

A battle against the rapid HIV transmission among the men who have sex with men population in Hong Kong

Choi.Fung Ho, P.S. Wong, ITC Nursing Team of SPP

Nursing Team of Integrated Treatment Centre, Special Preventive Programme, Centre for Health Protection, Department of Health, Hong Kong, China

Purpose: Since 2005, HIV infection in men who have sex with men (MSM) has increased notably, with the peak in 2007. Three clusters of HIV-1 Subtype B infections mainly involved MSM were detected, which indicated a rapid HIV spread. A targeted prevention project, namely Promotion of Safer Sex Project (PSSP), was initiated by the nursing team of Integrated Treatment Centre (ITC). This article presents the findings on project evaluation.

Methods: Between December 2007 and June 2008, on top of regular risk reduction counselling, nurse counsellors provided intensified individual education to MSM on knowledge and skills of practising safer sex, such as use of oral condom and selection of lubricant for anal sex. Another boost up session was given at 6-month later. Data collected from yearly Sexual Risk Assessment (SRA) which assessed the past 1-year sexual behaviour of patients were evaluated.

Results: In 2007, 1306 patients attended ITC. Of 1091 patients with SRA, 453 were MSM including 124 new patients and 329 old patients. The “unprotected sex rate” and “unprotected anal sex rate” pre- and post-PSSP of these patients were compared by Chi Square Test. For the “unprotected sex rate” of new patients, it reduced from 87.1% to 21.7% (OR 24.4, 95% CI 11.6-51.1) while for the old patients were from 14.9% to 10.5% (OR 1.5, 95% CI 0.9-2.5). For the “unprotected anal sex rate”, it dropped from 77.8% to 27.8% (OR 9.1, 95% CI 2.9-28.1) in new patients and from 34.7% to 20.0% (OR 2.1, 95% CI 0.7-6.7) in old patients.

Conclusions: The results demonstrate that PSSP has successfully reduced sexual risk of MSM; its effect on new patients is more prominent. It may be due to the relative low sexual risk rate in the baseline reported by old patients, which suggests that regular risk reduction counselling also plays a key role in the behavioural change of patients.