

MSM HIV Prevention Campaign 2006

Introduction

Red Ribbon Centre (RRC) has launched the Men who have sex with men (MSM) HIV Prevention Campaign 2006 in the second half of 2006, in order to scale up the HIV prevention effort in MSM or gay community.

Background

According to the latest HIV quarterly reports in 2005 and 2006, there has been a rising trend in reported HIV infection in Hong Kong. Sexual transmission has always been the single most important route of HIV spread in Hong Kong and accounted for about 75% of the infection. In the past year, infections among MSM stayed at a high level. There were a record annual number of 313 reported HIV infections in 2005, out of which 96 cases were MSM. In contrast, 66 MSM cases were reported last year. The proportion of MSM cases also jumped from 24.6% in 2004 to 30.7% in 2005.

There was also a reverse in trend on the number of reported MSM cases overtaking the heterosexual men in 2005. The major rise in number of new cases was from the age group of 25 - 44. In early 2006, there was also the identification of a cluster of HIV-1 Subtype B infections affecting more than 20 men in Hong Kong. After epidemiological investigation, the risk factors identified were having unprotected sex between MSM; using internet as the platform to know sexual partners; having sex with non-regular, non-commercial (casual) partners and using soft drugs during sexual activities.

In Hong Kong, various data sources pointed towards genuine increase in infections among MSM, including increasing number of voluntary case reports among MSM, an increased HIV prevalence recorded from outreach testing service performed by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in MSM saunas and the identification of a cluster of MSM infections. MSM has been playing a significant role in HIV epidemic in Hong Kong.

Dr Tim Brown (external consultant of Hong Kong) of East West Centre, Honolulu, Hawaii, singled out the exponential increase in HIV infections among MSM in Hong Kong as an area of huge concern in his report on "Estimation and Projection of HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong". Dr. Brown also pointed out that the outbreak of HIV infections may be linked to a regional epidemic of HIV infections among MSM in South East Asia.

Condom use among MSM remained low. According to behavioural data collected by DH's AIDS Counselling and Testing Service, the regular use of condoms among MSM is between 45-55%. According to a study conducted by a local NGO, the regular condom use for anal sex was reported to be around 60% in outreach settings of gay saunas.

Since July 2005, RRC has been playing an active part in communicating with the local MSM community on the increasing risk of HIV infection. A MSM working group on HIV prevention has been formed at RRC and held monthly meetings to plan HIV prevention activities targeting MSM. This Campaign was our initiative, with the support of AIDS Concern, Hong Kong AIDS Foundation and also members from the gay community.

Aim, Objectives and Target Audience

The aim of this campaign was to scale up the HIV prevention effort in MSM and the gay community. The objectives were:

- To raise the awareness of HIV/AIDS in gay community;
- To promote safer sex practice; and
- To encourage MSM with unsafe sex behaviour to go for HIV testing and counseling.

The population of men who have sex with men, including homosexual and bisexual, was the target audience of this campaign. MSM aged 20-49 was the focus of this Campaign.

Details of the Campaign

The name of the Campaign was "Do it safely". This MSM HIV prevention campaign came in line with the Safer Sex Campaign 2005 but MSM-specific. It consisted of three major phases: (a) awareness programme, (b) safer sex promotion, and (c) testing promotion. The core message of "Be proud of your safer sex practice" was brought out in a supportive manner. The aims of the three phases were:

First phase on promotion of awareness: to raise the awareness of the MSM community on the rising trend of HIV infection among them.

Second phase on safer sex promotion: to promote safer sex practice among the MSM

community.

Third phase on promotion of HIV test: to promote HIV testing after unsafe sex and to encourage those who have had unsafe sex to come out for HIV test, so that more undiagnosed HIV-infected persons can be found out.

The components of the whole campaign included:

- A targeted 3-phase media campaign, including publicity banners in gay websites; advertisements and editorials in popular gay magazines; posters in gay venues; advertisements in toilets of gay bars; and programmes in gay radio channels.
- Broadcast of a re-edited version of the “Dom Dom” safer sex API in the 2006 Hong Kong Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.
- Organisation of a short film competition with the theme on HIV and MSM from the end of 2006, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Lesbian and Gay Film Festival Society.
- A scheme for improving access to condom and lubricant in gay venues, such as saunas and bars.
- Setting up an MSM specific AIDS hotline (21171069) and a gay-friendly and MSM-specific website on HIV/AIDS (www.21171069.com).

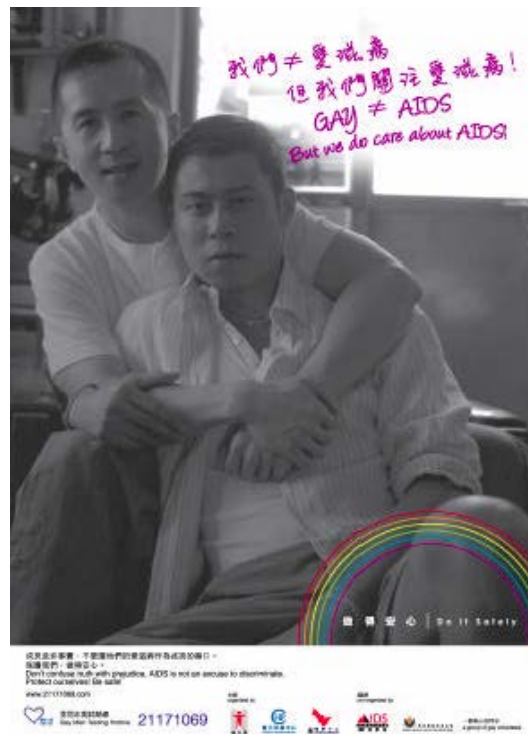
The publicity strategy has used the same design (a rainbow) for every part of the campaign so that people could link all up the components. Sets of publicity materials in the forms of magazine advertisements, internet banners, posters and coasters were produced for the three phases of the Campaign. Throughout the Campaign, internet banners, advertisements in most popular gay magazines and posters in gay venues, were employed to convey the messages to gay community. On-line programmes on HIV/AIDS and safer sex were also produced to disseminate the HIV prevention messages to a segment of MSM who use the internet.

Give-away items, including coasters, condom cases and gift packs containing a condom guide book, a condom and a lubricant pack, were produced for promotion in the three phases of the Campaign. Besides, free condoms and lubricants were to be distributed to gay venues with the period of the Campaign in order to improve the access to condoms and enhance the practice of safer sex.

A new AIDS hotline for MSM (21171069) has been set up in July 2006 and a website using the same rainbow design of the media campaign has been constructed and

launched in Oct 2006 (www.21171069.com). The contents are on HIV and sexual health and specifically address issues related to MSM. Information and resources on HIV and sexual health are provided in the website. New events related to the Campaign and HIV prevention activities will also be announced in the website.

Posters of the Campaign for posting in gay settings (bars, saunas, websites):





開心地做當然更好，但先安心又放心。「有帶」絕非「唔戴」嘅藉口。
 Have fun, but be safer! Not having a condom is no excuse for not wearing one.
www.21171069.com



一個為兩個人提供保護的套裝，安全套和潤滑劑，有效預防性病及愛滋病。
 Protection of two: Use condom and lubricant for safer sex!
www.21171069.com



我驗咗喇，你驗咗未?
I've tested. Have you?

Do It Safely

試算有固定性伴侶或男伴侶，亦應定期作HIV測試。及早診斷，及早治療，繼續健康人生。
Test regularly for HIV even if you have a steady partner. Test early, treat early, live healthily.
www.21171069.com

21171069

是時候試過 HIV Testing Week:
8-12 JAN 2007
快啲，嚟早只係今日就嚟 HIV
Go for HIV test today!

Do It Safely

詳情查詢及預約詳情，請致電：
衛生署提供之男同志健康熱線 21171069
服務專線 20584411 / 80333551
香港愛滋病基金會 29136913
www.21171069.com

For enquiry and booking, please call:
Department of Health Gay Men HIV Testing Hotline 21171069
ACS Concern 20584411 / 80333551
Hong Kong AIDS Foundation 29136913

21171069