, University of Melbourne

Background
Young people are vulnerable in relation to sexual health, with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy being significant concerns. Young men are less likely to attend a general practitioner (GP) and have less access to opportunistic screening. Access to good quality information and sexual education is a cornerstone in STI and unplanned pregnancy prevention but little is known of the sources of young men’s sexual health information.

Aims/objective
The aim of this research, which builds on a prior study, is to explore where young men obtain sexual health information in order to better inform GPs about their unique position to improve sexual health knowledge in young men.

Methods/approach
One-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with male TAFE students aged 16-18 years until data saturation was reached. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and thematically analysed.

Results/findings
There was often poor recall of school sexual education. Young men obtained sexual health information from various sources including family, friends and the Internet. However, information from the latter two sources was perceived as being unreliable. An unexpected finding was pornography as a source of information. GPs were perceived as a source of trust-worthy information but were not accessed for this purpose due to embarrassment, with young men preferring the GP to initiate this conversation.

Discussion
There was a self-identified need amongst young men for sexual health information but in the absence of an alternative they are turning to potentially unreliable sources. GPs are an acceptable, but underutilised, source of sexual health information for young men. It is good practice for GPs to initiate discussion about sexual health with young men.