

2015-6 Sydney Gay Asian Men Survey: HIV&STI related behavioural changes

Led and sponsored by the Sydney-based CALD
Gay Men Action Group

Preamble

In Sydney, similar HIV&STI-focused behavioural surveillance has been conducted in 1999 and 2002. This third round was conducted between September 2015 and June 2016 (completion of the community-focused recruitment). This report presents some major findings from the 2015/16 survey.

Characteristics of participants

Compared to the previous two rounds, the latest one added an online component (19% participants recruited) and clinical recruitment from a number of key Sydney metro-based Sexual Health Clinics and ACON a[Test] (25% participants recruited). Consistent with the previous two rounds, the latest survey consisted men largely recruited from gay social venues, events and sex-on-premises venues.

h h Majority (97%) of the participants identified themselves as male, 3% identified as transgender. Three main ethnic groups have been consistently present in the surveys over time: Chinese (about one-third of all participants); Filipino (about 10%) and Thai (about 10%). (Table 1) In the latest round, apart from 90.1 (o)-9.6 (m)1.0.8 (e.)-4 (e)-6 (s)-4.3 (49ird)2r.7 (i)2i2.2 ()14n-0.5 (e)-6 (t)-4msr g (m)4.5 (s)-1.3f)

STI testing

A similar pattern also applied to the increasing trend of STI testing uptake. In the latest round, about 70% of Asian gay men had been tested for any STIs (71.6 % including blood tests; 70.3% excluding blood tests for STI) in the past 12 months (Table 5), on par with that of locally-recruited gay men. More importantly, rates of comprehensive STI testing (at least four anatomical sites) in the past 12 months were similar between gay Asian men and locally-recruited gay men (over 45%). About one fifth (22%) among those reported a STI diagnosis in the last 12 months.

Table 5. Uptake of STI tests (excluding blood tests) among participants (N=468)

	N	%
Any STI test	329	70.2
- Anal swab	273	58.3
- Throat swab	274	58.5
- Penile swab	105	22.4
- Urine sample	290	62.0

Places or approaches to usually seek and/or find male sex partners

According to the latest round of the survey, mobile apps (69% sought, 59% found), followed by gay sauna (around 45% sought and found) were the two most common ways to approach male sex partners in the past six months. (Table 6)

Table 6. Six most common places or approaches for seeking and/or finding sex partners (N=468)

	Sought		Found	
	N	%	N	%
Mobile apps	324	69.2	276	59.0
Saunas	223	47.6	212	45.3
Websites and/or social media	187	40.0	105	22.4
Bars and/or dance parties	107	22.9	68	14.5
Beats	357	76.3	35	7.5
Gym	39	8.3	24	5.1

Table 7. Condom use with regular and casual partners

	2015/16 (N=468)		2002 (N=457)		1999 (N=319)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Had a casual partner	362	77.4	351	76.8	240	75.2
- UAI with casual partner(s)	135	37.3	66	18.8	52	21.6
Had a regular partner	286	61.1	258	56.5	210	65.8
- UAI with regular partner(s)	125	43.7	111	43.0	89	42.4

Knowledge of PEP and PrEP

For non-HIV-positive Asian men, the latest round shows that their knowledge of the existing

Alcohol and other recreational drug use

As shown in the latest round of the survey, alcohol was the most commonly used of all recreational substances with about half used it at least monthly in the previous six months. Amyl (poppers) was the second most popular drugs with close to 20% consumed it at least monthly in the six-month period. (Table 10)

Table 10. Common substances used in the past 6 months (N=468).

	N	%
Alcohol	335	71.6
Poppers	180	38.5
Marijuana	69	14.7
Viagra	67	14.3
Ecstasy	47	10.0
Crystal meth	37	7.9
GHB	27	5.8
Steroids	6	1.3

Stigma

As shown in the latest round of the survey, about half reported having negative experiences (e.g., shame, avoidance, exclusion, rejection) in the past 12 months, the most prominent being racial background/ethnicity, 53% (n=234) (w=0.7) (a=3.3) (e=6) (i)=4 (a(u)6 (t)=5.9 (c)=4.9 (u)=3.3 (c)=4.9 (a)=3.3