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### Track C - Prevention programmes for men who have sex with men (MSM)

#### CDC0849 - "Do it safely" - a government HIV prevention campaign targeting MSM

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**Issues:** In recent years, there has been a striking increase in the number of HIV infections among men who have sex with men (MSM) in Hong Kong, which is evident from a rise in the number of voluntary case reports and HIV prevalence data in outreach settings. This abstract describes the efforts undertaken by the Department of Health (DH) and its community partners in organizing an HIV prevention campaign among MSM.

**Description:** The Health Promotion Team of Red Ribbon Centre launched its first one-year MSM-targeted HIV prevention campaign in August 2006. This campaign aimed to mobilize stakeholders, including NGOs, venue operators and MSM community to contribute to prevention efforts through collaborations of various means. The main objectives of the campaign included enhancing accessibility of condoms and lubricants, promoting safer sex and encouraging HIV testing.

**Lessons learned:** Throughout the year, about 200,000 condoms and 200,000 packs of lubricant were distributed in more than 30 MSM venues through outreaches. Post-campaign evaluation survey shows that 56.2% of MSM bar-goers accessed free condoms at venues and 51.7% of the respondents know about DH's MSM HIV testing hotline (launched in October 2006). Promotions were done through several MSM websites. Internet turned out to be the most frequently used channel for MSM to receive HIV prevention messages.

Community-based HIV intervention programmes can be organized through the concerted efforts of the Government, NGOs, stakeholders and general members of the community. Multi-channel promotions can be applied where internet is becoming a more important channel in message delivery.

**Next steps:** In order to tackle the rising HIV epidemic and reach MSM with high-risk behaviours, specific issues such as an increasing risk impact of soft drug use in sub-populations, and the wider context of MSM relationship and culture need to be addressed.

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