

CRiSP - Community Based Risk Behavioural and Seroprevalence Survey for Female Sex Workers in Hong Kong 2006

Background

CRiSP was an initiative of Department of Health and five frontline non-governmental organisations (NGO) working with female sex workers, including Hong Kong AIDS Foundation, AIDS Concern, Community Health Organisation for Intervention, Care and Empowerment, Mercury Health Education Centre, The Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention and Action for REACHOUT.

The survey aimed to improve the understanding the situation of HIV and sexually transmitted infections in female sex workers. The result would help a better prevention programme planning in Hong Kong.

Method

A mapping exercise of sex venues in Hong Kong and an estimation of number of female sex workers in different settings was conducted with five frontline NGO in August 2006. The sex venues in the territory were divided into clusters.

The survey was conducted between 6 November 2006 and 31 January 2007. Five participating NGO outreached to their familiar settings and conducted interviews with female sex workers.

The survey comprised collecting a urine sample for HIV antibody test and an interviewer-administered standardised questionnaire on sexual behaviour, injecting drug use history and basic demographics. The urine samples were treated in an unlinked and anonymous way so that the testing result cannot be traced back to the individual.

Results

A total of 996 eligible samples with questionnaires were collected, with a response rate of 64.3%. Bars and

karaoke nightclubs each contributed about one third of samples. Other participants were recruited from street and one woman brothel.

78% were Chinese and 76% spoke Cantonese. The age of respondents ranged from 16 to 57 with a median of 31. Five urine samples were tested HIV positive. After adjusted for the sampling proportion, the HIV prevalence of female sex workers in these settings was 0.19%.

The consistent condom use rate for vaginal sex with customers among respondents was 92% while the condom use rate of last vaginal sex with customers was 93%.

Discussion

This is the first large-scale territory wide seroprevalence and behavioural survey in female sex workers which involved 5 major frontline organisations working with sex industry.

The seroprevalence result of this survey was compatible with other similar data, e.g. Social Hygiene Clinics attendees (0.17% in 2006). With the good behavioural pattern, it suggested an effective preventive effort targeting sex industry in Hong Kong.

However, the situation may be underestimated because this survey mainly covered sex workers who were reached by NGO in the community. Those not covered may be more at-risk. Interview conducted by outreach workers might bias to favourable results. In-depth qualitative study is needed in order to get more detailed information. The situation in female sex workers has to be monitored regularly and this exercise will be repeated two years later.

CRiSP 2006 Steering Group

FACTSHEET on CRiSP 2006

Published by Special Preventive Programme
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October 2007