

Responding to shifts in the epidemic Developing a coordinated response to the increase in HIV notifications in NSW

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- Health Promotion Sub-Committee, Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS Strategies
- Researchers

Overview

- Assessment and Analysis
- Response
- Issues
- Where to from here

Assessment and Analysis

- Data-cleaning and lookback
- Analysis of case notification data
- Review and evaluation of HIV health promotion program
- Assessment and analysis of national and international trends and programs

Assessment and Analysis

- Surveillance Forum: case notification data, sentinel surveillance, STI epidemiology, social research, HIV testing rates, lab data
- Concluded there was a genuine increase
- Most significant predictors of transmission: individual viral load; presence of STIs (transmission/acquisition); sexual behaviour; prevalence of HIV

Assessment and Analysis

- 2002 and 2003: increase predominantly gay and homosexually active men in inner Sydney
- Average age 30-39 but increases also in 20-29 year olds and 50-59 year olds
- 70% of all 2002 notifications – people from English speaking backgrounds
- Steadily increasing number of people with newly acquired HIV infection
- High rates of syphilis, Chlamydia, gono



Programming + Implementation

- Action Plan to reduce HIV infections among gay and homosexually active men in inner Sydney
- Objectives:
 - Provide information
 - Increase rate of safe sex
 - Increase regular, appropriate HIV and STI testing
 - Build capacity of health services and GPs to address HIV prevention

Programming + Implementation

- Action Plan developed and implemented by: ACON, PLWH/A NSW, Central Sydney AHS, South Eastern Sydney AHS, Northern Sydney AHS and ASHM
- Time frame: September 2003-March 2004
- Complemented specific/local initiatives undertaken by individual agencies



Programming + Implementation

Objective One: Communicating with gay men about changed context of risk

Objective Two: Support GPs, Sexual Health Services and HIV clinicians in prevention role

Objective Three: Increase STI testing and treatment

Content Issues

- Reading the data
- Simple plus complex information
- Personalising risk for HIV negative gay men
- Specific work with HIV positive gay men
- Balancing focus on inner city and regional/rural
- Relationship between mental health + sexual risk
- Relationship between use of alcohol and other drugs and sexual risk taking
- Addressing sexually transmissible infections



Process Issues

- Level of intervention: individual/social aspects
- Community engagement/creating the “discursive fug”
- Limits of social marketing and information based campaign work
- Focus testing
- Role of gay community media
- Role of mainstream media

Infrastructure Issues

- Complementary role of members of the HIV/AIDS partnership
- Supporting General Practitioners, and the relationship between Health Promotion and General Practice
- Flexibility and capacity to respond

Where to from here?

- Development of next *NSW HIV/AIDS Strategy* currently underway
- Provide a strategic framework for addressing HIV health promotion, treatment and care, and research 2004-2008
- Confirm commitment to partnership and complementary roles of partners
- Targets?